



COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR SAMSYS'
SERVICES: VENCYSYS & ZAPZYS

PROFESSIONAL PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this project, which is to create a communication strategy for Samsys' services, is to create a communication plan for this technology company.

To begin, the theoretical foundations for the concepts of "digital marketing," "content marketing," and "social networks" are provided. The communication plan that was produced for the firm in question is then presented in this project.

There were certain constraints to this project due to the absence of papers provided by the firm, such as the marketing plan, as well as the lack of essential information offered by Samsys.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; Content Marketing; Communication Plan; B2B.

RESUMO

O objetivo deste projeto, que é criar uma estratégia de comunicação para os serviços da Samsys, é criar um plano de comunicação para esta empresa de tecnologia.

Para começar, são abordadas as bases teóricas para os conceitos de "marketing digital", "marketing de conteúdo" e "redes sociais". O plano de comunicação, que foi elaborado para a empresa em questão é então apresentado.

Houve algumas restrições neste projeto devido à ausência de documentação fornecida pela empresa, como o plano de marketing, bem como a falta de informações essenciais dadas pela Samsys.

Palavras-chave: Marketing Digital; Marketing de Conteúdo; Plano de comunicação;

B2B.

INTRODUCTION

According to Kotler (2010, p. 12) "Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others." However, it must be borne in mind that this is not a static definition at the temporal level; that is, as the years go by, not only consumers but also the whole surrounding society are also evolving, and new sub-definitions of Marketing appear.

With this concept in mind, this project aims to develop a communication plan and strategy for Samsys' – management and software consulting company, based on Porto - recently launched pack of services: Vencsys and Zapzys.

Samsys, a consultant specializing in information and communication technologies, was founded in 1997 and has offices in Porto and Lisbon. Samsys is an IT company that combines the supply of IT consulting services with the goal of developing solutions that help businesses thrive.

Firstly, it will be approached the theoretical framework for “digital marketing”, “content marketing” and “social networks”, and then the communication plan itself, shall be elaborated.

As a result, it is critical to carry out the following planning in order to set it on the proper track in the market in which it works. The company's primary goals are to improve brand awareness, retain existing customers, attract new clients, and begin serving a more demanding market.

The long-term goal is to establish the firm as a market leader in comparison to competitors in the same market. As a result, several communication techniques will almost certainly be incorporated.

An analysis of the firm, as well as its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, will be conducted in the first phase.

As the main goals for this project, it intended to have a positive financial impact on Samsys by augmenting the number of clients as well as increasing the brand awareness and digital presence.



From then, the objectives will be more precisely defined, and the decisions for developing this company's communication plan will be specified.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Digital Marketing

According to Keefe (2004), during a major part of the 20th century, the definition of marketing underwent several changes, its complexity evolved year by year and the lack of consensus amongst authors emerged. This rapid evolution of marketing was only possible due to the constant sociological and technological advances that happened during this period (Keefe, 2004).

Although some authors consider digital marketing to be a deconstruction of traditional marketing (Çizmecci & Ercan, 2015), it is generally viewed as much more than that. The main objective of traditional marketing is more related with creating value to the consumer and motivating him to buy the product/service, while digital marketing aims to meet the consumer's needs in the fastest way possible instead of trying to change their perception (Varnali, 2012).

This change of perception was originated by the increasing use of information technologies, not only by the companies but also by the consumers and the entire supply and distribution chain, which resulted in the presence of the development, pricing, promotion, and distribution of goods and services on the online environment (Karaca, 2012). It made it possible for companies that would not be competitors in a traditional marketing environment to be so on the digital landscape as many barriers were removed due to the common usage of the same infrastructures to generate profit (Durmaz & Efendioglu, 2016).

Although many brands benefited with digital eruption, many did not know how to adapt quickly to the new reality as a lot of brands suffered major blows (Porter, 2001). In view of this new reality, marketing faces a different kind of challenges, such as finding digital content and structures that capture the attention of consumers in an automatic and unconscious way (Brasel, 2011). The first approaches to the digital world (in terms of advertising) were very similar to some of the physical one, such as banners on certain web pages with high traffic rates; however, new tools, platforms, techniques and formats emerged (Maqueira & Bruque, 2009), such as: Search engine marketing; E-mail marketing; Social network marketing; Mobile marketing; Viral marketing; Referral marketing.

1.1.1. Search Engine Marketing

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is an online marketing technique that consists of improving and maintaining a high position of a website in the search results on a search engine for the company to be easily found by consumers (Mahendru, Singh & Sharma, 2014). SEM consists of Search Engine Advertising (SEA) or paid advertising, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) or organic and free optimization (Mahendru, Singh & Sharma, 2014).

As stated by Ghose & Yang (2009), in SEA companies that want to promote their products or services on a search engine translate their product information into keyword listings to search engines. To establish the position of each competing ad on the search engine results, bid values are assigned to each keyword listing (Ghose & Yang, 2009). When the consumer searches a certain term on the search engine, the paid advertise appears at the top of the page, before the organic results, and signaled as a sponsored link (Ghose & Yang, 2009). The search engine charges a fee to the advertiser; usually, it is used the PPC (Pay-Per-Click) method where the payment only occurs when the ad is clicked, and the users are directed to the advertised page (Durmaz & Efendioglu, 2016).

When searching for a term in a search engine, the user tends to ignore every result beyond the 5th non-paid link (Yalçın & Köse, 2010); given this fact, it is mandatory for companies to work on improving their ranking position in the search engine results. Although SEO was first conceived as a wide set of techniques to improve a webpage position on the search engine listings, it now has a broader sense that includes every possible way to improve the web traffic organically (Davis, 2006). The good practices of SEO are based on three factors: on-page (that stands for any optimization made on the page itself such as the name of the file or the title and sub-title of the page); off-page (that has much to do with a good backlink construction through relevant and with high-authority websites that reference the targeted webpage); sitewide (that is related with the optimization of the ranking in the search engine listings not only of the targeted web-page but also of the entire website) (Clarke & Clarke, 2014). Companies that use SEO are getting more new customers and revenue than those who tend to ignore it (Mahendru, Singh & Sharma, 2014).

In conclusion, while still not quite expressive, SEM is an exceptional digital marketing tool for enterprises to use it in all their digital communication media (Lu & Zhao, 2014).

1.1.2.E-mail Marketing

E-mail marketing is defined as the sending of commercial or non-commercial e-mails to a previously defined list of recipients with the purpose of increasing not only sales but also web traffic (Hudák, Kianičková & Madleňák 2017).

According to Marques (2018), the list of recipient emails can be obtained through the rental or purchase of databases whose users have given prior authorization for the treatment of their data and for the receipt of third-party campaigns; however, this method is ineffective due to its segmentation which tends to be of low quality. Despite being a long process, it is also possible for the company to create its own list of recipients, which tends to be much more effective (Marques, 2018).

Through CRM software, it is possible not only to statistically analyse each email marketing campaign through different metrics (openings, clicks, email removals, conversion rate) but also to personalize the content of the email according to the consumer behaviour and preferences, prompt action and optimize the message design to make it more attractive for that specific consumer (Mele, 2015).

In conclusion, when used well, email marketing proves to be a marketing tool that produces substantial financial returns (Marques, 2018).

1.1.3.Social Network Marketing

As stated by De Vries, Gensler & Leeflang (2012), social network marketing refers to the process of using social media content to draw consumers to websites. The main purpose of this form of marketing is to promote brands, goods or services, often based on the opinions and feedback of consumers that communicate with the respective social media accounts (De Vries et al., 2012).

For firms, social network marketing can be very helpful since it stands as a potential strategy to develop brand loyalty, construct exit barriers and promote viral marketing through self-emerging consumer testimonials to establish communities around goods or services (Gotta et al., 2006). By soliciting user feedback and customer recommendations, these groups may also be a source of creativity via the input given by the users. Social networking can identify potential clients and help perform business analytics and market research on brand intelligence (Assad et al., 2011).

Recently, social networks have often been used as a marketing channel. Marketers are also interested in these networks because empirical data can be collected relative to their users, allowing for more detailed and precise segmentation (Durmaz & Efendioglu, 2016).

In Chapter 1.3, a more in-depth review of this subject will be conducted.

1.1.4. Mobile Marketing

There is not a consensus among authors when it comes to the definition of mobile marketing (Varnali & Toker, 2010).

According to the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA, 2008), mobile marketing is defined as “A set of practices that enables organisations to communicate and engage with their audience in an interactive and relevant manner through any mobile device or network.”

On the other hand, Leppäniemi, Sinisalo & Karjaluoto (2006, p.38) defined mobile marketing as “The use of the mobile medium as a means of marketing communications.”, while Scharl, Dickinger & Murphy (2005, p. 165) refer to mobile marketing as, “Using a wireless medium to provide consumers with time- and location-sensitive, personalised information that promotes goods, services and ideas, thereby benefiting all stakeholders.”

Nowadays, handheld devices with an internet connection are favoured, therefore, marketing techniques for mobile channels vary from conventional approaches in this manner (Durmaz & Efendioglu, 2016).

Besides the use of social media as a tool to reach the consumer, there are several other marketing activities that can be used in mobile marketing, those being MMS, SMS, QR codes, mobile applications and location services (Durmaz & Efendioglu, 2016).

Smutkupt, Krairit & Esichaikul (2010), identified as key unique characteristics of mobile marketing ubiquity, personalisation, two-way communication and localisation.

Ubiquity refers to users' opportunity to access information and conduct transactions from anywhere and at any time while personalisation refers to the fact that a smartphone contains personal information such as contacts or messages and it can stand as means of self-expression for teenagers (Smutkupt, Krairit & Esichaikul, 2010).

Because of their "always on" compatibility and quick set-up times, mobile devices allow for more two-way communication than any other mean (Schierholz, Kolbe & Brenner, 2007).

The ability to determine a smartphone user's geographical location by positioning the device is referred to as localisation (Clarke, 2001), marketers may use this technology to reach prospective buyers with location-specific goods or services (Smutkupt, Krairit & Esichaikul, 2010).

1.1.5. Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is the voluntary exchange of information or ideas about goods or services with the consumer's peers through any channel of communication (Durmaz & Efendioglu, 2016). It stands as a new marketing strategy and a method of communicating with consumers that has the ability to attract a wide audience quickly (Miller & Lammas, 2010). Since it allows people to exchange details (product descriptions, improvements, campaigns, etc.) with their friends via email or other social media, viral marketing is also known as "Internet Word-of-mouth marketing" (Bhattacharya, Gaurav & Ghosh, 2019).

Viral marketing is a novel topic that seeks to create loyalty in a permissive and non-intrusive manner, as well as use it as a tool for spreading a message, idea, or lifestyle that can propagate to others (Romaní, 2014). It stands as a marketing strategy that takes advantage of the full use of social networks, websites, and other network media to maximize the company's recognition through the unrestricted and accelerated transmission and reception of information, much similar to a computer virus across the network (Carpio, Hanco, Cutipa & Mamani, 2019)

Wilson (2000) identified 6 fundamentals for the creation of viral marketing, those being: free service; established network; easy advertising; free service; quick transfer; other infrastructures; interesting growth.

A viral marketing strategy is a less costly and unexpected way to attract customers; but, in today's world, where nearly 85 million videos and images are shared every day on a common social networking platform like Instagram the biggest obstacle is to reach wider audiences by getting the advertisement to deliver constant interactions with the community (Bhattacharya, Gaurav & Ghosh, 2019).

Viral marketing tends to deliver greater results than conventional marketing strategies as a result of information dissemination (Watts & Frumin, 2007). A growing number of digital marketers are taking advantage of this strategy and bring even more effort into engaging prospective buyers in order to profit from their services and goods by disseminating information

(Karczmarczyk, Jankowski & Wątróbski, 2018). Socially based recommendations have a stronger effect on targeted audiences than conventional marketing advertisements due to the improved truthfulness of interactions within a social network (Iribarren & Moro, 2009).

1.1.6. Referral Marketing

Customer referral programs are marketer-led word-of-mouth strategies that allow current consumers to recommend friends, families, and industry associates to become new customers (Kumar, Petersen & Leone, 2010). Because marketers may use rewards to encourage referrals and have more power of message quality, consumer referral services are often preferred to pure word of mouth (Berman, 2016).

There are two forms of referral programs: the first one rewards the customer with a monetary bonus for each action or sale they obtain for the company; the second one benefits the referrer by raising exposure, elevating his or her reputation as an expert or receiving favorable care from a retailer or distributor (Berman, 2016).

According to Veerasamy (2014) Dropbox, a file transfer, replication, and storage service, is a referral marketing success tale, having increased its consumer base from 100,000 to 4 million customers in just 15 months. When the referred party signed up for any tier of service, Dropbox gave both the referrer and the referred a 500MB boost in capacity (Veerasamy, 2014). If traditional marketing strategies were used, it is estimated by the Dropbox CEO, Drew Huston, a cost of 10 billion dollars to acquire a similar customer base.

1.2. Content Marketing

More and more, content marketing is becoming a crucial part of the marketing strategy. According with the report “Not Another State of Marketing Report - Trends and data from over 3,400 global marketers plus progressive strategies from our experts and partners.” referring to 2020, 78% of the companies inquired have a team of one to three elements responsible for content marketing (Hubspot, 2020). “Increasing numbers of organizations have set up material

on their Web portals as a way of providing users with information about their products or services.” (Yang, Cai, Zhou & Zhou, 2005, p.575).

1.2.1. Definition

The strategy of communicating with prospective clients through materials and interactions that they find beneficial is called inbound marketing (Dakouan, Benabdelouahed & Anabir, 2019). For Patrutio-Baltes (2016) inbound marketing is the main form of digital marketing and it represents an organic of marketing method, focused on the strong relationship between the brand and its consumers, who have willingly shared their curiosity in the goods or services of the company and who have been drawn to and interested in the high standard of content marketing. Inbound marketing is also explained as a concept focused on the idea of distribution and design of relevant content, directed to a particular target audience, to help the company being known without the usage of the traditional way of buying the interest of these (Maczuga, Sikorska, Jaruga, Zieliński, Boncio, Cardoni, & Poschalko, 2014).

In inbound marketing the consumer, drawn by content, research and social media marketing, is active in finding knowledge about their desires and their interactions with the brand (Chaffey & Smith, 2013). In order to achieve this, companies should produce interesting and attractive content and publish it in a way that is accessible for the consumers, so that they can be engaged and have a good interaction with the piece of content (Steenburgh, Avery & Dahod, 2011).

Since content is a core component of inbound marketing strategies (Chaffey & Smith, 2013), the inbound marketing approach utilizes content marketing as a tool (Lieberman, 2016).

The term “content” was originally used in a publishing environment, with the main objective being the captivation of the consumer’s attention through words, images and motion graphics, whether it be on radio, newspapers or TV (Vinerean, 2017). It was later, with the emergence of the digital environment, that this concept was brought into the online and in specific to digital marketing, as stated by Handley and Chapman (2011, p.21) being “anything created and uploaded to a website: the words, images or other things that reside here”.

The table 1 shows various definitions of content marketing proposed by several authors:

| Author | Definition |
|--------|------------|
|--------|------------|

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Pulizzi and Barrett (2008, p. 8) | “the creation and distribution of educational and/or compelling content in multiple formats to attract and/or retain customers” |
| Rose and Pulizzi (2011, p. 12) | “content marketing is a strategy focused on the creation of a valuable experience” |
| Content Marketing Institute (2017) | “Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience – and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.” |
| Järvinen and Taiminen (2015, p. 6) | “processes of creating and delivering content (i.e., text messages, pictures, videos, animations) to target customers in ways that add value and engages them in relationships with the company.” |
| Du Plessis (2015, p. 5) | “Content marketing is a strategic brand storytelling technique aimed at changing consumers' inactive behavior through unobtrusive, engaging brand conversations in earned media.” |
| Wuebben (2012, p. 5) | “the story of your product or service and propels your brand into the hearts and minds of your prospect, customers and others” |

For Rahim & Clemens (2012), before making the decision of buying or not a certain product or service, consumers are more and more addressing the internet to gather information about it. This represents a great opportunity for marketers not only to gain the consumers trust, but also to have a positive impact in their companies' awareness and sales figures (Edelman, 2010).

According with Świeczak (2012), content marketing provides for a sincere and transparent interaction with the target audience, built on confidence and partnership. The consumer trusts the brand, the company or the product for it to deliver trustful content about a certain topic (Świeczak, 2012). As a result, this inbound marketing tool is based around the premise that instead of using conventional advertising methods, companies will generate more revenue by encouraging the public to engage and by establishing a partnership with the consumer (Mallawaarachchi, 2011).

1.2.2. Strategy

Content marketing, as a strategy, has been used for a long time. For decades, companies have been giving out bulletins or messages through video (Świeczak, 2012).

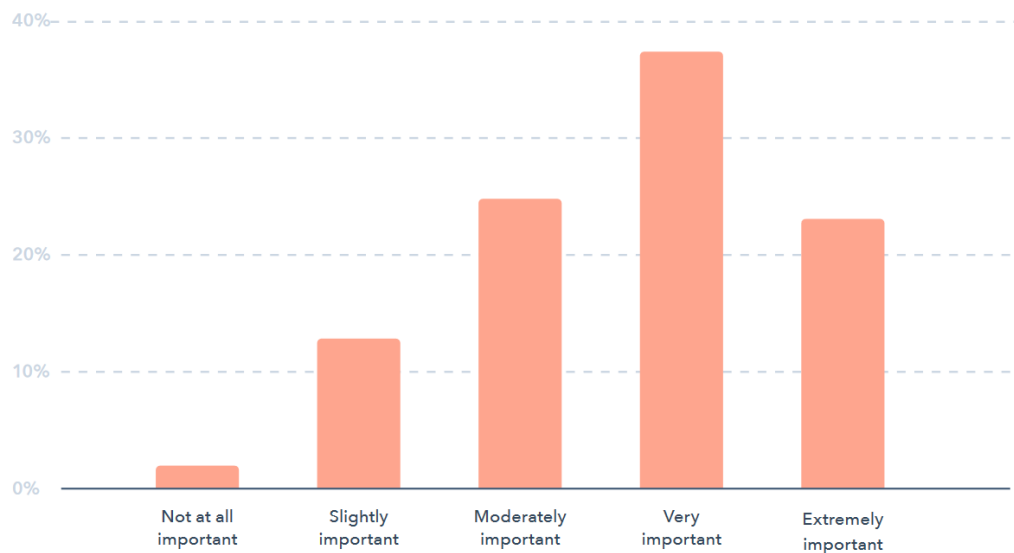
As stated by Vinerean (2017), due to the migration of the consumer to the digital channels, content marketing has become a preferred internet marketing strategy for many companies. Brands and businesses may use different online channels to build and share engaging brand stories that help them accomplish market goals such as customer conversion, or retention, brand awareness, acquisition, perceived value, or improved revenue.

For Pulizzi & Barret (2009), content marketing strategy can be structured around 4 main principles: have a purpose behind the communication; deliver useful information to the consumer; content marketing must be an important part of the overall approach; the content must have a well-defined target audience.

According to Vinerean (2017), organizations can select from a range of formats and techniques for a good content marketing strategy in any online environment. These strategies, on the other hand, must represent the interests of targeted audiences as well as the organization's goals (Vinerean, 2017). According with Kolowich (2016) the main formats and tactics used in content market are: blog posts; ebooks; templates; infographics; videos; guides; podcasts; kits; checklists and tip sheets; webinars; whitepapers; case studies; research reports/surveys; user-generated content.

Besides the format and tactics, the digital marketing techniques used are also crucial to achieve a successful content marketing strategy, for instance, SEO is ineffective if it is not used in a content marketing strategy (Pulizzi, 2012). According with the report “Not Another State of Marketing Report - Trends and data from over 3,400 global marketers plus progressive

strategies from our experts and partners.” referring to 2020, the majority of the inquired marketers, the majority thinks that content marketing is very important when building a digital marketing strategy, as seen in figure 1.



1. Source: Not Another State of Marketing Report (Hubspot)

According with Liam Fisher in a Smart Insights (2016) interview, content marketing is so important in any brand strategy because “Consumers today are bombarded with more adverts and messages than ever before, so the impact of more traditional channels is somewhat diluted. Content marketing has the capacity to resonate more powerfully with your customers because it’s carefully tailored to their needs and interests. It’s a way of conveying your brand’s personality and offering without being overtly promotional, which can go a long way toward building brand trust amongst your audience. More and more brands are recognising the impact of content marketing, so those who choose to ignore it will increasingly fall behind.”

The results from a content marketing strategy may only be seen after months, and in some cases, years of efforts, being considered a long-term marketing strategy (Poradova, 2020). A well-defined content marketing strategy, according to Baltes (2015), will build a privileged relationship with the target audience through a positive brand image, and marketers can draw, maintain, and hold the public in a long-term strategy. For Weerasinghe (2019), customers are

engaged with the brand to meet their desires as a result of the content marketing strategy, which produces content to reach the target audience.

According to Nguyen (2019) the content marketing strategy is an ongoing procedure that requires regular revisions focused on current events and emerging marketing technologies trends. As a consequence, the process of implementing and improving the content marketing strategy should be done at the same time (Nguyen, 2019).

1.2.3. Goals, metrics and channels

To create a content marketing strategy, firstly, it is necessary to define the goals that want to be achieved, and only then, according with a certain set of metrics, can be seen if the developed strategy is delivering the desired outcomes (Rahim & Clemens, 2012). According with Järvinen & Taiminen (2016), B2B content marketing's primary business goals are to boost brand awareness and image, promote customer engagement and maximize revenue.

According to Rose & Pulizzi (2011) a content marketing strategy should have the following goals in any organization: lead conversion and nurturing; brand awareness or validation; customer service; customer upsell; customer conversion; committed subscribers.

Rahim & Clemens (2012) conducted a study which shows that the majority of North American (33,9%) and European (50%) enquired marketers identified lead generation as the primary content marketing goal. In the same study, it was also identified that the least important goal for North American (5%) and European (0%) enquired marketers is customer feedback.

As stated by Maintz & Zaumseil (2019), the measurement of performance is an important phase in the execution of a content management strategy, for them, there are three interconnected goal-related content marketing target areas that should be measured: goals relating the brand; goals relating the customer; goals relating the communication. The brand related goals should be focused on creating and improving the company's brand awareness (Kaba & Bechter, 2012); the customer related goals should have, as main purpose, the creation of value to the consumer through the use of targeted pieces of content (Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009); the communication related goals; the communication related goals should be focused on enhancing the user's engagement (Tropp & Baetzgen, 2013).

Traditionally, metrics are “expressed in the form of numbers, ratios and key performance indicators” (Bekavac and Garbin Praničević, 2015, p.374). With the emergence of digital marketing, new metrics have been adopted by marketers (Maintz & Zaumseil, 2019).

Maintz & Zaumseil (2019) identified five main groups of metrics that should be used in a content marketing strategy: metrics related with the website visits; metrics related with visitors; metrics related with visitors' engagement; conversion metrics; metrics related with the brand. The metrics related with the website visits are “chosen entry page, landing page, exit page, duration of the visit, page views/page impressions, click-through rates, rich media display time, source of traffic (referrer), and communication channels used.” (p.5). The metrics related with visitors are “number of new visitors, returning visitors, repeat visitors, ratio of new to returning visitors, number of visits per visitor, recency of action on the site, frequency” (p.5). For the metrics related with visitors' engagement the authors identified “page exit ratio, bounce rate, page views per visitor, average time on site, click-through rates, e-mail click-throughs, downloads, rich media interaction rate, rich media display time, referring domains, numbers of friends/ followers, likes, and shares.” (p.5). The conversion metrics are “conversion, the conversion rate, the abandonment rate, the average order value, the numbers of friends/followers, likes, and shares” (p.5). Finally, the metrics related with the brand are “searches for/including brand or product names, overall traffic volume, and the number of visits.” (p.6).

Gabbianelli & Conti (2018) conducted a study by consulting firms on what metrics they use when addressing the performance of content marketing, they concluded that use of sharing (37%) and consumption (35%) were the most common used. On the other side, the least used types were sales (30%) and lead generation (25%) metrics. Also, in the same study, Gabbianelli & Conti found out that page views (69%), visits (54%), and page views/visitors (46%) are the most often used consumption metrics. The most used sharing metrics are tweets, comments and likes (64%). Email subscriptions (64%) and user reviews (44%) are the most common lead generation metrics, while off-line (56%) and customer retention (49%) are the most common sales metrics.

According with Lieb & Owyang (2012) companies may deliver their various content marketing formats across three separate media channels: own media, paid media and organic media. In order for a company to be competitive, all three media channels must be used simultaneously (Lieb and Owyang, 2012). The term "convergent media" defines the use of a

variety of tools from different media channels that work together to encourage brands to meet consumers precisely where, how, and when they want to be reached (Mahoney & Tang, 2020). For Du Plessis (2017), channels should serve as support to the relevance of the message in order to reach the target audience effectively.

1.2.4. Visual content

As industry experts suggest, digital consumers are more and more engaged with visual content such as photographs and video, visual communication has never been more relevant to brands that have an online presence (Brubaker & Wilson, 2018). According to a study conducted by Stelzner (2016) the most common form of content used in social media marketing is visual content (images) (74%), followed by blogs (68%) and videos (60%).

Visual content, whether in the form of a picture or a video, has the ability to provoke strong reactions and evoke feelings, affecting attitudes and behaviours (Geise & Baden, 2015). Most content marketing experts prefer visual content, and there is growing scientific evidence for this strategy (Pharr, 2019). According to Davies' report (2014) on the differences between promoted text and image advertisements, image-based advertising (70%) has a higher share of the market than text-based advertising. Users are more likely to reject ads in text format that are classified as sponsored content (78% rejection) (Davies, 2014). Infographics are an example of a type of visual content that succeeds at transmitting complex information, telling stories, and displaying sequential information (Pharr, 2019).

Since visual content, which can evoke several sensations and intensify feelings, is more likely to be interpreted heuristically, it is perhaps simpler to interpret and draw conclusions from, this is especially true for social media users who click through a flood of content rapidly (Brubaker & Wilson, 2018).

Content should be delivered in a mobile-friendly manner, as the rise in mobile internet usage highlights the need for companies to offer content that can be consumed on the go (TrackMaven, 2016). Visually rich content, which contrasts with text-heavy content, can be accessed with a single click and is more conveniently tailored for the smartphone's screens (Pharr, 2019). Because of the broad spectrum of connectivity to mass communication, such as smartphones, that can embrace visual advertising, visual content becomes more relevant for marketers on various platforms (Nikandish, Kheleva, Yin-Fah, & Chuen, 2020).

1.3. Social Networks

As stated by Tomaél, Alcará & Di Chiara (2005) in humanity's history, there are many topics that emerge from certain contexts that are a reflection of society as a whole and the spirit that is lived in that period. One of the current society topics that, in a comprehensive analysis, turns out to be the reflection of it is social networks (Tomaél et al, 2005).

According with Portugal (2007) the first conceptualization of social networks was made in the first half of the 20th century in the field of social and human sciences. However, the authors did not establish a relation between the social networks and the individuals' behaviour that were part of it (Portugal, 2007).

Mercklé (2004) stated that it was only in the second half of the 20th century that the term really gained importance within the sociological community. The concept of the social network was built around two currents of thought: the British and the American (Portugal, 2007).

According to Portugal (2007), the British current of thought had as main concern the situational analysis of restricted groups of individuals while the American approach was focused on quantitative analysis, starting from a structural approach.

As stated by Tiago & Veríssimo (2014), all these paradigms would be changed with the emergence of the digital world; not only would the concept of the social networks have to be rethought, but also the way in which individuals interrelate was completely changed. There was a migration from social relationships to online communities where geographic limits no longer served as barriers to social interaction (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014).

According to Tiago and Veríssimo (2014), the use of social networks provides consumers with a series of benefits, whether it be efficiency, convenience, the large number of product offerings, the impartial opinion of other users regarding certain products/services, and even more competitive prices.

1.3.1. Digital Social networks (Social Media)

According with Chen & Lin (2019), people's desire for interpersonal relationships has been mirrored in the emergence of social media. Internet networking websites also taken social activities to the interactive realm of the internet (Chen & Lin, 2019)

Brands must be present where the interaction takes place, and social media encourages brands and customers to interact in real time, making communication development and management essential for businesses (Platon, 2014).

Marketers use relationship marketing techniques to form long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders, such as consumers (Jacobson, Gruzd & Hernández-García 2020). Social media is frequently used in the private sector to advertise and market goods and services; in the public sector, it is frequently used to exchange information and inspire consumer interaction (Royle and Laing, 2014).

Companies must schedule marketing campaigns based on the needs of various customers; they must consider users' needs ahead of time and learn which goods or services users need in order to plan experiences that leave a lasting impact (Kim and Perdue, 2013). Many businesses have attempted to benefit from social media; as a result, a series of guidelines for the managing of consumers and organizations have been established, as well as companies' social media marketing strategies (Chen & Lin, 2019).

In the sales process, B2B companies use social media for interpersonal relationship-oriented reasons rather than their B2C equivalents (Iankova, Davies, Archer-Brown, Marder & Yau, 2019). Swani, Brown & Milne (2014) identified specific distinctions in the content of B2B and B2C social media marketing on Twitter and Facebook, especially in the degree to which B2B companies have more ties and clues to product details and place a greater emphasis on emotional communication.

1.3.2. Motivations

Since mediated communication in social media websites represents the prevailing values and norms of the culture from which users derive, the reasons driving the usage of each social media platform and social interaction through them may vary throughout cultures (Boyd, 2008). For instance, Lewis & George (2008) found variations between Koreans and Americans in terms of propensity to deception and subjects approached on social media platforms. While Koreans were more likely than Americans to lie about their work, income, and physical features, Americans were more likely to lie about where they resided, their age, and their desires (Lewis & George, 2008) .

In the study conducted by Throuvala, Griffiths, Rennoldson & Kuss (2019) it was revealed that the key motivators for adolescents to use social media have a close relation with the need to be in constant interactivity with their peers, the urge to control relationships and contents posted as well as the construct of the digital social reality.

Brandtzæg & Heim (2009) have included the ability to form new friendships and meet new people as appealing motives for the usage of social media networks, which is seen as simple and obviously welcomed because it is free. The authors also include several explanations of this form of new relationship, including the search for new individuals who are connected to a new city or job area to which the person has migrated, or also searching for university friends with whom the individual has not yet had the chance for personal contact (Brandtzæg & Heim, 2009). Then, as the second most important motive found by Brandtzæg and Heim (2009), there is interaction with already established friends as a way to keep in touch with them.

Waterson (2006), Rheingold (1993), and Preece (2000), on the other hand, suggest that the impetus for participating in various online communities is influenced by factors such as exchanging similarities and needs, encountering others with similar interests, and also the prospect of forming close friendships and mutual aid as a result of shared interests.

Another motivator is the value of a sense of belonging, which, according to Baumeister & Leary (1995), is the cornerstone for the creation of strong and secure relationships. In a similar vein, Sun, Youn, Wu & Kuntaraporn (2006) found that university students' use of social networks for knowledge exchange, amusement, and attachment to social experience, in general, is the product of actions aimed at the consequences of feelings of belonging, more particularly by those who seek new points of view.

According with Muntinga, Moorman & Smit (2011) there are three main motivations related with contributions to brand-related content by the consumers: personal identity; integration and social interaction; entertainment. In this study, Muntinga et. al (2011) stated that the personal identity motivation can be divided in three sub-motivations, those being self-assurance, self-presentation and self-expression; also, the motivation related with integration and social media interaction covers three sub-categories, those being helping, social identity and social interaction; for the entertainment, while the entertainment motivations are related with the enjoyment and relaxation.

1.3.3. Frequency

According with Young (2009), more than half of all Internet users have entered a social network, making this kind of channel one of the most popular ways to create and share content.

Shensa, Escobar-Viera, Sidani, Bowman, Marshal & Primack (2017), conducted a study to verify the frequency of internet usage related with social media (excluding work-related usage) amongst young adults. They discovered that the average young adult (19 to 32 years old) spends 61 minutes per day on social media and visits some of the most popular social media websites 30 times per week.

From 2005 to 2015, the percentage of American adults using social media rose from 7% to 65%, according to Perrin (2015). In 2005, only 12% of young adults (18 to 29 years old) used social media while in 2015 that number rose to 90% (Perrin, 2015). At the same period, among those aged 30-49, there has been a 69-point increase from 8% in 2005 to 77 % in 2015 (Perrin, 2015).

Facebook comes out on top of a list of 11 social media outlets when it comes to being a frequent news source, with around a third (36%) of Americans using it on a regular basis (Shearer & Mitchell, 2020). The second most popular source of news in the United States is YouTube, where 23% of adults get their news on a daily basis and or 15% of adults in the United States, Twitter is their primary source of news (Shearer & Mitchell, 2020).

In a report conducted by Vannucci, Flannery & Ohannessian (2017), that gattered data from 563 emerging adults (18 to 22 years old), it was discovered that in a normal day, participants estimated spending an average of 6.63 hours on social media and males tend to use social media more often than females, on a regular basis.

It is also important to anticipate how the next generation of consumers will act like on social media. In a study conducted by Kelly, Zilanawala, Booker & Sacker (2018), with the average age of participants of 14.3 years old, it was discovered that just 4% of girls reported not using social media, compared to 10% of boys. Over two-fifths of girls used social media for three or more hours a day, compared to one-fifth of boys (43.1% vs 21.9%, respectively).

2. COMMUNICATION PLAN

2.1. Samsys Diagnosis

After defining the methodology for the elaboration of the communication plan, the diagnostic phase follows. For this, it is necessary to do an internal and external analysis.

2.1.1. Internal analysis

A comprehensive internal review is required in order to idealize, execute, and control a communication plan. This process enables the creation of an organizational photograph that allows for a consolidation of knowledge bases about the Samsys microenvironment, resulting in a well-defined approach for executing the communication plan.

The internal analysis included data collection through interviews with Samsys management as well as research gathered through documentation provided by the entity and internet research.

2.1.1.1. Company characterization

Samsys was founded in 1997 by brothers Samuel and Ruben Soares as a small business unit based on hardware. However, the desire to operate in the management software field soon became evident, which resulted in a collaboration with Sage in 1999. Samsys now implements Sage technologies for over 75 percent of its management applications customers.

Samsys is committed to the supply and deployment of Information Systems tailored to the individual needs of each sector and has a close relationship with its partners. The main goal is to increase the efficiency of the services it offers on a continuous basis. It has a cohesive team of up to 50 elements which allows for a full national coverage.

The company's 24-year existence correlates in several respects with the new era of information technology, which coincides with the introduction of the Internet (whose usage has soared since 1994, following the launch of the World Wide Web) and the economic revolutions that resulted.

All this hard work has not gone unnoticed, as it has ensured the company's continued success. Samsys received the “PME Líder 2020” prize, which was developed by IAPMEI in collaboration with Banca and Turismo de Portugal and recognizes businesses with superior economic and financial performance and risk profiles based on the most up-to-date economic metrics.

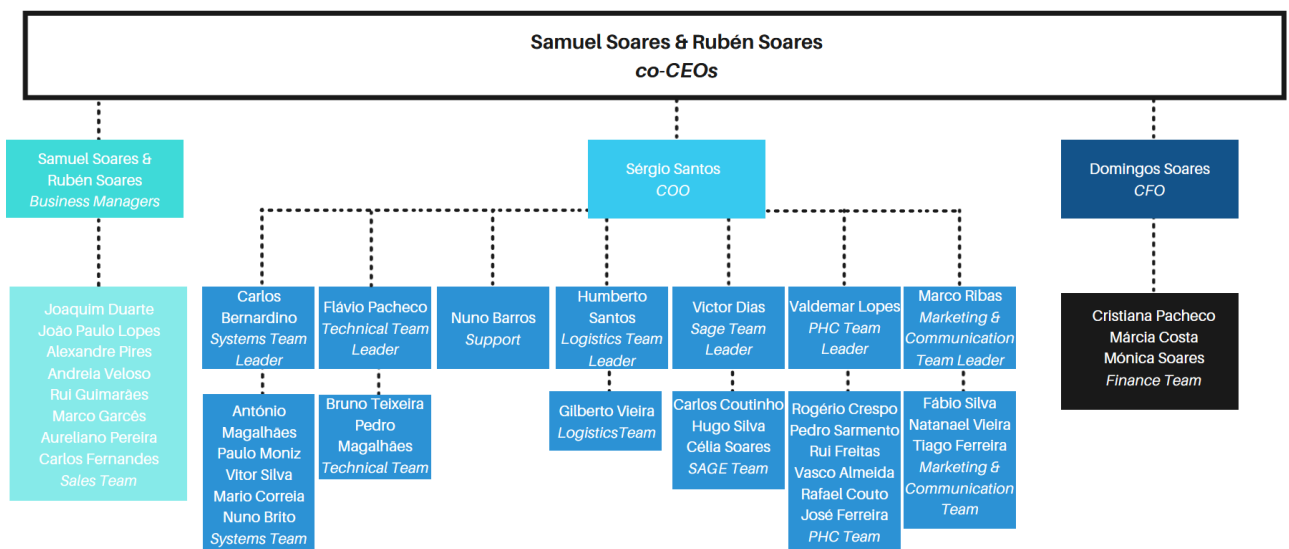
2.1.1.2. Mission, Vision and Values

Samsys' mission is to assist its customers in growing their company's performance and competitiveness through the research, production, and deployment of superior technological solutions that foster mutual growth, creating value for its employees and society as a whole.

The company's vision is to be recognised as the leading information technology consulting firm that helps businesses expand and generate more value.

Samsys decided to express its values through an acronym for "coragem" (courage). The values are: Competency; Objectiveness; Responsibility; Mutual Help; Genuineness; Commitment; Motivation.

2.1.1.3. Organizational Structure



2 Source: Own elaboration

2.1.1.4. Provided services

Samsys is a versatile company, always paying attention to its clients' needs and, therefore, offers a lot of different services.

One of them is Help & Support. Actions are established in these departments to promote proper care and support practices, as well as guidance and information to help customers get the most out of their equipment. When they require assistance as well as maintenance, the Technical Team guarantees that they are in perfect working order or, in more serious circumstances, recommends the most appropriate equipment on the market for the job at hand.

At the Planning department, Samsys affords a staff devoted to supporting and monitoring company's deployments and solutions, with quick and effective support, always presenting the best solutions to its clients.

The creation of internal and external material takes place in the Communication & Marketing department. Whether it's social media, SEO chores, press relations, email marketing, or video marketing, Samsys assists and maintains communication and corporate image. The firm creates complete communication solutions that include everything from written content creation and production to monitoring and analyzing the efficacy of their interactions.

Servers, switches, video surveillance systems, backup systems, continuous power systems, networks and any applications to exploit the hardware component are all represented in the Systems Engineering field. Working in the Information Technology (IT) Consulting and Solutions area, Samsys strives to provide appropriate and unique solutions that may be implemented in the future and help businesses develop. Samsys concentrates its operations in the Systems and Communications area, a privileged field through which to demonstrate the strength of its solutions, that are based on the knowledge and experience of certified professionals in the field of Optimization IT Management, Networks and Communications.

The Development department sets up bespoke development solutions, whether mobile or web applications, all the dynamics of customizing solutions such as for a portal, website, business to customer, business to business or business to employee and e-commerce.

Samsys also provides software consulting by to really well-known programs SAGE and PHC. With this software, the company presents appropriate choice for meeting the demanding needs of medium and big businesses, as they offer ease of use, data analysis power, scalability, and total reliability, as well as strong data analysis capabilities for decision-making.

2.1.1.5. Marketing-Mix

The marketing-mix primarily outlines the factors that enable the company to implement the chosen strategy in order to achieve the set goals.

Because the marketing mix is such an important instrument, it is important to remember that each variable represents a collection of factors/techniques for intervening and communicating with the market.

The marketing-mix is composed of 7 variables: product, process, people, promotion, price, place and physical environment.

The **product** variable, in the Samsys context, translates into a variety of management consulting services such as planning, communication & marketing, systems engineering, IT consulting and software consulting (SAGE and PHC).

For the **process** variable, it differs from service to service, however, there is some transversal guidelines that affect the various departments, those being: direct and constant communication with the client, fastest delivery of services as possible and always IT supported.

As for the **people**, Samsys counts with more than 60 employees across all the departments. However, this variable doesn't end here given the fact that Samsys operates with various partners to ensure the quality of services provided.

For the **promotion** variable Samsys reaches its potential clients through a variety of ways, whether it be through a vast network of contacts or through its presence in the various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn.

The **price** of each service varies according with the necessities of each client. However, Samsys as recently launched three packs of various services for a uniform price. The pricing policy is set according to a value-based strategy. From the customer's perspective, value-based pricing seeks to determine the return created by the product's use. Identification of the target client (their budget, capacity to purchase) and the product and its complexity (its ability to satisfy

customer's objectives) may be used to assess how a consumer perceives product value and the real value they receive.

The price of each pack is according to the services provided, ranging from 400€ to 1200€ (plus monthly fees).

For the **place** variable, Samsys holds operations in two separate offices, one being in Ermesinde (headquarters) and the other in Lisbon. The second office was created to ensure the fast delivery of provided services.

For the **physical environment**, Samsys operates in a two-store building (Ermesinde) which stands as a working space for all the departments.

2.1.2. External Analysis

2.1.2.1. Sector Analysis and Characterization

This analysis was carried out using FEACO, the largest consultancy association in Europe, which represents a third of total turnover in Europe and hence offers itself as the most comprehensive database for management consultancy analysis.

As a result, the European market study is based on the figures supplied by it, which are regarded as representative of the entire European market for the years 2019-2020 (there isn't yet analysis for the years 2020-2021).

The European panel trend has been significantly impacted by a relative slowing of the growth tendency, primarily in Germany and France. Hungary, Romania, and Denmark are all seeing rapid development. Covid-19 had a significant economic impact in 2020, upsetting existing trends and making any evaluation more difficult.

As per early statistics, Covid-19 had a substantial influence on MC turnover, decreasing the European panel industry turnover by 6.2 percent. The MC turnover has decreased significantly in most countries, often between 5% and 10%, with Slovenia and Spain being among the most hit. Meanwhile, a few nations, like the United Kingdom, Romania, and Greece, have seen a rise in MC turnover.

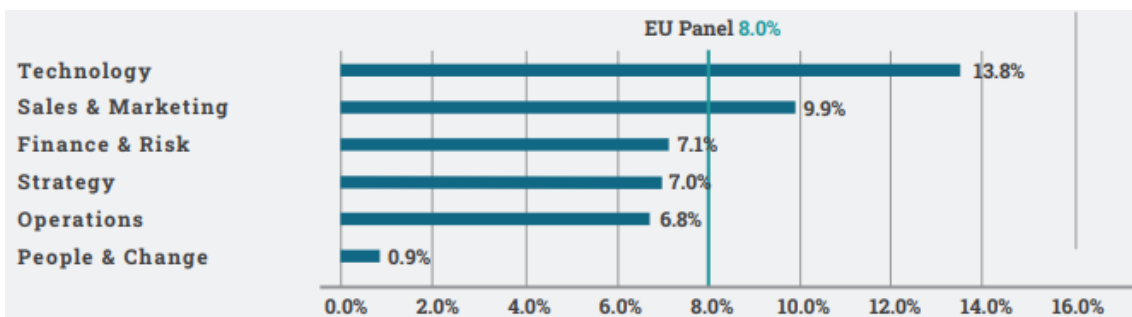
| COUNTRY | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Yearly CAGR (2017-19) | 2020 |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------|--------|
| Austria | 12.3% | 12.9% | 11.3% | 12.2% | n.a. |
| Denmark | 7.9% | 5.7% | 10.8% | 8.1% | -10.0% |
| Finland | 4.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.4% | -10.0% |
| France | 10.2% | 12.3% | 8.2% | 10.2% | -10.0% |
| Germany | 8.6% | 7.3% | 5.7% | 7.2% | -7.5% |
| Greece | 7.1% | 9.3% | 13.7% | 10.0% | 3.0% |
| Hungary | 6.3% | 8.8% | 22.3% | 12.2% | -10.0% |
| Italy | 7.8% | 8.6% | 7.8% | 8.1% | -8.9% |
| Romania** | n.a. | 4.2% | 12.0% | 8.0% | 10,0% |
| Slovenia | 1.2% | 7.5% | 0.0% | 2.8% | -12.5% |
| Spain | 8.0% | 6.5% | 5.9% | 6.8% | -11.0% |
| UK*** | 8.0% | 7.0% | 7.0% | 7.3% | 2.5% |
| European panel* | 8.4% | 8.3% | 7.3% | 8.0% | -6.2% |

3 Source: Report Feaco 2019-2020

The digitalization has fueled the expansion of the Management Consulting business in recent years, and technology consulting has really been highly crucial during the pandemic. Sales and marketing consulting also had a notice grow during these years.

During the pandemic, people and change were more important, owing to new modes of working, although there was no obvious and consistent pattern across nations.

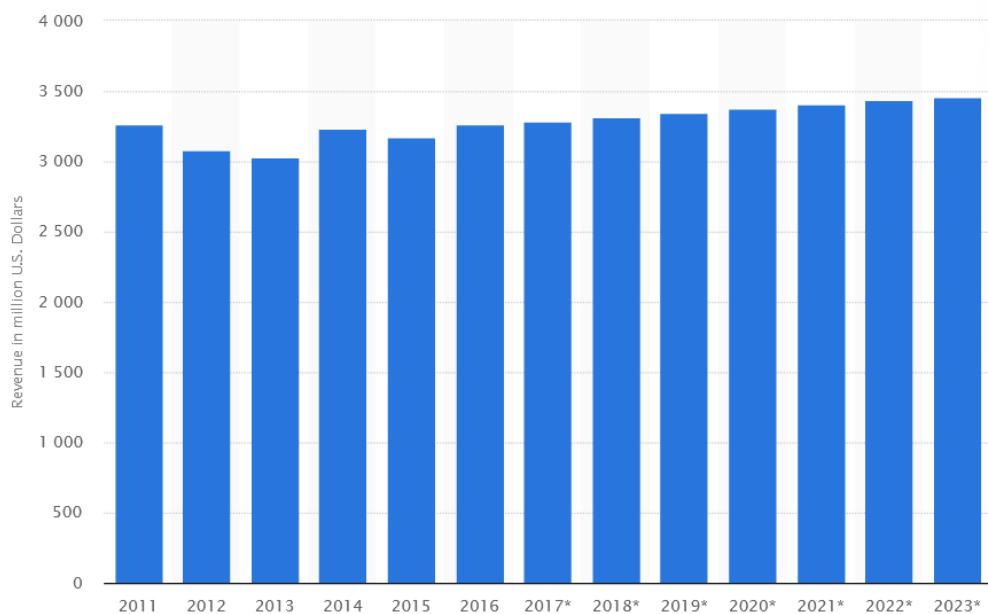
In 2019, the Service Sectors, namely Energy & Utilities and Telecom & Media, have been pushing industrial growth. Because several service sectors, were less affected by the pandemic, they have maintained, or even expanded, their consulting assignments in 2020, but many industrial companies have not.



4 Source: Report Feaco 2019-2020

Because of the existence of strategically significant markets such as the United Kingdom, the European consulting market still is one of the most powerful in the world. However, in recent years, economies such as Portugal's have grown significantly in importance in the European and global contexts.

During the period 2018-2023, the Portuguese business market and other management consultancy activities is projected to grow a total income of over 20 billion US dollars, up from 3.3 billion US dollars in 2018. With around 1.8 billion dollars in revenue in 2018, computer consulting represents an important component of the industry's revenue.



5 Source: Statista

As a result of the analysis, the company should be able to expand its work capabilities and services offer to international markets. As well as orienting its services to the needs and preferences of its customers, which is critical to the success in the consulting market.

2.1.2.2. PESTEL Analysis

When doing a strategic analysis, it is important to consider the company's influence and interactions with its surrounds.

The PESTEL Analysis looks at six different settings - political, economic, sociocultural, technological, environmental, and legal - to determine whether there are any signals of change that might provide a threat or an opportunity to the organization.

Political-Legal context

Given the private nature of the organisation, it is acceptable to approach the political and legal variables as one. In order to contextualize Samsys' work, it is necessary to comprehend the current national and European politics: despite a minority government, government stability exists in Portugal owing to the governance congruence between a participative president of the republic and a pragmatic prime minister; and many questions at the European and international level.

Because Samsys is a private corporation, it is not susceptible to direct political action or pressure; nonetheless, it is vulnerable to economic and fiscal changes that governments may impose. As a result, it is critical to examine the political context in which it operates, particularly at the national level. Local elections are scheduled, which might result in political changes such as tax regulation. In this regard, it is critical to pay close attention to market fluctuations.

As a result, national politics can be described as stable and reactive to developments in other economies. Companies like Samsys rely on the sense of governance unity and the increasingly favourable consequences of economic and fiscal policies aimed toward economic development.

Economical context

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy determines the present economic situation. According to IMF statistics (2021) issued in April, the world economy is predicted to expand 6% in 2021 and 4.4 percent in 2022, following a loss of about 3% of GDP in 2020. Nonetheless, the economic downturn in 2020 was not as severe as predicted in prior studies, thanks to stronger-than-expected growth in the second half of 2020, with most nations expanding after adjusting to the new reality forced by the health crisis.

According to February statistics from the National Statistics Institute (INE, 2021), GDP in Portugal dropped 7.6% in 2020, which is a record low. Following a 2.2% GDP increase in 2019, the decline in 2020 reflects the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Portugal.

Following a severe global economic recession in 2020, predictions clearly indicate to future growth. Since previously stated in the market study, the management consultancy sector is anticipated to continue growing in the future years, as, while it was impacted in 2020, the effects were minor in comparison to other industries.

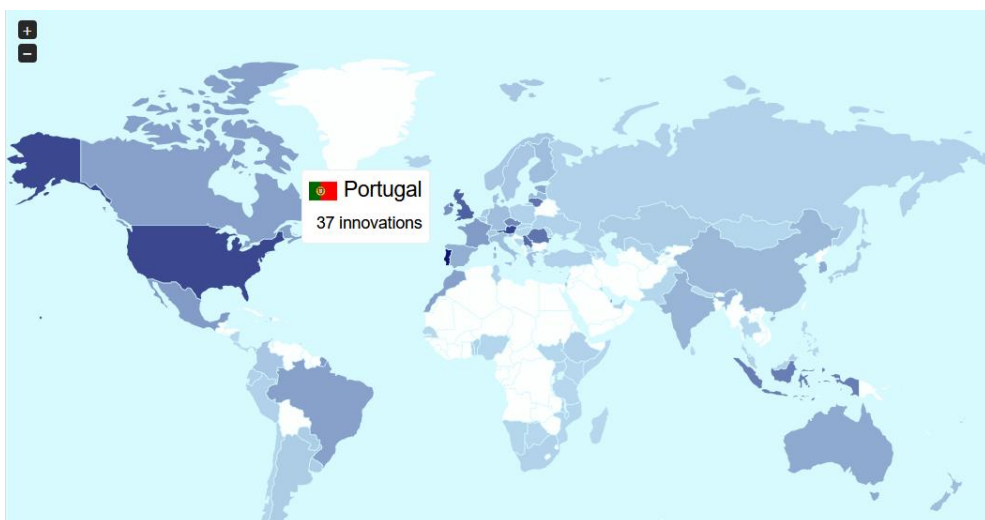
Sociocultural context

In most situations, businesses in the b2b sector have fewer customers. Because Samsys' clients are largely businesses, analysing the social issues that impact the organization in this situation is challenging.

However, undoubtedly, consulting companies' social approach and its capacity to offer services remotely instead of in the office has rescued the sector from collapse. This permitted projects that might have been terminated otherwise to proceed. Limitations on social activity, as well as their direct and indirect effects on economic activity, are likely to fade away with time. We can state with certainty that the crisis, at least as we know it, will come to an end as more people are immunized each day.

Technological context

In terms of finding answers to the crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic highlights and encourages many of the technological improvements of businesses and the national scientific system evolution. The Organization for Trade and Economic Development (OECD) put Portugal in the vanguard of creative solutions in the battle against COVID-19 on May 2, 2020,



6 Source: OCDE - Innovative response tracker

confirming this national reality, with 37 innovations out of 463 presented, as seen in the next figure.

Samsys is focused on increasing service quality, so that, in addition to streamlining the whole process of designing and creating new solutions, technology can also be used to improve the quality of existing services. As a result of technological advances, Samsys can provide the market unique solutions at cheaper costs and faster delivery periods than currently available, all while maintaining superior quality.

The utilization of technological factors and the automation of the supply chain provide a tremendous ally considering Samsys' objectives in terms of service innovation connected with projects such as "Zapsys." In this regard, Samsys should make significant investments in the utilization of technological factors.

Environmental context

Environmental concern has become ingrained in our daily routines and is beginning to influence our actions. Samsys leaves an environmental footprint as a result of its operations, and it is up to the firm to reduce this footprint and follow appropriate environmental policies, such as trash separation and encouraging the use of digital documents.

In terms of the company's operations, betting on the optimization of energy use, which is linked to the rising sensitivity of people to this fact, would be a significant asset.

2.1.2.3. Competitors

We are currently experiencing an increase in b2b competition, as well as increasingly informed and demanding clients. The most efficient, well-organized enterprises with a well-defined business path in terms of supply, market, and target audience thrive in this environment.

When looking at the consulting business as a whole, firms like Aventura, PMO Consulting, Deloitte, Everis, Novabase, Accenture, KPMG, Capgemini and Reditus might be considered competitors of Samsys.

However, because Samsys is a small business, I'll discuss its three primary competitors, who are also small businesses in the technology, marketing, and business management consulting fields.

The first is Aixadi, a consulting firm that provides tailored worldwide accounting, tax, and payroll solutions to clients in more than 50 countries. Their cloud-based IT platform, staff, and approach are all meant to work as an extension of the finance department of their clients. They also have a MultiCountry IT platform that allows multinational entities' accounting, tax, and payroll data to be accessed by their clients regardless of their location. This is a significant opponent since they not only compete on a national level, but also internationally.

Another one is Procensus, an IT consulting company provides a range of services to assist customers in optimizing and reorganizing their businesses, operations, and information technology. They focus on presenting three main services: Strategy and Operations, Technology implementation and Digital. The company offers a variety of services to help its clients optimize and restructure their businesses and operations. Following the industry's best methodological practices as well as technical advancements enables businesses to improve their performance and compliance.

The last one is QSP – Marketing Consulting works in the area of Strategic Marketing, Branding and Consumption Consulting. Through studies and market research, ensures a better performance of organizations, their brands, and their products and services in the areas of Strategic Marketing, Branding, and Consumption Consulting. QSP delivers solutions to the market based on rigorous analysis and procedures that give inventive and effective tactics, using the latest and innovative methodologies. The major focus is on the continuous search for solutions that are tailored to the demands of its customers in order to provide the finest guidance in their marketing decisions and the effective creation of value. It represents Neurons, Inc. in Neuromarketing solutions for Portugal, in addition to numerous market research and strategy solutions. It hosts the most important Management and Marketing Conference in Europe - the QSP SUMMIT – every year and produces the magazine “Marcas que Marcam”, which is based on Portugal's largest brand awareness study. QSP's services are geared on implementing plans that maximize the profitability of various company ventures, with strategies tailored to each sectorial reality and market, both domestically and internationally.

Samsys has paid close attention to competitors, like these three companies, analysing their strengths to learn from them and identifying their flaws to overtake them.

2.2. SWOT Analysis

There is fierce rivalry among consulting companies to obtain and retain customers, and there are several factors that influence a client's decision to hire one firm over another. As a result, it is beneficial for consulting companies to evaluate the market and their performance on a frequent basis.

Samsys, by being a consulting company, have this need for always be aware of the market/competition around it. The SWOT analysis is one method for assessing the company competitive market position. SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Because there are non-controllable and controllable aspects, respectively, that must be taken into account in the company's management, this form of analysis allows the firm to be placed at a level of comparison between its external condition and its internal organization.

STRENGTHS

- Full-time marketing and communication team with advanced design and technological skills;
- Experience in online various digital platforms;
- Good reputation of the company in the industry;
- Innovative solutions that meet the needs of the costumers.

WEAKNESSES

- Absence of marketing automation;
- Few views and subscribers on digital platforms;
- Low engagement rate on digital platforms;
- Lack of good quality video content.



THREATS

- Strong competition;
- Lack of time efficiency;
- Easiness for competitors to copy the provided services.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Space for extra development of the digital platforms;
- Reduce costs for the implementation of the provided services;
- Increasing need for efficiency amongst targeted audience;
- Strategic partnerships.

7 Source: Own elaboration

In order to provide clear policies that could be implemented in the organization, a dynamic SWOT analysis must also be addressed.

Strengths and Opportunities policies

Given the fact the Samsys have full-time marketing team composed of highly skilled professionals, it is only suited that the time invested in the company's social media platforms is higher. A schedule of posts should be elaborated with attention to special dates and important events in the industry.

Also, the increasing need for efficiency amongst Samsys' clients allied with the ability to generate innovative market solutions translates into a clear opportunity path for the development and investment in services like Vencsys and Zapzys.

Strengths and Threats policies

Given the fact that Vencys and Zapzys business model is easily copied by the competitors, it is important for the marketing department to experiment and test new business models and new ways not only to reach the customer but also to monetise Samsys services in the best way possible.

Weaknesses and Opportunities policies

Firstly, the company should appoint a community manager inside the marketing and communications department, his responsibilities would be much related with the interaction on social media platforms, support and answer any questions presented by the users.

The Samsys' YouTube channel seems to be the digital presence with more space to grow. In order to boost user engagement and assert Samsys as a trustful and respected organisation in its industry, a video series or a podcast can be created with focus on technology, business or leadership.

Weaknesses and Threats policies

With the introduction of marketing automation in various processes, time efficiency can be achieved. Tasks like online campaigns management can be very time consuming and with the help of automation, the marketing department, can have a better use of its time.

2.3. Strategy and Implementation

2.3.1. Services

With the launch of two new services, Samsys proposed a development of a communication plan for both of them. The two services are Zapzys and Vencys.

Zapzys is an E-Commerce and ERP platform integration solution (management and invoicing software). Zapzys enables the client to save time by integrating his online store with his ERP.

Samsys integrates the client's business in WordPress WooCommerce, Shopify, or Magento using the Zapzys solution, and ensures that the client's management and invoicing are connected with ERP softwares such as PHC CS (Corporate, Advanced, Enterprise), Sage (50c,

100c, X3), Primavera, or Eticadata. All the operations that the client does in their E-Commerce are available in their management and invoicing software, and vice versa.

This solution allows the customer to eliminate data input duplication and related errors while maintaining complete control over their business: pricing adjustments, product updates, stock availability, and images. By providing these solutions, the client ends up saving a lot of precious time that can be used in other areas of its business.

In order to reach different types of clients and necessities, Samsys decided to create three levels of price tags and its respectively solutions.

The level one costs 400€ plus 20€/month and allows the client to always keep their product catalogue up to date, automatically synchronize their stock and manage and maintain product pictures as well as product families/categories. The level two costs 800€ plus 40€/month and gives all the advantages present on level one and adds the feature to integrate orders in the e-commerce website. The level three costs 1200€ plus 60€/month and gives all the advantages present in the previous levels and allows clients to update the status of their orders from their ERP to their E-Commerce, as well as particular information about their customers.

Vencsys is an automatic billing notifier that allows the client to alert his own customers who have expired (or are about to expire) documents by sending notifications through email or SMS without requiring human intervention. It may be simply integrated into any Windows management software (PHC, Sage 50c, Sage 100c, Primavera v9 and Eticadata) or SQL Server database.

Vencsys' most apparent feature is delivering the billing document email message (overdue or not overdue), this email is sent to the customer contact, which is defined in the customer record. If the client anticipates sending a large number of emails per day, it is feasible to specify how many seconds a new email is sent in the program to avoid the email server being flagged as a spammer.

The client may also send an SMS message as a notice if he has the option to send SMS. The program allows the client to customize the indication of when a message is delivered, the kind of communication (email or SMS), and the message text.

Besides these features, Vencsys has some more advantages like exclude customers from sending messages; indication of types of documents to be considered; submission of

operation summary; recovery of unsent messages due to errors; custom test mode; force the creation and sending of messages.

The normal price of Vencsys is of 630€ plus 15€/month, however, as a launch campaign, the initial price was dropped to half, being 315€ plus 16€/month.

2.3.2. Goals (Financial and Marketing)

The goal of this communications plan is to promote the services across the country. Due to the fact that these are new services, a combined gain of 500 new firms is expected within a year.

According with the ease to sell each service (and respectively levels) and the needs of the market, a revenue distribution of 60% to Zapzys (30% to level one, 20% to level two and 10% to level three) and 40% to Vencsys seems acceptable. This translates into the following revenue values: 45 000€ for Zapzys level one, 80 000€ for Zapzys level two, 60 000€ for Zapzys level 3 and 63 000€ for Vencsys. Adding all these values, we end up with a prospection of 248 000€.

As for the marketing goals, it is intended to increase the organization's visibility, achieve a bigger user engagement on the digital space in less than a year, improve the webpage and content quality and increase brand awareness and communication by 90%.

To increase the user engagement on the social media platforms, various actions should be conducted, such as increasing the quality of the published content by focusing on delivering specialized posts that meet the needs of the audience and that can generate discussion among the community. By doing this, the company promotes the exchange of ideas and interactions that culminate in a more engaged and prone to complete a purchase audience.

In order to achieve a better-quality website, a full digital scan must be made and a full renewal of it should be done. This action will lead to a faster browsing and to a easier conversion funnel for the costumer. After the renewal of the website based on user experience good practices, bounce rate and average time per visit should be closely monitored in order to assure an optimized navigation for the user.

The main focus for increasing the digital presence should be of delivering more and with more quality posts across all the social media platforms as well as increasing the number of marketing e-mails delivered.

All these actions must be conducted by the marketing and communications team, according with each individual's skills and capabilities.

2.3.3. Segmentation and Target Audience

Given the specialized nature of the services, the target audience falls within the B2B market and includes customers that value continuous improvement as a tool for operational efficiency. Due to their higher propensity to work with dispersed teams, service communication will be addressed at small/medium sized national companies.

Within organizations, leaders of continuous improvement departments, as well as CEOs and general directors in the case of companies with centralized decision-making authority, must be addressed. Individuals in this category have a strong analytical orientation, as they respond more rapidly to numerical stimuli such as the goal of efficiency, productivity, and decrease of execution times, among other things, which is the form of the message to be delivered.

Given the business to business (B2B) nature of Samsys' provided services, the target audience is very much related with people who currently have a decision-making role in certain organisations. Taking this into account, the following audiences are targetable for Samsys: young entrepreneurs; professionals in management; individuals who work at the top of a company's management (partners, managers, shareholders, administrators).

To provide a better understanding of the targetable audiences, two buyer personas were defined as follows:



EDUARDO
OWNER OF AN OLD COFFE HOUSE, 53 YEARS

BIO
António is the owner of Arcada Coffe, a establishment founded 22 years ago and very known by the locals in Espinho.

GOALS
Although he has the establishment full of customer, he wants to simplify and facilitate a very diverse range of accounting tasks.

PAIN POINTS
Worries that his company is acting on outdated information.
Doesn't have accounting information in one single platform.

TECHNOLOGIES
Works with an outdated stock software in his coffe house.

PERSONALITY:

- Social (7)
- Passionated (9)
- Dynamic (8)



RITA
FINANCE DIRECTOR, 34 YEARS

BIO
10 years after joining a company, Rita achieved the position of financial director.

GOALS
She wants to make the most out of the investments her firm has already made while still keeping expenditures and the budget under control.

PAIN POINTS
To ensure that the sales projections are correct, the sales manager must provide a weekly sales report, however, according to the sales manager, generating these reports takes a long time.
Does not want to spend too much money on new technologies.

TECHNOLOGIES
The company only uses the SAGE software but only for accountancy.

PERSONALITY:

- Social (6)
- Passionated (10)
- Dynamic (5)

9 Source: Own elaboration

2.3.4. Communication Strategy

The first stage in the communication plan will be to expand on the existing Samsys customer connection. These two services are extremely beneficial in the activities performed by Samsys consultants in monitoring the continuous improvement actions being executed since they are very focused towards the deployment of software tools.

As a result, in the initial phase, communication must be addressed to these consultants in order to familiarize them with the product and its possibilities, allowing them to utilize it with their clients. Customers must grasp the benefits of using the tools in addition to conveying the services to consultants, thus communication must be geared to them as well, so that they desire to continue using the tools even after the project and consultant assistance has ended.

Social Media Platforms

Social media platforms are one of the low-cost and effective communication activities where we may communicate with consumers and potential customers using numerous tools that simplify communication for businesses. Social media has evolved into a low-cost, high-return method of communication. Social networks are useful not just for making personal connections, but also for effectively communicating with the market.

Samsys is recommended to use a variety of social media platforms to produce content and effectively monitor the market. The use of social media must be done properly, and the communications and marketing department must oversee it.

The firm must use the following social media platforms to communicate effectively: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Youtube. In essence, Samsys should provide news and events on social media, as well as useful information for customers and future customers (content marketing), the best methods to use the Zapzys and Vencsys platforms, and platform improvements.

Blog

As previously said, one of the most often utilized techniques for building trust and renown in a product is through the transmission of content and subjects of interest and utility to the target audience (content marketing). By gaining knowledge from the firm, this audience builds a good opinion of the brand and increases its credibility.

Interactivity will be created on the Samsys blog by sharing news from the field of continuous improvement, case studies of successful companies, links to webinars, always-up-to-date articles of interest, and the possibility of publishing comments and articles submitted by blog readers, subject to prior review.

Users will get e-mails with changes to the blog's news through RSS Feeds, in the format of a newsletter with a pre-defined design. Samsys may obtain feedback from users, demonstrate

interest in reader opinions, spread information about the company’s related subjects, and represent itself as an authority in them by using this blog. The blog facilitates the transfer of the company's corporate culture by sharing its ideals, as well as improved search engine positioning through keyword definition.

Email Marketing

It is critical to emphasize that e-mail marketing is a simple, quick, secure, and confidential method of communication, but most importantly, it is bidirectional, establishing a relationship between the consumer and the firm, with a written record and the ability to send asynchronous messages.

This activity is connected to CRM; in this way, a database may be created, and for email marketing, it comes very handy that Samsys already has a list of clients and potential customers.

2.3.5. Control & Calendar

A control should be applied to the set of planned activities to enable for evaluation of their progress. As a result, a collection of indicators capable of evaluating and placing activities in respect to the goals they want to achieve was developed.

| Action | KPI | Goal |
|--------------------|---|------|
| Social media posts | Post likes increase over time (%) (User engagement) | 90% |
| | Comments over time (%) (User engagement) | 100% |
| | Click through rate (User engagement) | 30% |
| | Number of posts per week (by channel) (Digital presence) | 4 |

| | | |
|-----------------|--|-------|
| | <p>Conversion rate</p> <p>(Action performance)</p> | 5% |
| Blog | <p>Unique visitors to website by channel (per week)</p> <p>(Brand awareness)</p> | 25 |
| | <p>Bounce rate</p> <p>(Page quality)</p> | 5% |
| | <p>Average time per visit</p> <p>(Page quality)</p> | 1 min |
| | <p>Number of leads per week</p> <p>(Financial)</p> | 10 |
| Email Marketing | <p>Number of emails delivered (per week)</p> <p>(Digital presence)</p> | 100 |
| | <p>Spam complaints (per week)</p> <p>(Content quality)</p> | < 10 |
| | <p>Conversions (per week)</p> <p>(Financial)</p> | 5 |

In terms of schedule, the goal is to implement the communication plan from 2020 to 2021, therefore the actions will begin in November 2020. These, on the other hand, need forward planning in order to be worked on and conveyed as efficiently as possible. As a result, work on the various activities should begin in November.

It's possible that certain dates will alter.

| | nov/21 | dec/21 | jan/22 | feb/22 | mar/22 | apr/22 | may/22 | jun/22 | jul/22 | aug/22 | sep/22 | oct/22 |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Social Media posts | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Interactive colaboration | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Monitoring analytics | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Email Marketing | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Blog posts | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CRM | | | | | | | | | | | | |

The actions in yellow should be conducted by Marco Ribas, in green by Natanael Vieira and in blue by Fabio Silva.

Both social media posts and email marketing actions, must be conducted on a weekly basis with no less than three social media posts per week and, at least, one marketing email per week.

The interactive collaboration must be made on a daily basis in order to achieve a bigger user engagement and achieve a sense of community amongst the followers on the different platforms.

The monitoring of the analytics must also be made, not only for social media, but also for the blog in order to assure that the customer journey is as smooth and optimized as possible.

The blog posts mentioned in the table refer to content marketing post. It is preferred to publish one good and with really useful information blog post every two months, than simply unloading lots of shallow content. Besides this, it is important to keep the blog updated weekly with news and content related to the field of business and with the company.

3. CONCLUSION

The major conclusions concerning the Communication plan established for Samsys are presented in this chapter. It was possible to understand the characteristics of the field of operation of Samsys' Marketing and Communication department appreciated by users of these services after a theoretical approach to Digital Marketing, Content Marketing, and Social Networks.

Despite the competition, because these are services with innovative solutions directed at the industrial sector, it was recognized that the product's strategy pointed to a niche approach, with a strong need for brand development as well as finding the right market positioning capable of demonstrating its unique value proposition.

The proposed strategies mostly centered on digital tools that were either free or could be built by the company's own resources. The recommended activities include different actions, such as building the brand's online presence, projecting the product's exposure in corporate settings, and monitoring the product user through the platform's own tools.

There is no clear data on purchasers and users because these services are still in the early stages of development. This research should be performed later, once the company has attracted customers and have a better understanding of their profile. This sort of study should be performed on a regular basis over time so that its evolution can be tracked.

One significant restriction is the lack of a marketing plan and corresponding strategic guidelines to serve as the foundation for the creation of this communication plan. As a result of conversations with the Marketing and Communication department's team leader, certain assumptions about strategic orientations and brand positioning were formed.

Because this is a professional project, the developed plan will be given to Samsys' management, who will decide whether or not to implement it, which is why no comprehensive information regarding the implementation has been provided. Developing this project has shown to be a valuable asset, both in terms of its practical component and use in the real world, as well as the further development of the communication area.

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