

CASE

AUDI – VORSPRUNG DURCH TECHNIK

ASSIGNMENT -
SHIFT IN PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

The automotive industry as a whole has been in transition for some time now. At the same time, the requirements in the Premium vehicle customer segment have changed radically. Model ranges have become more extensive - and technical. Moreover, buyers place an increased emphasis on the design and brand of the car. Up to 98 per cent of new Premium cars are sold through factory delivery, fully customised to the customer's personal needs. *"This shift in purchase behaviour sets a new tone for the sales approach. It determines how the salesperson understands where the customers are coming from and what exactly they are looking for,"* says **Janne Hällfors, Product Manager, Audi Finland.**

Audi has outperformed its main competitors BMW and Mercedes-Benz in the Premium car segment since 2004. Audi operates with a dealership model, and many operating practices are decided by Audi AG in Germany. Both the sales process and methods must adhere to strict standards. *"Our cooperation with Trainers' House focused on training to improve the leadership skills of sales centre managers and the quality of our sales and customer service operations to cement our position in the segment,"* Hällfors explains.

CUSTOMER DELIGHT AT ALL LEVELS

All car manufactures follow similar sales processes. What takes place within that process is what can differentiate them and create competitive advantage. *"We have considered every phase of the process and established requirements for a standard Premium class experience. In addition to the product itself, everything from communication to the sales centre and customer service must embody the Premium attitude and first-class customer care,"* Hällfors emphasises.

We established a training program for the sales managers and all the 70 salesmen in the Audi Finland sales network. The sales manager training focused on the managerial role, creation of management plans, the best way of measuring sales success and leadership in practice. *"It is essential for a sales manager to understand how operations and the measurement and management thereof affects sales, overheads and finally, customer satisfaction,"* says Hällfors. Audi has

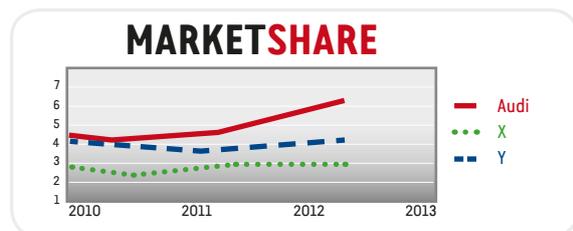
audited the practical implementation of management plans with the Trainers' House's Pulse monitoring tool.

In sales training, we focused on identifying the most effective and client-centric way to drive the sales process. *"Sales personnel honed their practical sales skills and identification of customer needs in small groups. We also simulated customer encounters and the best ways of proceeding in different situations. By doing so, we implemented Audi's mission – customer delight – in practice at all levels,"* Hällfors says.

GREAT RESULTS

"Our sales process has improved all-round, and our performance has improved significantly in every area. We have increased our market share and most importantly, all of our customer satisfaction metrics have improved notably," says Hällfors, satisfied. *"Our customer satisfaction is now the best in the Nordic countries and Audi Finland has established itself as a benchmark in Europe,"* Hällfors says.

Audi Finland will report a strong sales result for 2012. Everything we do at Audi is based on our brand essence, "Vorsprung durch Technik", or progress through technology, which is further divided into three brand values: sportiness, sophistication and progressiveness. We live and breathe these values in all our customer service and sales activities," Hällfors concludes.



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