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COMMERCIAL STRATEGIES AND EXPANSION OF B2B PARTNERSHIPS IN THE LANGUAGE TEACHING SECTOR: A CASE STUDY OF WALL STREET ENGLISH

Internship report to obtain Master’s in Commercial Management and Marketing

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Declaração de honra

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Diana Alexandra Dias da Costa

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my parents and sister who always made sure I pursued what I wanted and supported me along the way.

To all my friends who followed this journey and gave me words of encouragement at all times.

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A thank you to professor Kevin Hemsworth for the support, guidance and availability.

RESUMO

Este trabalho surge no âmbito da conclusão do mestrado em Direção Comercial e Marketing no Instituto Superior de Administração e Gestão, com intuito em analisar as estratrégias utilizadas para efetuar parcerias B2B pelo Wall Street English. O objetivo principal passa por aferir a comunicação entre os vários departamentos envolvidos assim como as ferramentas que utilizam.

Através de uma revisão literária foram abordados temas com relevância para um mundo de empresas B2B que demonstrou relevância na elaboração de entrevistas aplicadas dentro da empresa de forma a obter uma perspetiva interna. Com a abordagem qualitativa usada foram obtidos os resultados aos objetivos estabelecidos.

É verificado que existem algumas necessidades de melhoria no processo atualmente usado pela empresa, visto a discordância em certas ferrramentas utilizadas. De forma geral, através de o relatório elaborado foram descobertas novas formas para o sucesso da empresa através das necessidades expressadas pelos colaboradores.

Palavras- chave: Marketing B2B, Customer Relationship Management, Parcerias B2B

ABSTRACT

This work is part of the conclusion of the Master's Degree in Commercial Management and Marketing at Instituto Superior de Administração e Gestão, with the aim of analyzing the strategies used by Wall Street English to make B2B partnerships. The main objective is to assess the communication between the various departments involved, as well as the tools they use.

Through a literature review, themes relevant to the world of B2B companies were addressed, which proved usefullness in the preparation of interviews applied within the company in order to obtain an internal perspective. With the qualitative approach used, the results of the established objectives were obtained.

It seems clear that there is opportunity for improvement for improvement in the currently process currently in place in the company, as some tools show to be inappropriate. In general, the present report reveals has revealed new ways for the company to succeed through by giving answers and satisfying the needs expressed by the employees.

Keywords: Marketing B2B, Customer Relationship Management, B2B Partnerships

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAE – Cambridge in Advance English

CPE – Cambridge Profiency Exam

FCE – First Certificate Exam

IELTS – International English Language Testing System

PET – Preliminary English Test

WSE – Wall Street English

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1. INTRODUCTION

In order to conclude the master's degree, performing an internship was determined as the adequaate way to apply the adquired knowledge of the first year in a practical and professional scenario. Therefore, Wall Street English's marketing department presented itself as the best option to undergo an intership. The intern was requested to carry out the internship in Porto supporting the team located in Lisbon.

The intern became in charge of the B2B partnerships, as there was no-one in the company assigned for this job. Therefore, the internships focused mainly on the analysis of partnerships, and the effectiveness of the internal articulation of these partners within the company. To determine and find the answers to the main goal, a qualitative methodological approach was used.

The interviews were conducted to those who were involved in the B2B process and throught them it was possible to gather insightful information regarding the company and the work method used.

This report is divided 6 chapters: (i) an introduction and explanation of the work as well as the main goals; (ii) internal and external analysis highlighting the most important aspects; (iii) the theorical and scientific framework, referring to the topics relevant to the report such as B2B marketing, customer satisfaction, B2B retention strategies, customer relationship management and CRM in B2B market; (iv) refeerence to the methodology applied and how it was played out.The same chapter also includes the analysis of the interviews, the activities carried out in the internship as well as the contribution for the organization; (v) insights on the report and the internship; (vi) lastly, the conclusion is presented.

2. Technical and Scientific Framework

2.1 B2B marketing

The concept of business to business (B2B) is directly related to the marketing and selling products or services from one company to another.

According to Kotler et al., (2020), the Business to Business (B2B), can be described as business market. According to Brennan et al. (2011), in this market relationships are made with other companies, which are their customers, as opposed to the Business to Consumer (B2C) market where the customer is the final consumer.

In a today's world where everything has become more digital and inevitably became part of B2B, it makes mandatory to have a more dynamic approach and therefore technological innovation is essential for a company's success and performance (Lin et al., 2020). Companies have gathered that by including B2B marketing in their work have gained many benefits and advantages in their business. By using all the resources and attending to all the needs of the market, they are able to segment it, developing new strategies accordingly which leads to the ultimate goal of a company, bringing the customer satisfaction to a higher level (Mora Cortez & Hidalgo, 2022).

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2017) in B2B companies the customer journey involves many factors so it can be longer and segmented into several stages which means it also takes a prolonged period of time. The journey starts by identifying the problem, searching for the information, evaluating alternatives, and finally, making the decision. When it comes to the purchasing process it is generally more complex, due to not being a single customer but a company it involves a lot more people who are focusing on factors such as performance (Cannon & Perreault, 1999).

It is defined by some that the core of B2B is to maintain the good relationship with the customers, being the only way to keep partnerships between both (Raišienė & Raišys, 2022).

Since relationships are such an important factor in a B2B strategy, Hutt and Speh (2002) point out how there is a new phase of the B2B marketing where it is extremely key to maintain and manage the relationships with effectiveness. With the market now being more competitive it shows once again how much a good relationship with the consumer is needed, making companies go from a transactional focus to a relational one, adapting to the current needs of the market (Grönroos, 1994). According to Payne and Frow (2005), the market now has several factors which can directly or indirectly influence a company's ability to obtain and retain customers.

2.1.1 Customer satisfaction in a B2B context

Customer satisfaction is influenced throughout the sales process, from before the sales starts where they set their expectations of products to after the purchase where they expect the best resolution of any problems or complaints. At each of these stages, customer satisfaction depends on if their expectations are met, both before and after the purchasing process (Eggart & Ulaga, 2002).

Zolkiewski et al. (2017), point out that there is a difference in measuring the customer's satisfaction in a B2B market and in a B2C market given that the consumer is completely different, which means there are some challenges for organizations operating in B2B.

When observing the relationships that exist in B2B markets, it is clear that the corporate purchasing process is the main differentiating characteristic between B2B and B2C markets, and that organizations processed with purchases based on certain aspects such as justification, risk and duration (Bunn, 1993).

B2B relationships are not consistent, they usually involve many people, leading to go through many different stages and process suffering changes along the way and end up taking place over a long period of time (Webster & Wind, 1972). In a organization world where there are many competitors. It is very important to make sure that the existing relationships are being well taken care of and with that making sure that it is given the right importance to trust, satisfaction and loyalty (Rhee et al., 2014).

Satisfaction, according to Akrout (2014), is the final percepction that one makes after purchase which then can be used to evaluate the service provided. Thus, the complexity of the products and services traded in these markets, as well as the long-term nature of commercial relationships, reflect the high importance of these relationships being effective and satisfactory (Chumpitaz Caceres & Paparoidamis, 2007).

Satisfaction has a major impact on whether or not someone decides to renew a contract and therefore it is very important not only to the company but also the customer (Visentin & Scarpi, 2012).

Satisfied customers are usually more likely to maintain the relationship, influencing their future purchasing behavior, but also of friends and people they know which can lead to more customers in the future, according to Peppers and Rogers (2017). The authors also mention that customers who develop trust with their suppliers tend to continue these relationships, as it reduces uncertainty and vulnerability in their choices. Aityassine (2022) mentions how a customer's satisfaction can then cause a positive impact on a customer loyalty to the company. Customer loyalty has a completly different definition from customer satisfaction. How ever these two can be found linked with each other, without satisfaction there is not a possibility for loyalty (Dam & Dam, 2021)

Customer satisfaction is the ultimate confirmation that the company is offering a good product or service. It also allows the company to obtain a critical opinion that can lead to an improvement of the service (Sudiyono et al., 2022). It can be described as an essential aspect to define if a company is successful (Bupu et al., 2023).

Nowadays, some companies also find a way to connect with their customers through the digital world, being in contact in real time, which gives them better chance of reaching the customers satisfaction (Awad et al., 2022). It allows to establishes a closer relationship with the client which entails a better relationship quality (Utami et al., 2023).

Kotler and Keller (2018), also mention that a satisfied client is someone who will be loyal for longer, buy more frequently and pay less attention to the competitors.

2.1.2 B2B customer retention strategies

Customer retention is the ability to develop long-term relationships with customers (Buttle, 2008). According to Ahmad and Buttle (2001), customer retention can be seen as the opposite of losing customers.

So that a customer may express intention of reusing a certain provider's service, they must be satisfied with the services rendered, and it must convey feelings of trust and added value (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002).

Normally, in purchases made between businesses there is a bigger exchange of relevant information, where as compared to those made between business and final customer, as the information is limited to the essential. It is therefore essential that the marketeer in the B2B context provides a level of knowledge and expertise in interactions with their potential client (Yolyan, 2019).

Customers see retention as a will to keep returning to a certain business and acquiring their products and services on an ongoing basis (Zineldin, 2006), while for a company it means doing everything to keep the relationship with customers for as long as possible, making sure it is solified (Buttle & Maklan, 2015). Customer satisfaction comes right along with customer loyalty, which is a company's goal to maintain the relationship with their customers (Iqbal et al., 2023).

According to Rauyruen and Miller (2007), the importance of retaining a client comes from a higher number of transactions that exists in a B2B context. Due to the fact that there are less customers and therefore more valuable ones, its is a bigger risk to have any abandonment from their part.

In current days and with the advance of technology, companies can adopt new tools in their work allowing to follow the customers needs in real time and maintain a constant contact (Chakravorti, 2006), allowing the possibility of retaining customers higher. It is common for companies to use certain programs to help with the client management, such as a CRM system (Mujayana, 2020)

2.2 Customer Relationship Management

Customer Relationship Management, better known as CRM, is a concept that appeared alongside the new tecnologies with a purpose of helping companies managing their relationships with their customer by being able to store numerous information and analyse it in a strategic way, aiding the decision making process. There are different types of CRM systems, some are more focused on analyzing data information, others are more operational where they are more useful to the sales and marketing team, and there is a collaborative CRM that focuses on communication exchange (Ananda Budi Subagja, 2022), these are classified as three waves in CRM (Miremadi & Ghanadiof, 2021).

As a tool, the company may use it to recognize, anticipate and satisfy the company's needs as well as the consumers, making the process more enjoyable for both parties. Rahmasari et al., (2024) point out how a CRM encorporates multiple aspects within the process of a consumer and that helps the company with getting insightful information.

According to the authors Oliveira et al. (2014), CRM is a set of tools that is used in the corporate world that envisions the improvement of the relationships with the customers and makes sure they are the most important part of the business process. Simões (2021). It confirms the idea when mentioning how it is necessary for company to use technological tools as a support to maintain the good management of the relationships and contact between a company and their customers.

A CRM system is quite complex and includes many different functions that exist in an organization. The CRM is a tool that has been growing over the years and that offers companies the benefits of success and sustainable performance for their business in the long term, supporting three areas such as marketing, sales and services (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2021).

According to Brown (2001), CRM can be used to follow the customers life cycle and all the different stages they go through, allowing to choose the best marketing approach based on the characteristics gathered.

According to Chatterjee et al., (2023), it is essential that the company has a high quality CRM that allows the best results. It is important that the CRM used acquires the most accurate information resulting in a higher service.

Payne & Frow (2005) argue that it is a strategic approach that adds value to all those envolved in the process, resulting in the development of relationships with certain customers. In this way, by implementing CRM tools, a company may have a higher chance of maintaining and continuing customer relationships (Reinartz et al., 2004) and predicting the success of new products and services (Ernst et al., 2011).

Nowadays, CRM is a tool commonly used for identifying, retaining and maximizing the value of the companies clients (Rapp et al., 2010).

2.2.1 CRM's goals and benefits

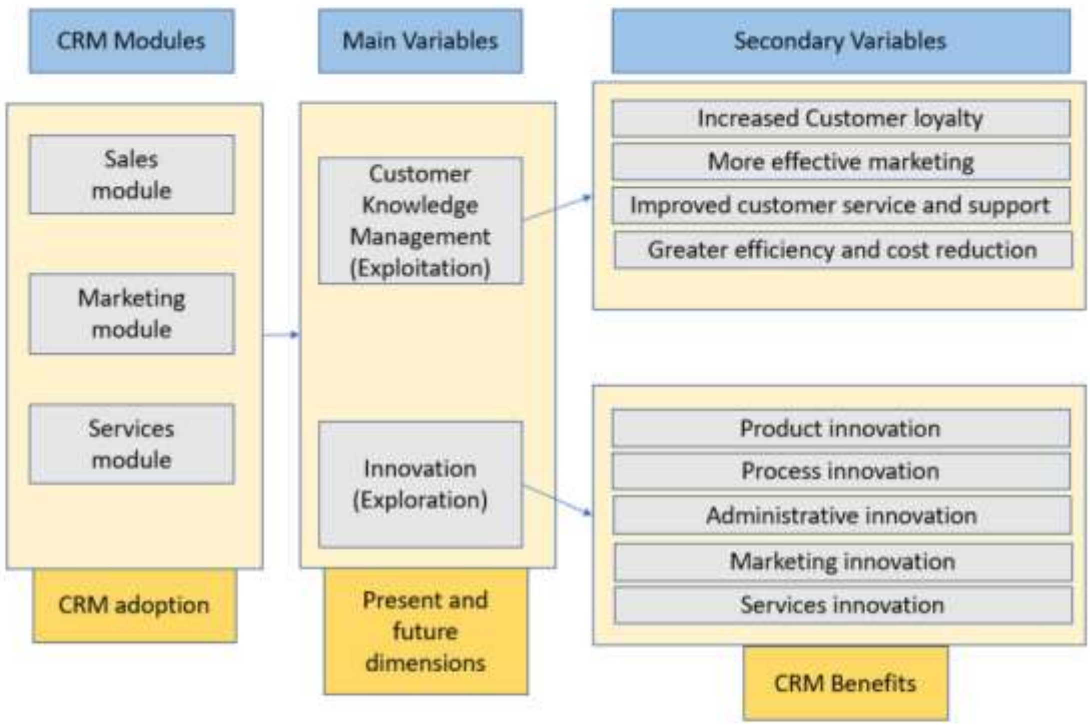
According to Ryals (2002), the main goal of a CRM is getting to know the customers being able to maintain them and reduce the risk of losing them. The way that these risks lowered is by recognizing the particularities that increase customer interest and will generate loyalty. According to Hughes (2002) a CRM was made with the aim of getting to all the important information regarding the customer and by obtaining it becoming available for the company certain strategies that can be used in at the right time with the right product or service that will increase the possibility of higher satisfaction from the consumer.

The ultimate goal of a CRM is the satisfaction of the customer that eventually leads to the improvement of the relationships and a higher revenue for the company. According Ronald S. Swift (2002), the CRM was created with the objective of keeping in contact with the current clients and creating profitability for the company while also having a chance of getting newer ones that will lead to an increase of business and the company success.

A CRM helps a company minimize their cost as they are able to plan their strategies with more information as well as having their employees better prepared to any encounter they may need to resolve (Nguyen & Ali, 2021)

Many authors mention different benefits that come from the use of a CRM system within a company. Gil-Gomez et al. (2020) have made a layout (figure 1) that demonstrates how a CRM impacts the company and which particular department as well as mentioning the benefits it brings to each, accordingly.

Figure 1 - CRM benefit map



Source: Extracted from Gomez, 2020

Gil-Gomez et al. (2020) summarize the benefits of CRM for companies mentioning that these can be in sales, marketing and services. Regarding the benefits of a CRM, it is mentioned that it can help maintain the relationship in the long run by acquiring vast information about the clients. There are four main benefits referred, the first being increased customer loyalty, as it allows to have a personalized service using data to identify the needs of the customer increasing their satisfaction. Secondly, more effective, marketing by using relevant information to better plan and formulate the marketing strategies. Thirdly, improved customer service and support, the CRM helps with automatized systems that allow a better and faster response to the clients providing a better service. Lastly, greater efficiency and cost reduction, as by getting more information about the clients, the company can create an offer based on the needs of the customer, therefore more unique and more assertive (figure 1). Summarizing, implementing a CRM system in a company brings in many advantages and benefits for the company as a whole, given that it cover many areas.

2.2.2 CRM in B2B market

The B2B market, in comparison to B2C, has less customers as it is made of companies, therefore each relationship has a higher economic value. As a result, the importance and the value of just one customer is very large and can have big impact on the company on the long run. The possibility of losing even just one client, can have a major impact on the company, which brings a higher need in maintaining the customers that the company currently has. It must become an interest to build strong relationships based on mutual trust and interest and to deliver products and services of high quality to the customer.

A B2B client is also someone more informed and that requires to be presented with more accurate details, it is a higher level of service (Setkute & Dibb, 2022). A system as CRM provides a platform to analyze as much data as possible and gather all the information to better the relationships with a company’s customers(Sivakami & Abinaya, 2024)

With time, companies start to realize how important relationship marketing is when it comes to maintaining the relationship with the customers. According to Payne and Frow (2005), marketing was once more transactional, meaning it was more focused on the transaction itself rather than who was purchasing it, however nowadays it has become more relational with companies giving more attention to their customers and making sure not only they cultivate the current relationships to the maximum but also gather some new clients, opposed to before where companies would focus on just getting more clients thinking it would bring success that way (Gummesson, 2011).

Håkansson and Snehota (1995) mention how activites, resources and their participants are able to flourish the relationship between a company and a consumer, which brings the necessity of having a CRM system to help manage. Kandampully (2003) refers how important it is that these relationships are being well taken care of, paying attention to all the important information as it ensures that they have a competitive advantage and profitability.

As mentioned before, due to the high value of a single customer there are contributions of CRM to the B2B market that can be highlighted, which are increasing sales opportunities and maintaining relationships with existing customers (Jacobs & Stone, 2008). The main goal of a CRM is to provide all employees who interact with customers, directly or indirectly, with access to information in real time (Fill & Fill, 2005). This confirms the necessity of a CRM system in a company, given that the loss of any client can be major and effect the company performance.

With studies it has been proven the importance of a CRM in a B2B Market, it has shown only positive outcomes by using to its fullest. It is also seen as important that the employees have the best knowledge on how to operate the system as it can only bring sucess that way (Abreu et al., 2022).

3. Diagnosis of the Company and the Problem

In order to understand market position and identify growth opportunities, it is necessary to carry out an analysis of a company's external and internal environment. Such an analysis allows a company to recognize the most advantageous opportunities and how to achieve its objetives and goals.

3.1 Internal Analysis

3.1.1 Wall Street English

Wall Street English (WSE) is a multinational company whose mission is to help people learn English quickly. It was first known as the "Wall Street Institute" but in 2013 it changed its name to Wall Street English.

WSE was founded in 1972 in Italy, by Luigi Peccenini, and since then has 250,000 students, 400 schools in around 28 countries (Wall Street English, 2024).

The quick expansion of the company also began due to the vast expansion of the English language all around the world. Many adults started to get the need to learn or better their English seeing how it became a big international language. The founder, who was at the time studying German, saw a gap in the market, where it was not possible to find a system of learning adequate and focusing on working students and family providers, due to stricter schedules.

Wall Street English has brought innovation and stood out in English language teaching by introducing a new learning method - blended learning, a method that combines the traditional and the technological. Also, the method provides and online learning system that allows people to study at their own pace and whenever possible (Wall Street English, 2024). Alongside it, it was also used the flipped method, where students could study at home the subject that would be presented in the following class, rather than the conventional method where students would have class and proceed with the studies at home.

3.1.2 Wall Street English Portugal

Wall Street English has been present in Portugal for almost 30 years and currently has 35 centers throughout the country. These centers are divided into franchised and corporate centers. The biggest difference between franchise and corporate centers is seen in management practices, with franchise centers having some internal management freedom compared to corporate centers, which always follow the guidelines dictated by the national headquarters. Currently the corporate centers are located in Lisbon, Porto, Aveiro and Braga.

In Portugal, the company was awarded with the Five Star Award (Prémio Cinco Estrelas): an independent prize given by Cinco Estrelas, a Portuguese consumer research agency, for 10 consecutive years.

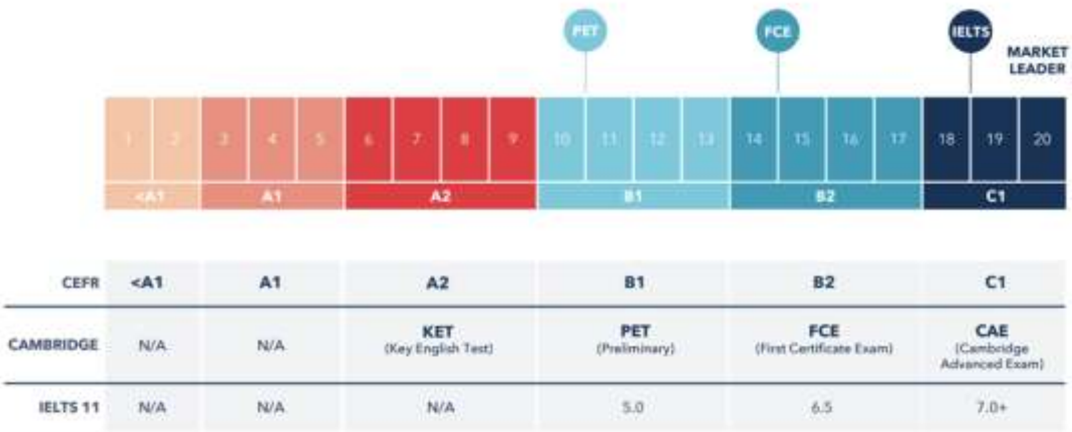
3.1.3 Wall Street English - English School

Wall Street English, as opposed to other language schools in the country, only offers courses to learn one language, English. The school started out with offering English courses only for adults from the ages of 17 and over and later started a course for teens, from the ages of 13 to 17.

The methods of learning that the school offers are, as previously mentioned, the blended method and the flipped method. The flipped method is the one that, contrasting with the regular school system, the student can learn on the platform and practice with exercises before the class with the teacher.

WSE has divided the learning process into 20 levels (figure 2). The first five levels correspond to the A1, from level 6 until level 9 corresponds to A2, from level 10 until 17 corresponds to B2 and level 18 until 20 corresponds to C1 (Wall Street English, 2024).

Figure 2 - Wall Street English learning levels



Source: WSE website

In order to know which level the student is, the school offers a level exam that takes around 20 minutes, and can be done at one of the Wall Street English centers.

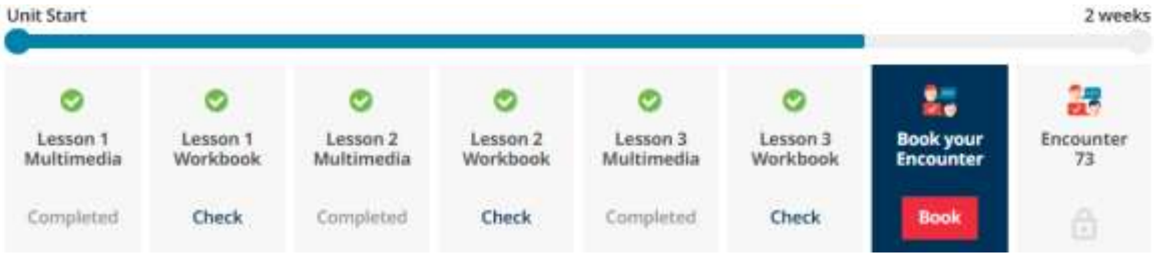
The school plans out that each level should take around 2 months to complete if followed the recommended schedule of lessons, 4 hours of study per week. Each level has 4 units and each one has 3 lessons that are made out by 3 mini cycles. Each mini cycle takes around 30 minutes to complete, and by the end of it, related exercises are made available in the workbook to allow practicing moments, which will take around 30 minutes as well. All together, one full lesson should take 2 hours to complete, therefore the unit 6 hours into completion.

On the platform, the lessons are called “multimedia”. These “multimedia” lessons show something similar to a tv show. On each level, the student watches a video that keeps up with the life of a few characters. All of them focus on a different part of the English language, either grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation.

Other learning process options at WSE are group classes or social clubs. There are presential lessons, in which the teacher corrects exercises that the students have done and offers study guidance using the tool in question. Within the types of group classes, there are also conversation classes where the teacher proposes a topic within the current unit and everyone discusses that topic, promoting communication and oral expression and comprehension skills. Finally, the teacher provides grammar classes, on which students can learn and practice the grammar of the level they are at.

By the end of the unit, the student must book a session on which he will be evaluated on the topics studied in the unit and will be able to advance to the next one (figure 3). The encounter has the duration of an hour and it can be individual or in a small group.

Figure 3 - Dashboard look from student's app



Source: WSE website

When the student completes the level, he has to do a level check in order to test all the things learnt in all the units. The result of the level check will be the grade of the certificate's level attributed by Wall Street English.

All of this information is presented to the student in their Welcome Lesson, which always happens before the student enrolls in the course.

Besides the course for adults, WSE also offers, as already mentioned, a Teens Edition that is all online and that provides all content adapted to the age slot. In addition to this course, there is also an option of courses for companies, which allows employees to study English either at the company, called InCompany, in a class format or at the center, called InSchool.

WSE also offers courses of preparation for certification exams such as Preliminary, First Certificate, Advanced, IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and the Occupational English Test. These courses are not focused on teaching English but on preparing the student for their language exam.

3.1.4. Wall Street English - Corporate

More than a school, WSE is also a company. The headquarters of the company are located in Lisbon at Avenida João Crisóstomo 46, 1050-127 Lisboa. There is where the CEO, financial department, the human resources department and the marketing team operate from.

At the corporate centers is possible to find course consultants, the director of each center and service manager.

The service delivered by the company is the learning of the English language. This service is presented by the consultants that daily receive prospects in their centers, either webleads or walk-ins. The role of the consultant is to sell the English courses and monitor them throughout the course.

Once a prospect arrives at the center, the consultant starts by trying to better understand what the person is looking for, and the reason for which he or she want to start learning english. Following that, the prospect is asked to do a level test in order to both, the consultant and the prospect, be aware of the knowledge of the language that the possible student has.

After, the consultant does an introduction about the school and the method that is used, mentioning the duration of each level and to which level each one corresponds in terms of fluency of the language.

Following the explanation, the consultant now presents the plan of study alongside the prices and methods of payment. Following this meeting, the consultant checks whether the prospect student is fully informed on the course conditions, to lead to the enrolment in the school.

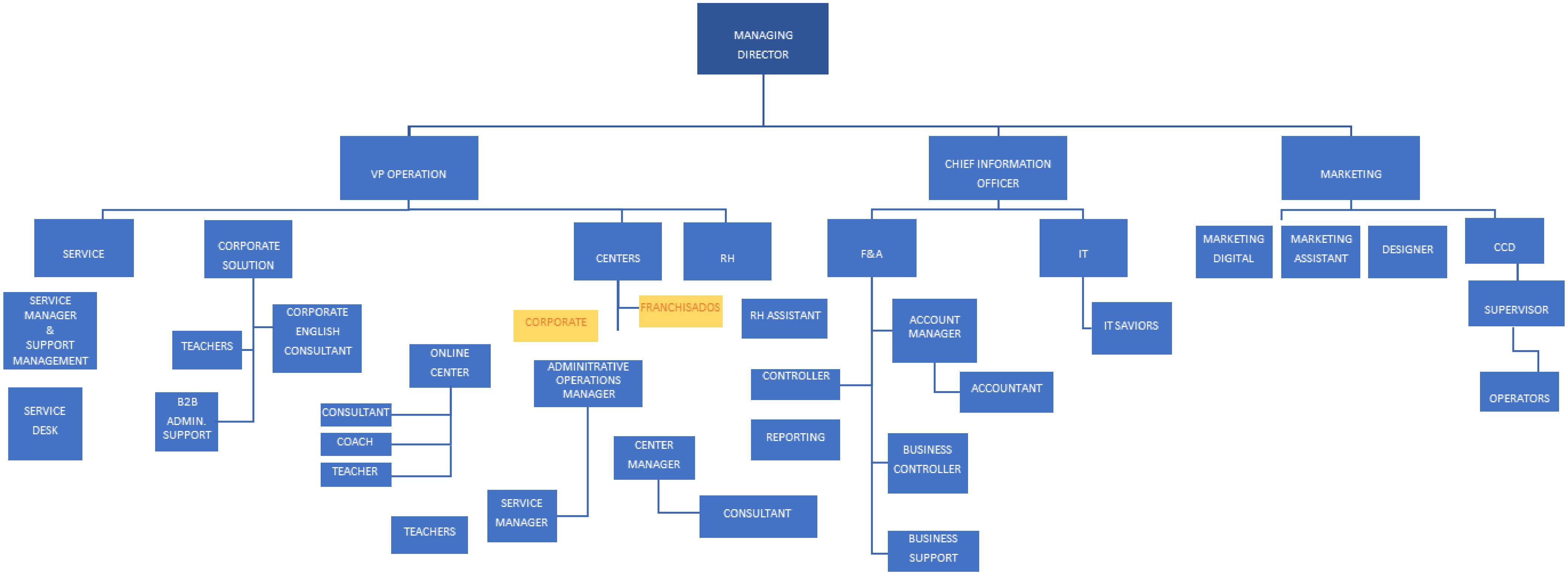
These sales are also made by the online team, that is based at the corporate centers, where they also present the course to the prospect students, but differently to consultants, as the level test is applied through a link that is sent by the online consultant.

WSE also offers corporate solutions, where they have courses planned out and adapted to companies. These are established through partnerships and protocols, on which special conditions are agreed upon (Wall Street English, 2024). These partnerships can be initiated either by a first contact from the company or by WSE.

3.1.5 Organizational structure

Wall Street English Portugal is a big company where the highest role in the organization is the managing diretor followed by VP operation, chief information officer and marketing department. These are then followed by other functions within each sector (figure 4).

Figure 4 - Company organizational chart



Source: Wall Street English Portugal Presentation

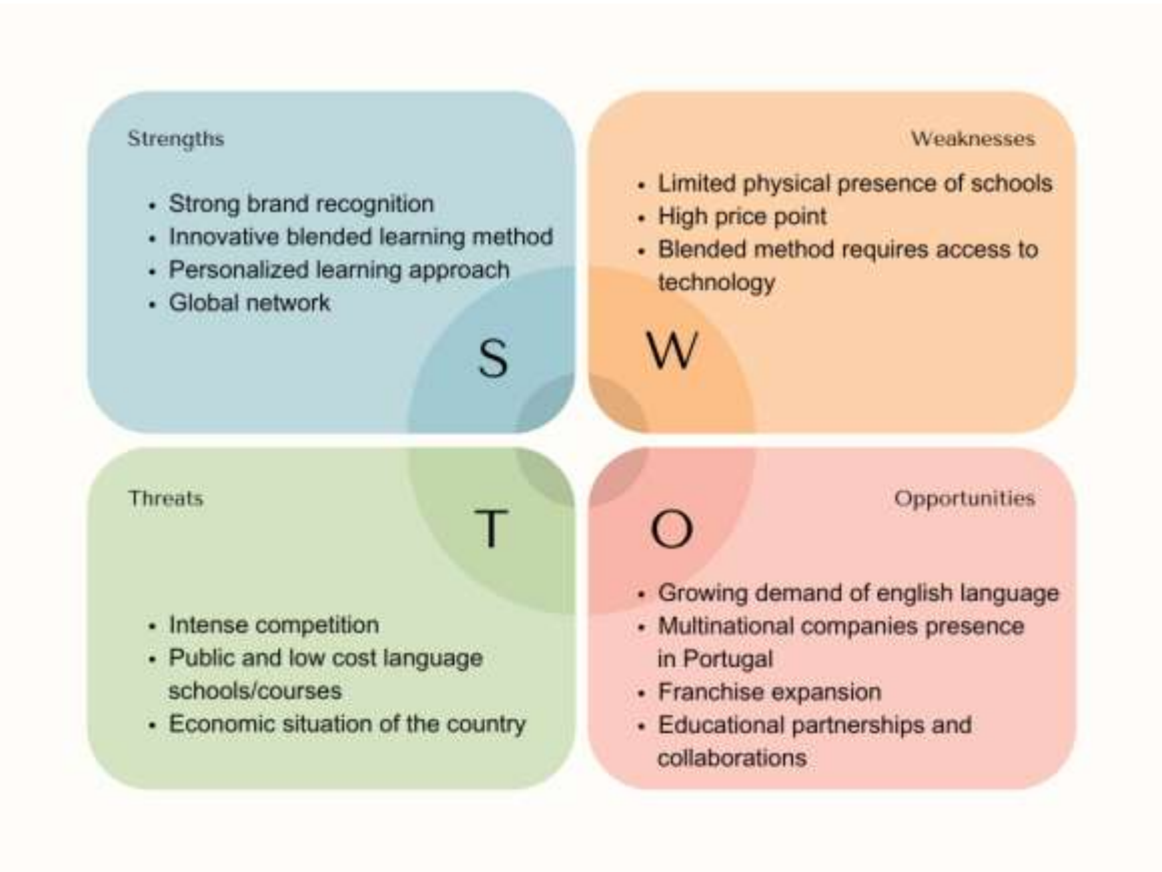
3.2 External analysis

3.2.1 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is based on the information gathered from an internal and external analysis of the company, both of which contribute to the company's development. The internal factors are represented by the strengths and weaknesses and the external factors are represented by the opportunities and threats (Hofrichter, 2017).

With the internal analysis made and a search of the external aspects by verifying and analysing the competitors as well as general overview of the market where the company is established, we are able to gather conclusions to elaborte a SWOT analysis of Wall Street English Portugal (figure 5).

Figure 5 - SWOT analysis



Source: Author's elaboration

Through the analysis made (figure 5), the company shows opportunities for improvement. Having in account their strong brand recognition in Portugal and the modern learning method, they show room to face their competitors by being able to reach more regions and a wider public range.

3.2.2 Competitor Analysis

During a research carried out on the competitors of Wall Street English, the following competitors with a greater significance in the market were identified: British Council, Lancaster College, Cambridge School and Bristol School.

The selection was made with particular attention to the Porto region, as this was the location of the internship and therefore the best place to compare the different english language schools (table 1).

Table 1 - Competitor analysis

CRITERIA	Wall Street English	Bristol School	Cambridge School	British Council	Lancaster College
Course Offerings	English proficiency courses mainly for adults and corporate packages	General english courses with offers for young learners and teens	More specific programs such as PET, FCE, CAE, CPE and IELTS	General, business and academic courses. IELTS and cambridge exams preparation	General and business with more focus on younger learners and teens
Price Structure	Prices by levels. Higher than some competitors, justified by its flexibility	Prices by hourly pack. More affordable pricing with less flexibility	Prices based on certification courses. Prices considered on higher side	Vary of price options by credits or modules. My also be considered mid to high prices	Prices offered for annual or intensive courses. More affordable.
Global Network	Global presence in over 28 countries	Mostly in the UK and USA. Has some presence in southern european countries	Worldwide presence often operating through franchises or affiliates	Vast presence worldwide in over 100 countries	Does not have a strong international presence
Teaching Method	Blended method, online and in person	Traditional classroom	Mostly in person, some online tools	A mix of online and in person method	More traditional, in person classes

Source: Author's elaboration

By analysing the competitors on multiple criterias, as seen in Table 1, it is possible to verify that Wall Street English stands out against its opponents due to the teaching method, providing the students with many online tools and offering a course completely online. Another aspect that stands out is the general course offerings, some school are more focused on the general english while others are mainly focused on language exams. While WSE offers both options, the main course is the english proficiency course. Regarding the price structure there is a big range between the schools, given as some are higher prices than other. However, the difference is justified by the amount of courses offered as well as the teaching method.

As for the global network, all schools have international presence, some more than others. WSE is present in many countries. However, there are some competitors that have more presence.

3.3 Problematic identification

When offered the chance to be a marketing intern at Wall Street English, the intern was given the opportunity to be responsible for the B2B partnerships.

The problematic was based on the absence of someone responsible for the B2B partnerships in the marketing team. Since there is no one in charge, it was decided that it would be best to find out how this procedure is carried out and coordinated by the various departments involved.

For this purpose, it was also important to verify how the communication was made throughout the departments and how the information is being processed within the company, acessing the effectiveness of the process. This would ultimate lead to figure out if there were any flaws in the process and the need of any arrangement.

4. Methodology, Activities carried out and Contribution to the Organization

4.1. Methodology

In order to perform this study, it became essential to identify a problem or opportunity of improvement, explore the subject in question by researching on what other researchers have found, consult various sources of information, so as to create foundations that suport the formulation of objetives, gathering insightful information on the matter.

Therefore, collecting information should be the first step to create the idea and the contribution that the matter may bring. The technical and scientific framework should be aligned with the tasks that will be carried out during the internship, so as to support them with the existing theories. The information on the topics was gathered through digital platforms such as Google Academics, Mendeley, Abinform and RCAAP.

4.1.1 Framework and objectives

Having in mind that the start of the investigation is by acknowleding the problem and finding out what can be done, it should the be highlighted the purpose of the research. By coming up with a final motive of the investigation, questions will come up along the way that will eventually lead to the results of the the research.

In order to achieve the overall objective, it was considered that the most appropriate methodological approach would be a qualitative one. Since the subject of the report is commercial strategies and the execution of B2B partnerships, it is suggested that using a qualitative approach will bring more in terms of future contributions to the study in question.

Considering that the main goal is to purse B2B partnerships, the specific objectives are: (i) to gather information that will help structure the company's internal diagnosis; (ii) to measure employees' perceptions of the way in which the search for and communicating with potential partners is taking place in the company. This will allow to understand the tools that are being used and how they are assessed. In light of this, the following specific objectives were streamlined:

1. Assess whether the employees believe that the strategies used are adequate;
2. Assess if all the employees are aware of the whole process and the role of each department in it;

3. Identify the tools used by the team and how relevant they are to succeed;
4. Gather insightful information from each department's perspective to improve the B2B partnerships process

4.1.2 The Exploratory Interview as a Methodological Approach

As far as the method, an exploratory qualitative approach was selected using semi-structured interviews. There are various types of interviews that can be used in different circumstances, with different formats, depending on the objectives of the research and the environmental context. The variety of interviews can be considered as a spectrum, they can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. The less structured the interviews, the more exploratory it is.

According to Oliveira et al. (2023), interviews are a remarkable tool when it comes to obtaining data in the context of qualitative research. The elaboration of a script is said to begin with main questions focused on the objetives of the interview. It may also contain some others questions targeted to certain interviewees, that can be prepared before hand or at the moment of the interview. This method allows flexibility in the interview which may come with adaptations along the interviews (Ruslin et al., 2022).

When with more time, these interviews can be tested allowing to find any mistakes or any missing information so that they can be modified (Kallio et al., 2016) . In cases like the current one, it is not possible to do so even though it would be advised.

4.1.3 Sample

When it comes to selecting the interviewees, it is best to keep in mind the main goal of the interviews and what we plan on getting through them. The interviews were carried out with 4 departments, which all have direct contact with the B2B partnership process: Marketing, National Operations Director, Corporate Solutions and Center Manager. This is a convenience sample, as it is aimed at Wall Street English employees.

In order to obtain the fairest opinion on the subject, it was decided to respect the anonymity of the interviewees. Only the relevant aspects will be presented in order to outline the profile of the interviewees and analyze their relationship and perception of the B2B partnership process (table 2).

Table 2 - Interviewee profile

	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Female
Time in the company	10 years	8 years	18 years	6 years
Time in the current role	5 years	5 years	6 months	6 years
Role	Marketing Director	Center Manager	National Operations Director	Corporate Sales

Source: Author's elaboration

The interviewees choosen (table 2), apart from being from different departments, also had a big range of work time in the company such as some having worked for 18 years and others for only 6 years which allows to obtain different perpectives.

4.1.4 Procedure

In order to fulfill the main objective and the specific objective, an interview script was created. As the company's headquarters are in Lisbon, the interviews were conducted online using the Teams platform and took around 30 minutes each.

The interviews were scheduled with the help of the marketing manager, who organized the dates and times available for each person. An email was send out to all the interviewees regarding the topic of the interview and the duration of it, also mentioning that it was aimed to support the intern's internship report.

For the interview, the script was made based on Joseph (2019), the questions were created and adjusted according to the objetives previously established and the departments that would be interviewed. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed in order to proceed with the analysis.

4.1.5 Analyzing the results

a) <u>What is your position regarding the commercial strategies used in order to obtain new leads?</u>

Overall, the interviewees agree with the strategies used. It can be seen that to some extent they are all aware of the strategies used, some departments more than others.

It is also possible to verify that each department, when faced with this question, all think of different types of strategies. While some believe that the strategies used are more towards the B2C instead of B2B, others mention how it is more about the adults program instead of the teens edition.

The marketing team proves to be the one more aware of all the dynamic, given that it's them who create and put into function these strategies.

Even though the response was all consensus it was unclear which strategies in specific the interviewees agree with since no particular one was mention, therefore it is not possible to verify if they all agree on the same strategies.

b) Is there anything that should be done differently, in your opinion?

Although everyone believes that the current strategies are adequate, it can be seen that the employees think that the strategies could be improved. It was noted that some departments believe that the strategies could be more aggressive and up to date, focusing on the needs of the current market. One particular department mentioned that, alongside the strategies used by the marketing team, there could be more envolvement from the sales team by using other platforms to reach some other leads besides the ones that the company is getting.

Overall, even though the suggestions are different from each interviewee, it can be observed that all believe that something could be done differently or changed.

c) How aware are you of each team work in the process?

Employees in the various departments believe that they are aware of each other's work to a certain extent, either through communication at meetings or through contacts via the internal platform they use. It can be seen that, because the work crosses the various departments, what happens at the end is that the updates go through everyone.

However, there are some departments that are more connected to certain departments than others. From an analytical perspective, it could be seen that even though everyone is aware of the other teams work, it could be done in a clearer way making it more accessible for everyone.

d) From 1 to 10, how is the communication with other departments?

The overall rating given was between 5 and 9, the average being 7. The standard deviation being 1.414 indicates a moderate variation around the average, the values are not extremely dispersed but there is some variation. It can be seen that although communication is carried out, employees do not believe that it is very effective and that there is room for improvement.

It was determined that there are departments that share information more regularly than other, and that sometimes it can be considered non-existent, which also explains the range of the classification given. It was shown that majority believe that the communication within the company needs to improve, as currently, it is not being done effectively.

e) Do you use any tools to communicate with other departments?

By analyzing the answers, it is possible to verify that the communication is mainly done through emails or the internal platform - Dashboard.

Following the answers to the previous questions, it can be determined that there is a lack of tools used to communicate with other departments, affecting the communication proces. By mostly using email as a tool of communication, they seem to need a method to send out information quicker and in a more effective way. Even though email is a great communication tool, it should not be the only one used, especially when the departments need to be in constant exchange of updated information.

f) How do you maintain the relationship with the current clients?

The answers to this question showed that the contact with customers varies greatly from department to department.

The more administrative departments establish contact through emails, meetings or telephone. The contact they make is more frequent and more focused on the manager of the company with which they have a partnership.

At the centers, it is possible to see that contacts are made directly with student and then will pass on the information to the corporate department.

Overall, it is clear that all the departments that need to be in contact with the clients, are maintaining it with all the means that they have.

g) From 1 to 10, how frequent are these updates and how much importance do they have?

In this particular question, the answers were unanimous, with all interviewees giving it a 10.

It is very clear that all believe that the constant contact with the current clients makes a huge impact in the continuing of the partnerships.

h) Which CRM tools do you use during your work?

With this question it was possible to ascertain that no CRM system is being used to the fullest, given as only one department mentioned the use of an internal CRM.

Some departments use an internal platform that allows them to access didactic information regarding the students, but it doesn't allow them to use CRM functions. The marketing has mentioned this one alongside their own CRM, however since it was only mentioned by their department, it is possible to verify that it is not used within the company but perhaps only by a few people or departments. It is also important to mention that one interviewee informed at one point that CRM was implemented but without any success and therefore it was no longer used.

With this answer is possible to verify that the employees not only do not use a CRM system, but never got any training to use one, which leads to not being aware of its benefits and all it can bring to the company.

Departments such as sales and corporate would benefit from the use of one, either the one that the company currently has or even a different one.

i) Should CRM be given more importance?

Following the previous question, all the departments besides marketing believe that this aspect should be improved and that more importance should be given to a CRM system. Not just because it is easier to manage, but also because it would help to communicate more effectively and quickly between departments, something that was previously mentioned as a negative.

Those who believe it should be given more importance, mentioned that they would like to use it for improving the communication between each team, consulting important information and inserting and consulting information in real time. The fact that the only CRM tools mention were regarding communication, proves not only the existing gap in communication between teams, but also highlights the fact that many may not be aware of the benefits of CRM as it could help the employees in many others ways, as seen previously, such as increasing loyalty of the clients, product innovation, reducing costs and many others.

It is clear that the interviewees would benefit from the efficiency of a CRM system in their work, regardless if they think that they do not have currently one available to use or not. Not only it should be given more importance but it should be one of the priorities of the company. The implementation of a CRM system would also help to better the communication throughout the various departments, which would be highly valued by the employees.

j) Have you had any training to deal with specific students from B2B contracts?

This question in particular was aimed to the consultant/center manager to ascertain if there was any different method towards the B2B students.

In this case was possible to verify that there was a training that was requested by the consultant in order to improve understanding the B2B process and how the contacts are made by other departments.

Even though this training is provided, it not mandatory to be done by all consultants. This is something that should be changed, as it is important for the for all the employees to be aware of all the services provided by WSE and how they work. It would increase the knowledge of the consultant and on the long run would help with the B2B contracts as it would provide the employee with enough grasp to obtain B2B through B2C students.

k) From 1 to 10, how much importance is given to B2B partnerships within the company?

The answers to this question were quite different among the interviewees, ranging from 3 to 10. The average rate was of 6.75 with a standard deviation of 2.487, which indicates a relatively high variation around the average, suggesting a considerable dispersion. There are those who believe that is given a lot of importance because it brings a lot of brand recognition, but there are also those who think that it is not given much importance because it is not present in all departments.

Thus, one could conlcude that the importance of B2B is not very clear in the company. If it were to be shown more within the company, perhaps the answer to this question would be more unanimous.

l) What benefits do you believe B2B partnerships bring to the company?

With this question, it was possible to verify that the opinion among many is that B2B brings a lot of benefits to the company.

In general, it's about how much the brand is valued and how it presents itself on the market and that, as a result, they acquire more students and make more revenue.

Linked with the previous question, the benefits mentioned by the interviewees are not very specific, giving the idea that the employees are not aware of the actual benefits that it brings to the company. This could also mean that they are not very aware of the commercial strategies used and what the company obtains from them.

m) What are some limitations you face while doing your job?

The question showed that the limitations of the work vary from departments.

Some say that it is a slower method because you have to go through several people and wait for the process, while others mention that although it is not slow, it could be better organized so that it is faster and more effective.

The answers show that the interviewees are hoping for a faster and quicker method to add to their work. This supports what was gathered throughout the interview, the need of a CRM system in order to improve the effectiveness of the job.

n) In your opinion, is there anything that should be changed with priority in the company?

Given the responses, it can be concluded that communication is an element that calls for a change in more than one department, but also for new administrative methods that make work more intuitive, in order to improve the efficiency and execution of the work.

It is possible that the lack of communication comes from not having a clear method within the company. It was gathered that the main tool used is email, which does not seem to fulfill the needs of the employees in terms of communicating. Resorting to a tool that is not integrated with any system of the company leads to lack and failures of communication, which also ends up taking extra time to organize the work, that can be confirmed by the answers to the previous question.

Table 3 -Interviews analysis

1. Assess whether the employees believe that the strategies used are adequate;	2. Assess if all the employees are aware of the whole process and the role of each department in it;	3. Identify the tools used by the team and how relevant they are to succeed;	4. Gather insightful information from each department's perspective to improve the B2B partnerships process;
It was consensual that all the interviewees view the strategies used as adequate. However it was observed that some would prefer that these suffer slight modifications in order to improve their position on the market. By analyzing the results, the company should be more transparent to their team with the strategies used as well as adapting to the needs of the market.	By analysing the results, it seems to be necessary to improve the communication throughout the company. The teams is not fully aware of their pairs'work, either due to miscommunication, or the ineffectiveness of the currently used process.	WSE limits themselves by using minimal work tools. The main tools used are email, excel and their didactic internal system. Even though the tools used are important to their work, they are not the most efficient and therefore bring obstacules to the company.	With all the interviews made, it was possible to verify the need of a better communication within the company and a system to help implement the effectiveness of it. The B2B partnerships process would benefit with the implementation of CRM system, not only for the tools used admnistrative aspect but also for the service and product that the company offers.

Source: Author's elaboration

Through the interviews and the analysis of all the results, it was possible to present conclusions to the previously stipulated objectives, as can be seen in the table above (table 3).

The analysis of the interview was done on a NVIVO software, where the interviews were added alongside the information of the interviewees. Then each interview was read with attention, creating codes along the way which would then be used to perform the analysis. Each code was created with relevant information provided by the interviewee's answers, highlighting the most common answers and being able to identify the main positive and negative aspects (figure 6).

Figure 6 - Results from NVIVO analysis

Source: NVIVO software

By comparing each code, the most common answers among the interviewees were the fact that there was no CRM being used, that the communication within the company was mainly through email and that in general everyone agreed with the current strategies used by the company (figure 6).

By analyzing all the interviews, it is possible to verify that the company should focus on improving the communication within the company as well as use of a CRM system to aid their work. Even though that the company has effective communication, given its success, it could be given more importance and consider introducing some newer methods and work tools.

As previously referred, it is highly important for a company to work with a CRM specially in B2B. Given the importance of each client, it is extremely important that the company keeps track of their customers in a detailed way and use tools to improve their work.

As some authors have claimed, as mentioned previously in the report, a company like WSE not only has individual clients but also companies, meaning that each transaction is very valuable and that it is important to focus on the wellbeing of those relationships, especially when marketing is more transactional nowadays (Payne & Frow, 2005).

As Kotler and Armstrong (2017) have mentioned, the relationships with these customers go through many stages and that take time. To be able to follow all this process with major attention and guarantee the best results, it is best to use a CRM system in order to use tools that will allow to follow the journey closely.

It was mentioned as well by the interviewees, how sometimes it can be difficult to be aware of every little detail by each team, the use of the CRM system can help with the communication within the company making it easier to be on top of every information available in real time. This allows to have the needs of the client met at all times, leading to the ultimate satisfaction, which is very important in order to maintain the relationship and hopefully acquire more clients, as previously mentioned by the authors Peppers & Rogers (2017). This will also lead to a more effective work as the information gets passed on more swiftly through the departments.

Overall, it is seen that all the departments agree in the work that has been done by Wall Street English, only pointing out that it could benefit from improving the communication and adding newer tools in order to continue providing the best service as they have been doing for the past years.

4.2 Activities carried out

The internship was initiated on October 7th 2024 in the marketing department of Wall Street English and allowed the intern to personal insight on the corporate reality and the company's dynamic.

The intern, was firstly introduced to the company's culture, departments and specifically the marketing team at their headquarters in Lisbon. The rest of the intership took place in their offices in Porto at Wall Street English – Bom Sucesso. Even though the marketing team was located in Lisbon, the intern was able to work in their offices in Porto, having regular meetings on Teams with the marketing manager, in order to monitor the work and help with the tasks. Alongside the meetings, any last minute question or doubts were always answered through messages.

The role of the intern was to support the marketing team in the B2B partnerships. During the first days of the intership, the intern was presented with the tasks and main goals of the following three weeks, as well as the guidelines of the reports to be done by the end of each week.

The main goal of the first week was for the intern to be able to be able to summarize the value proposal of the company, and the WSE as a brand, from a commercial presentation perspetive to clients or partners.

Therefore, it is important to mention that the intern started out the first week by performing as a mystery client at one of the centers in order to better understand the service that is provided by WSE. By doing this process, the intern got a personal feelling of the client's perspective when arriving at one of the center looking for informations and perhaps enrolling in one of the courses. By having a meeting with the consultant it was also given to the intern credentials to use the WSE platform for 15 days, which led to the second task of the week. The intern then spent studying the english language on the WSE platform to gather some more insight on the school learning method. On the first day of using the platform, the intern also attended a Welcome Lesson, that it is given to any student who starts using it. During this lesson the method of sutdy of WSE was explained, as well as the duration of the course. All the options that the paltform offers were presented, such as the exercices and how they should be done. The intern, for the following days, took time to understand their platform by doing all the exercices available and getting to know what WSE has to offer to their students. Once the week ended, the intern sent out to the intership coordinator, a word file summarizing the experience from the moment that the intern visited the center to the understanding of their platform. This report was a way to pratice explaining the value proposition of the school and the product, in a commercial perspective to present clients or partners.

For the second week of the internship, the aim was to understand the commercial dynamics of the business, particularly through the teams at the centers and the sales team. To achieve this, the trainee accompanied the sales team at the WSE center in Matosinhos and observed B2C sales, both in person and remotely. With the team, it was possible to observe how the communication process takes place among the people who work at the centers and their students, and how they approach those who are looking to enroll in their program, as well as getting a better feelling of what the environment of the centers bring to the students. It was possible to be present in one of the meetings with a prospect student so as to see how they display the offer to them, from looking into their interest to find the best course option and the final offer. By the end of the week, as requested by the marketing manager, the intern prepared a report summarizing the week describing everything such daily task from the consultants, the approach to the students and the way they present the offer to the prospects.

The goal of the third week was to prepare the intern to connect with potential clients, negociate and develop commercial strategies. It was planned out to start collecting and managing a database, defining communication channels for direct marketing, direct approach tools (messages, emails, commercial presentations), accompanying sales with the corporate solutions team. The intern elaborated templates that were to be used when approching with a proposal, either by email or telephone. These templates were elaborated and then revised by the marketing manager to make sure that the message was clear on what the offer was.

Throughout the internship, the intern elaborated a database with information of schools, universities and companies that were based near WSE centers to then proceed with reaching out to them, in order to propose a partnership.

The database (table 4), was created on excel, and included information such as the name of the school/university/company, email, telephone number, person in charge, status and observations. All the information was obtained through google search and afterwards double checked by calling the schools and universities to verify if all the information was correct, in order to send the business proposal.

Table 4 - Database layout

School	Person in charge	Email	Telephone	Status	Obs.

Source: Excel database

During this period, the intern had training regarding the social network LinkedIn, in order to help find data for the database. The training allowed the trainee to use the platform on a daily basis to find new contacts. A search for companies in various regions of the country was made, as well as checking the employees of each company and those in relevant positions for our contact. Through this search, the intern was able to obtain not only the company's general contact email adress, but also the contact details of the person responsible for the desired department.

Once the database was completed with all the regions previously agreed upon with the marketing manager, the process of send the proposal emails began. A calendar of tasks was created, of when to send out the emails.

The intern, alongside with the marketing manager, planned out a schedule to send emails to a certain region each day of the week, so that in the following week, if no email response was recceived, a follow up email would be sent.

The emails between these companies became the intern's responsibility. Once a company demonstrated interest in the proposal, a protocol would be sent out, which had more specific information regarding the benefits offered. The protocol would be altered with the information correspondent to each company.

Alongside with the emails, if requested by the company, a meeting would be arranged with Wall Street English Corporate Solutions department, during which the company could gather more information regarding the protocol and would modify if necessary.

During the internship, the intern also got to be part of the school fair that WSE attended. The fair, called "Rumo", took place at Católica University of Porto on November 12th. The intern spent the whole time getting to know the process behind these fairs from companies perspective and was able to talk with students from the university, gathering some leads for WSE.

4.3 Contribution to the organization

Throughout the internship, the intern became the person in charge of the B2B partnerships in the marketing department.

As the team did not have anyone assigned for this role, the intern gave an important contribution to the company. During the time of the internship, a lot of information regarding potential clients was gathered into a database that was shared with the marketing manager.

The contacts made throughout the internship led to the signing of protocols with companies and universities, as well as other companies that had shown interest, and scheduled meetings for the following year, now to be conducted by others. (table 5).

Table 5 - Final contabilization of emails

	Emails sent	Finished/ In process	Not Interested
Schools	108	4	4
Universities	56	3	2
Companies	209	14	4
Hotels	86	6	5
Total	459	27	15

Source: Author's elaboration

As seen in the table above (table 5), the intern was able to send out a total of 459 emails that led to 27 protocols, either finished or in process.

As the company seeks to continue this role specifically for interns, all the work made was left explained and arranged so that the company may continue to receive interns to proceed with the work. The intern organized a folder containing all the needed information and documents, such as, excel database, templates for email messages, summary of the LinkedIn training, an excel schedule of the meetings arranged.

It was also arranged, between the intern and the marketing team, that the results of the interviews alongside the analysis where to be shared to the team in order to give a better insight on the subject so as to help them in their future professional activity.

5. REFLEXION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE REPORT

This internship was a great opportunity to acquire work experience in a learning environment, which led to being a very enriching experience.

Having the chance to do the internship at such a notorious company, not only in Portugal but in many other countries throughout the world, allowed to obtain a great insight on a corporate organization and how a marketing team works. The intern was very well received by the company as they took time to show all the departments and the facilities, allowing to understand their work method to the fullest.

Through these 3 months of experience the intern was able to be apart of their marketing team and help the company with projects aiding with daily tasks that with time began being executed more independently. It helped being more confident with the work and develop more critical thinking. All the activites that the intern was able to be part of were essential for the work as well as important for this report. The team was always in contact making sure that everything was being done correctly while giving the necessary support.

Being the first contact with work experience in this field, it was challeging in the beginning being in a completely new environment and adapting within such a small period of time. This period of time could also limit some other tasks that could have been done as well as more time with the ones initiated. However, even in two and a half months, it was possible to gather valuable insight, not only professionally but also personally.

Overall, with this internship concluded there is a feeling of gratefulness and certainty that it will help in the future.

Regarding the internship's report, it was possible to plan and structure an idea to then organize and analyze the results. The process of the information gathering on important topics for the report, as well as conducting the internship work, were challenging specially due to starting the project later than previously planned. The idea for the title of the report came at the very last minute, when the option was offered to do this internship in a specific role, leading to only choosing the topics that were to be mentioned about two weeks into the intership.

On the second half of the project, it was decided to proceed with interviews on the WSE team as not only a way to gather information necessary for the internship report but also a way to get to know more about others departments, since they are spread throughout the country. During this time it was important to do some time management for the success of this report. The script for the interviews was ready in december which meant that the company had a lot of work regarding the closure of the year, which led to some interviews being delayed. It was important to remain focused on the report and continue to work on the sections that had been written until that point, either by adding new information or modify anything that could be improved.

Once the interviews were finished and the information had been gathered, it was time to proceed with analysing them in order to reach the conclusions of the report. Given that there were only four interviewees, there wasn’t a big variety of details since some of the responses were quite similar. Even though this shows agreement and understanding within the company, it did bring some trouble when comparing the answers in order to obtain the return needed for the analysis. It was necessary to have a critical thinking when verifying all the answers, ignoring the knowledge of the company’s work method gained through the internship, so to have a perspective of an outsider and making sure that the analysis based only on the interviews.

By the end, the intern was faced with the challenge of connecting the interview analysis with the technical and scientific framework, guaranteeing that the report not only had a correct line of thinking from the beginning until the end but also eloped all the information coherently.

In general, writing the report has been a valuable experience even though challenging at times. It helped with the ability of structuring from beginning to end, organizing ideas and analysing results leading to conclusions. This will surely help with the writing of reports in the future in a professional scenario.

6. Conclusion

In this report, it can be said that the main objetive was successfully achieved. The goal was to obtain more information and understanding regarding the B2B partnerships that the company establishes and verify all the process, from the strategies used to internal workflow that supports them.

Through the work of the intern was possible to assess the method used to establish these B2B partnerhips and how the contact was made. WSE does a great job of reaching out to prospects by contacting them through email and presenting themselves mentioning all the courses available and always suggesting a meeting to provide more specific information.

It is also important to refer that the marketing team is always very observant of any fair that is happening, where they can promote the school and connect to other companies, whether looking for individual clients or B2B partnerships. This strategy helps to keep the brand in the public eye, allowing Wall Street English to continue being a reference in the language school world.

Aligning the role of a marketing intern to the objetive of the report, structured interviews were established as the method to be used to obtain more information regarding the process in question. Through the interviews made, it was possible to get the results to what was initially established. It showed valuable perspectives of the employees regarding the strategies in place and overall their opinions on it as well as any opinion and potential areas for improvement. The interviewees highlight some needs to improve the communication process within the company, mentioning that it must be a faster and in a more effective way. While giving this information, it was also mentioned the need for a better system that would facilitate the communication process, which can be done by using a CRM system, as its importance for the company was highlighted with the present research. Wall Street English is a powerful brand with so much recognition that has been solidified troughout the years and that it can only improve by investing in new systems that are able to provide the team with essential tools to optimize their work.

Even though the main goal was reached, one must agree that this research could have been more accurate. A longer period of time to fully understand the whole process and perhaps gathering more interviwees would have led to a more in deepth analysis of the company's internal and external partnership startegies.

Overall this project was a great academic and personal experiment, given the level of the company and how much impact they have in the language teaching sector in Portugal.

Such a renowned brand will certainly continue to improve their business and excel at their work. Moving forward, it is suggested that they continue to focus on the B2B partnerships and give them the right importance within the company by implementing a CRM system allowing the staff to have the best tools possible to better their work.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Interviewee 1

Question: Gender
Answer: Male.

Question: For how long have you worked in the company?
Answer: 10 years.

Question: And in your current position?
Answer: 5 years.

Question: What is your role in the B2B process?

- Acquiring leads
- Maintaining clients

Answer: Marketing has developed the entire strategy and digital materials for acquiring leads, and is responsible for all offline communication investments, such as magazines and presence at specialist events. On a day-to-day basis, investments in digital marketing, which are the responsibility of the marketing department, generate leads that come in via the official website, email marketing or social networks. In the company's CRM, marketing controls the entry and distribution of these leads to the respective sales agent: they can go to the corporate department, to a center or directly to the call center, for example. Marketing has no active role in contact, sales or retention, although it has developed the materials used by key account managers, i.e. commercial presentations, proposals, etc. However, to ensure that there is correct feedback to monitor the return on our digital marketing investments, there is a member of the marketing team who monitors all investments, leads generated, contacts made, proposals sent and contracts closed or renewed. In this way, it is possible to guarantee proper control and monitoring of the ROI of the operation and, at the same time, of the commercial performance of the teams. I, in particular, created the materials and strategies a few years ago and have now delegated these functions to my team in accordance with this process, which I have also defined.

Question: What is your position regarding the commercial strategies used in order to obtain new leads?

- are you aware of them;
- do you keep up with them;
- are they adequate;
- updated;
- agressive;

Answer: These strategies were initiated by me a few years ago and continued and developed in greater depth now by the team. We have ads of various types, on different channels, generating a good and growing volume of leads and simultaneously generating more sales over the years. The sales teams will always say that it's not enough, that they want more volume and that some channels are better than others. However, when the marketing department analyzes the results, through the investment and performance control mentioned in the previous point, we can see that the perceptions of the sales teams usually don't correspond to reality. Bearing in mind that the markerting department has obtained increasing results in the volume of leads it has captured, in the number of commercial opportunities it creates for the sales team and also in the value of the sales it has managed to generate through the investment it has made, our position is that the strategies are obviously working.

Question: Is there anything that should be done differently, in your opinion?

Answer: We believe that the sales team should make an increasing effort to do proactive commercial prospecting in an attempt to attract more leads, for example by using Linkedin correctly. When a marketing department generates a lot of leads for a B2B sales department, the latter tends to become passive and dependent on these leads for new business.

Question: How aware are you of each team work in the process?

Answer: Yes. There are weekly meetings between marketing and the business department to discuss various topics about how the operation works.

Question: From 1 to 10, how is the communication with other departments?

Answer: 9 - Very good. We communicate regularly and are also physically close in the office, where we work on a hybrid basis. There is a good relationship between everyone and we are aware of each other's day-to-day lives.

Question: Do you use any tools to communicate with other departments?

- crm system;
- teams;
- emails;

Answer: E-mails (always!) for official communication and sending everything you need to work. Teams for meetings.

Question: How do you maintain the relationship with the current clients?

- meetings (online/in person);
- reports;
- emails;

Answer: That's not our responsibility. Meetings with clients from the corporate department don't go through the marketing department. When it comes to meetings with companies that are potential clients or partnerships (one of the gateways to leads as well), we usually meet through Teams, but we always try to delegate these companies to the sales team.

Question: Which CRM tools do you use during your work?

  - contact management;
  - deal stages;
  - task management;
  - activity reporting;
  - customer journey mapping;
  - lead capture;
  - email marketing;

Answer: We have our own CRM, developed to process and automate the handling of many leads, various channels of capture, suppliers and recipients of the leads - our English centers, our call center or the corporate department, for example. We work with information relevant to customer follow-up and commercial performance control mostly in excel. We also have our own dashboard to monitor students and their progress, from which we export feedback to the client/training manager, although this part is not the responsibility of marketing, and finally, we use email to communicate, with materials from the previous tools.

Question: Should CRM be given more importance?

Answer: Not for the volume of work, leads and customers, in my view. Our CRM is enough to process the leads that come into the department, as well as to monitor digital marketing efforts. Then, for commercial follow-up or lead recovery, the salespeople would need to know and make the commercial efforts that they would then like to automate via CRM. If they don't, there's no point in them asking a tool to do something for them that they don't know what it is. CRMs should be requested and designed according to the specific processes that companies know they need. It shouldn't be sales people or IT managers who design them, but managers who understand the flows of information, data and commercial operations needed to develop the business, with an idea of productivity and the main KPIs.

Question: From 1 to 10, how much importance is given to B2B partnerships within the company?

Answer: 7. For the marketing department, the corporate department is just as important as any other English language center, with the specificity that we do a lot of work specifically for this department alone, whereas for the 36 English language centers in Portugal, we normally have marketing efforts that, as a rule, have to benefit everyone equally and, if possible, centrally.

Question: What benefits do you believe B2B partnerships bring to the company?

Answer: This department makes it possible to apply and make the most of our teaching method, which is a market leader in Portugal and the world, to large companies, namely through the 100% online product which can be used by many employees, individually, without the need to form classes or fixed timetables, with complete flexibility for companies. It allows us to bring in large amounts of sales, with few associated costs, and also contributes to the prestige of our brand, when associated with big brands that have been our customers for many years. This trust gives us credibility in the market and also benefits the brand and the English language centers (B2C).

Question: What are some limitations you face while doing your job?

Answer: Time. We are very active and creative. We wish we had more time to be even more creative and innovative. We have to be selective in the strategies we use and we try to be efficient and standardize as many processes as possible for this purpose.

Question: In your opinion, is there anything that should be changed with priority in the company?

Answer: Yes. More aggressive commercial prospecting by the B2B team. Member Gets Member strategy, in cooperation with English language centers that can be great sources of corporate leads. Implementation of an ambassador campaign, in which all the company's employees can be B2B salespeople, with a commission associated with bringing in a client company. These are three ideas to implement. There's always a lot to change and test. Test, test, test. Always.

Question: Is there anything you would like to add that wasn't asked about?

Answer: No. But I'd love to see the results of this report, as well as Diana's opinion, because an outside view is always different and interesting for someone who has been here for so long.

Attachment 2 - Interviewee 2

Question: Gender

Answer: Female

Question: For how long have you worked in the company?

Answer: 8 years

Question: And in your current position?

Answer: 5 years.

Question: What is your role in the B2B process?

- Acquiring leads
- Maintaining clients

Answer: I have more contact with B2C students, but due to the center's location and the fact that there are a lot of companies in the area, I'm also focused on the B2B side.

Question: What is your position regarding the commercial strategies used in order to obtain new leads?

- are you aware of them;
- do you keep up with them;
- are they adequate;
- updated;
- agressive;

Answer: In my opinion, I think marketing is much more focused on the centers. If you look at LinkedIn or Instagram, all of our social networks focus much more on B2C than corporate. But yes, I think we could always improve. If it's more aggressive, if it has more expression, I think so. I keep up to date with what marketing is doing with B2B and there are some publications, but I don't think it's very expressive compared to what's going on in the center. The latest videos that have been made about the centers are good, but I think that B2B should also have some videos along those lines, for example introducing the colleagues, what they do, their daily lives. So yes, it could be more expressive.

Question: Is there anything that should be done differently, in your opinion?
Answer: What I have mentioned above.

Question: How aware are you of each team work in the process?

Answer: Honestly, I wouldn't have asked to do B2B training and if I don't keep the team up to date with what's going on, it's like corporate is a completely separate department. And I honestly think that if I'm not the one trying to find out, it doesn't get through to the centers what work is being done by the colleagues, and even then, it's not very expressive and there's little communication. I'm a bit more connected, and I don't think the other centers are aware of the work they do.

Question: From 1 to 10, how is the communication with other departments?

Answer: A 5. I believe that there is room for improvement.

Question: Do you use any tools to communicate with other departments?

- crm system;
- teams;
- emails;

Answer: Usually by email. Marketing informs you that they have partnered with company x and have the following discounts. As I mentioned earlier about the networks, it would be interesting to perhaps inform them that a partnership has been signed with that company. For example, when we're here at the center, I do this through LinkedIn itself, informing people that a partnership has been closed. But usually, it's by email and then if we check on our website.

Question: How do you maintain the relationship with the current clients?

- meetings (online/in person);
- reports;
- emails;

Answer: It's done in exactly the same way as the B2C students. We receive the students, distribute them to the consultants, schedule the welcome lesson and send them an email with the codes. The colleagues are also informed in all the emails and then we accompany the students here at the center in the same way.

Question: From 1 to 10, how frequent are these updates and how much importance do they have?

Answer: In this particular case, it's corporate that makes the contact, which is usually what we do and is guided by the center. What happens is that the student is a little late in terms of timing, so we communicate with the corporate and inform them that they need more time, and then it's up to corporate to inform them that they need more time to finish. I'd rate it a 10, it's always important.

Question: Which CRM tools do you use during your work?

- contact management;
- deal stages;
- task management;
- activity reporting;
- customer journey mapping;
- lead capture;
- email marketing;

Answer: We at the center only use the Dashboard. We follow up the student through the dashboard.

Question: Should CRM be given more importance?

Answer: Yes, I think it would be important to have a system where the information could be consulted by the people at the center as well as by colleagues, because they don't have access to the information unless we email them. If there was a shared system, they would be able to consult it and see it in real time as we record the feedback.

Question: Have you had any training to deal with specific students from B2B contracts?

Answer: Yes, it was my request to have one. I had it last year in July.

Question: From 1 to 10, how much importance is given to B2B partnerships within the company?

Answer: Since not all departments are involved, I would say maybe 3. Because there's marketing that was involved, corporate and then one or another center. I think it's only the people who work in partnerships and companies who like working with companies.

Question: What benefits do you believe B2B partnerships bring to the company?

Answer: If it were on a scale, it would be a 10. If the communication were better and an awareness-raising campaign were carried out to close a company and several employees and have almost the entire objective of the center right away, of course it would make all the difference. It's about being able to make the most of our time and resources and get a turnover for the company.

Answer: What are some limitations you face while doing your job?

Question: It's a longer process, it's not such a quick sale.

Question: In your opinion, is there anything that should be changed with priority in the company?

Answer: I don't know, I think that kind of response would be better for the operations for those who manage and decide what to do and how to do it. Perhaps, as I said at the beginning, communication, involving everyone in the company and making it something that people can see, exploring what's on offer and trying to attract companies and more leads and students, because then what it will bring is more results, more turnover for the center and for the company.

Question: Is there anything you would like to add that wasn't asked about?

Answer:

Attachment 3 - Interviewee 3

Question: Gender

Answer: Female

Question: For how long have you worked in the company

Answer: For 18 years

Question: And in your current position

Answer: 6 months

Question: What is your role in the B2B process?

- Acquiring leads
- Maintaining clients

Answer: I was director of corporate sales until June, so I was in charge of the department. Right now, I'm still in the process of leaving, there are a lot of things I still see with that department. I also connect the department with the centers, there are many things that I help the key accounts with, because those who are now in charge of the department are also still in the process of getting to know the companies, the strategies, developing the strategies.

Question: What is your position regarding the commercial strategies used in order to obtain new leads?

- are you aware of them;
- do you keep up with them;
- are they adequate;
- updated;
- agressive;

Answer: WSE Portugal is a very mature brand in the Portuguese market, so we have the brand as a sun hat and underneath that is corporate, corporate sales, teens. We benefit a lot, we're a brand that's working as a market leader, we've always been very associated with adults, English for adults. There's been a lot of marketing work to change this in the sense that we've had the teens product for two years and we've had corporate for a long time and then we got LinkedIn and we have a series of magazine publications, so that they always see that we're much more than English for adults. There's always more we can do, investment, resources, are also limited so if you ask me if the strategy is right, I think so. Because with the investment we make and the way it's used, we can effectively bring in a good volume of leads for both teens and corporate solutions, where we can get a very high return on these two lines of business. We look at teens and we look at corporate sales, maybe the volume of sales isn't as important as that of adults, but the return is impressive. It's very good, so it depends how you look at it, but the marketing team is always thinking of new ways, there's always something more to do. I think it's effective, especially when you look at how we leverage our brand and how it's been changing.

Question: Is there anything that should be done differently, in your opinion?
Answer: What I have mentioned before.

Question: How aware are you of each team work in the process?
Answer: Until June, when I was director, I always had a lot of contact. Today I'm always well up to date with strategies, information sharing and discussions

Question: How is the communication with other departments? 1 to 10

Answer: Some are better than others, but I think we still have a long way to go. The mkt knows the corporate department quite well and so does the center, but for the rest I don't think there's as much communication. As it's not a center, there's a lack of knowledge, for example, about how the department works and some of the rules. One of the very important things for me when I took over the corporate solutions department was to improve this type of communication and sharing with the other departments and centers, and I think it's better. To give you a number, I'd say 6 or 7.

Question: Do you use any tools to communicate with other departments?

- crm system;
- teams;
- emails;

Answer: In terms of transfers, which is what happens most between centers and corporate departments, we have Dashboard, which is our platform where we have all our students data and there is a transfer of student data. Corporate sales does a lot of transfers of students to online centers, they receive them, inform them and transfer them to the centers. We've created a series of rules, between the online center and corporate sales, where I receive transfers and send them on Friday, corporate to the online center and the online center has until next Friday to make the incorporations.

Question: How do you maintain the relationship with the current clients?

- meetings (online/in person);
- reports;
- emails;

Answer: We have two situations, we have the client who is the company and the student who is the employee of the company, so we have the difference and we work with two clients, the company and the employee. With students, we monitor their progress. The students can be studying at a center or at the company, either way there is a follow-up of the student's progress. Both in terms of study pace and performance, as well as course consumption, whether they're on track, not on track, whether or not they're meeting expectations. Then there are meetings with the teachers or with the team at the center, which are constant and follow the procedures for each product that already exists. There are then progress meetings, there is feedback given after encounters, after classes, according to the product that the company has acquired for the employees there is a different type of procedure followed with the student always focused on the student's satisfaction and progress and on achieving the student's objectives. And we have the company, when we have a company, regardless of the product purchased, because there are companies with various types of offers, we will deliver reports. Normally, it's monthly, but others ask for it every 2 months. They have specific requirements and at the start of negotiations we see what the company needs. Whether it's 2 classes or 6 classes, the company I work for has 200 dispersed across several schools, and the company will always receive reports on the students. That information is standard, but in negotiations we check if anything else is needed, such as the number of hours they've been on our multimedia platform, for example. Companies can ask for something more specific and we do that. And the meetings, we have meetings with the classes and we have meetings with our interlocutor with the company.

Question: From 1 to 10, how frequent are these updates and how much importance do they have?

Answer: For me, yes, a 10. They're very important, especially in sales. What we do is stress free management, a package delivery and we manage the training. So the relationship between a company's training manager is one of the factors that weighs heavily in deciding which company I'm going to work with.

Question: Which CRM tools do you use during your work?

- contact management;
- deal stages;
- task management;
- activity reporting;
- customer journey mapping;
- lead capture;
- email marketing;

Answer: We have two different situations. We have the didactic part which is on our dashboard and we have all the reports including when I have students and they are distributed between the centers, and I go to dashboard and get the report, although the centers also send us information about the students. In the dashboard I can extract all the information from the students I'm studying at the center and then from the groups that are training at the company. The dashboard allows me to get a summary of practically all our products that we have available for students. On the sales side, there's no CRM. We tried to incorporate one last year, but the department failed to enter all the information, so we ended up not using it. At the moment we just use a dashboard and excel.

Question: Should CRM be given more importance?
Answer: Yes, I believe it should.

Question: From 1 to 10, how much importance is given to B2B partnerships within the company?
Answer: 10. It's not as important as the adult business, but it's important for brand consolidation and revenue.

Question: What benefits do you believe B2B partnerships bring to the company?

Answer: Brand and revenue. It has an important volume as another center and also the positioning of the brand in Portugal.

Question: What are some limitations you face while doing your job?

Answer: Perhaps in the centers, for example, there's a lack of knowledge about how corporate solutions work. It's a sector that has to continue to grow and in my opinion it's the future. With regard to the market, the ideal for corporate sales would be to focus on large companies, because sometimes there is a temptation to fall into smaller companies that then become more B2C.

Question: In your opinion, is there anything that should be changed with priority in the company?

Answer: Perhaps what I already mentioned in the previous question.

Question: Is there anything you would like to add that wasn’t asked about?

Answer: No, nothing.

Attachment 4 - Interviewee 4

Question: Gender

Answer: Female

Question: For how long have you worked in the company
Answer: Since 2019

Question: And in your current position
Answer: As well, since 2019.

Question: What is your role in the B2B process?

- Acquiring leads
- Maintaining clientes

Answer: Acquiring leads as well as keeping contact with current clients.

Question: What is your position regarding the commercial strategies used in order to obtain new leads?

- are you aware of them;
- do you keep up with them;
- are they adequate;
- updated;
- agressive;

Answer: I believe it is a process, it is always an ongoing process, meaning, there are times where it makes sense to have a certain strategy and there are times where it makes sense to have a different one, therefore, being adequate is being dynamic. Yes, it is adequate sometimes but others it could be more aggressive. It has to be adjusted by being dynamic, being able to quickly respond to the market's needs. Sometimes there are things, for example when there are situations that you can't control, such as when there's a crisis, do not insist on looking for leads. It's very important to read the market to understand what to do at that moment. Or sometimes you can take advantage of unique situations that work and bring in a lot of leads. So what I would say is adjust to the market, adjust to the occasion, but you have to do it very quickly. Because sometimes the strategy of 6 months ago no longer works now.

Question: Is there anything that should be done differently, in your opinion?

Answer: I think what I have answered in the question before.

Question: How aware are you of each team work in the process?

Answer: Yes, in this case marketing is keeping us up to date, more or less, I wouldn't say I'm very up to date, but I think the information is being passed on to us.

Question: From 1 to 10, how is the communication with other departments?

Answer: I think it could be better, but it's not anyone's fault or that it's badly done, we sometimes don't share either, the day is rushed and there's no time for that. But I'd say maybe a 7.

Question: Do you use any tools to communicate with other departments?

- crm system;
- teams;
- emails;

Answer: Mostly through email and sometimes in person meeting as well. But it is mostly emails.

Question: How do you maintain the relationship with the current clients?

- meetings (online/in person);
- reports;
- emails;

Answer: It depends, with some clients it's only by email and others is by phone. Perhaps the most commonly used are telephone and email. When processes are going on, I sometimes speak to the client every day, there is a closeness by phone and email and then there may be meetings, depending on where the training project is.

Question: How frequent are these updates and how much importance do they have?1 to 10

Answer: They are very important. It is important for the company to know that when they reach out to us, we attend to their requests and resolve them. It is extremely important, not the frequency of the contact so to say but it's the security that customers have when they contact us and we respond.

Question: Which CRM tools do you use during your work?

- contact management;
- deal stages;
- task management;
- activity reporting;
- customer journey mapping;
- lead capture;
- email marketing;

Answer: We don't have our CRM updated, meaning, currently we are not using it. We use excel and some reports to do the follow ups.

Question: Should CRM be given more importance?

Answer: Yes, it would be nice to have a CRM adjusted to our work needs.

Question: From 1 to 10, how much importance is given to B2B partnerships within the company?

Answer: I don't know if they have a big impact, it's a bit of a school awareness thing. Maybe a 6 or 7, I think it has some.

Question: What benefits do you believe B2B partnerships bring to the company?

Answer: I think the basic thing is that it can bring in customers, but it also advertises the brand, because we have a lot of companies that have our logo in the field of partnerships, so there's always continuous advertising with the protocols, regardless of whether they bring in customers or not.

Question: What are some limitations you face while doing your job?

Answer: Perhaps the issue is that we need to have things a little more organized with the crm, or organized in a faster, more structured and quicker way.

Question: In your opinion, is there anything that should be changed with priority in the company?

Answer: There's an administrative part that takes up a bit of time and could be lighter if there were some specific programs, even for monitoring information. I think this part could be improved so that it doesn't take up so much time and then it doesn't add much. There are things that are repetitive and it would be better to have a program to deal with rather than one person.

Question: Is there anything you would like to add that wasn't asked about?

Answer: No, nothing to add.