A road to promote roadside assistance in Turkey

Joanne Visser and Annemarie Versteeg
Everything we see in the world is the creative work of women.

~ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Istanbul
### Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joanne Visser</td>
<td>Yenişehir Mh. Seçkin Evler Sitesi A Blok Daire 36 34912 Kurtköy/Pendik Istanbul, Turkey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joanne-v@solcon.nl">joanne-v@solcon.nl</a></td>
<td>+31 627 45 66 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anemarie Versteeg</td>
<td>Yenişehir Mh. Seçkin Evler Sitesi A Blok Daire 36 34912 Kurtköy/Pendik Istanbul, Turkey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:versteegam@gmail.com">versteegam@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>+31 636 56 24 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Studentnumber 080632

### Marmassistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marmassistance</td>
<td>Grup Center Is Merkezi, Yenisehir Mustafa Akyol Sokak No:9/158 Kurtköy, Pendik 34912 Istanbul, Turkey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marm@marm.com.tr">marm@marm.com.tr</a></td>
<td>+90 216 560 07 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Christelijke Hogeschool Ede

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Ozan Alemdaroğlu</td>
<td>Grup Center Is Merkezi, Yenisehir Mustafa Akyol Sokak No:9/158 Kurtköy, Pendik 34912 Istanbul, Turkey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ozana@marm.com.tr">ozana@marm.com.tr</a></td>
<td>+90 530 333 92 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Ton Veen</td>
<td>Christelijke Hogeschool Ede Oude Kerkweg 100 6717 JS Ede The Netherlands</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tveen@che.nl">tveen@che.nl</a></td>
<td>+31 647 23 83 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Studentnumber 080051
It was December 2010. We decided to travel abroad to enlarge our international experience and widen our vision on communications. While we were making plans to travel abroad, Marmassistance in Istanbul, took over the roadside assistance activities of former ADAC Turkey.

Halfway December of the same year, our teacher Mr. Veen brought us in contact with Dr. Ataç of Marmassistance. Due to the take-over that had taken place, Marmassistance business’ grew instantly, but the marketing communications did not. Not yet. Herewith a great opportunity for us arose.

In the first cold weeks of 2011, concrete plans were made. We gathered information for our thesis by e-mailing Dr. Ataç and meeting Mr. Grootmeijer from ANWB and Mr. Biekmann from ARC Europe.

Now, four months later, we are in Istanbul. Our thesis is finished. We learned a lot about the Turkish culture, the automotive market, roadside assistance and marketing communication strategies. With all this knowledge we formed a strategy for Marmassistance: a road to promote roadside assistance on the Turkish automotive market.

During this experience we were helped and encouraged by many people. They really liked the fact that two Dutch girls were studying the Turkish automotive market or the Turkish culture. We experienced a lot of typical Turkish support, kindness and enthusiasm. Sometimes we underwent the relaxed Turkish way of planning, which is totally different from our tight Dutch scheduling. Which resulted in stressful moments for us and many laughs amongst our colleagues. However, their intentions were good. As they always are.

We proudly present our findings in this thesis, because it was not an easy job for two Dutch girls to research the Turkish automotive market and the complex roadside assistance packages. We could not have done this without the help of many.

We want to give a word of thanks to everyone who provided us information for our thesis. We especially want to thank Mr. Alemdaroğlu, marketing supervisor and supervisor of our thesis. His humor, support, enthusiasm and his friendly “it is a pleasure to help you” were great.

We also want to thank Mr. Biekmann from ARC Europe. It was very nice to meet him before our trip, but certainly even more of a pleasure to see a Dutch face every so often in a Turkish office.

We also want to thank Mr. Veen, our supervisor from the Christian Ede University of applied sciences in the Netherlands. Without him we would not have been here in Istanbul.

And there have been many others who took the time to answer our questions, without even knowing us.

Last, but certainly not least, we want to show our gratitude to Dr. Ataç, director of Marmassistance. He invited us and welcomed us to Istanbul. Where we had the most educative and wonderful time.

Joanne Visser and Annemarie Versteeg
English summary

Below you will find a summary of our thesis.

The main question of our thesis is: In which strategic way can Marmassistance promote its roadside assistance program on the Turkish market, using therewith relevant knowhow and experience of European automobile associations?

When you look closely at this question, you will notice our thesis is spread in six themes: roadside assistance, Marmassistance, Turkish culture, Turkish market, European automobile clubs and strategies. The outcome of the research of all these themes results in a final advice. We will briefly describe our findings on the themes and our final advice.

Roadside assistance is providing services to a client in case of a vehicle breakdown, that aims to assist the client to safety continue his/her way as soon as possible. Executed roadside assistance services are repairing on spot for simple problems: flat tire, low battery etc. And towing to garages in case of complex problems.

Marmassistance provides roadside assistance. Initially it was a medical company. Since the beginning of this year it also provides technical services. It provides this services to its business partners. Business partners are car manufacturers, importers and European automobile clubs. At the moment in Turkey roadside assistance is not known as a consumer product, membership.

Turkish culture is very different from, for example, the Dutch culture. Due to collectivism, relations and families are very important. Also in business life, relations and the opinion of the group is very important.

The Turkish market on which Marmassistance operates is the automotive market. This market has gone through some changes over the last few years. Due to negotiations with the European Union, Turkey become part of the European automotive market. This resulted in stronger competition. On the global level, Turkey upcoming economy appeared. Also the competition on this level strengthened, due to the introduction of the Chinese car. The reaction of the car manufacturers on the strong competition is a hungry need for customer loyalty. Roadside assistance became a marketing tool for customer loyalty.

In Turkey, roadside assistance is quite new. European automobile clubs exist for years. Therefore they have much knowledge and experience. This is shared via ARC, an European umbrella company for roadside assistance providers.

‘Strategy’ is a very important theme for our research. We believe Marmassistance should work on separation of the technical and medical services, but still remain one brand, in which diversity strengthens. On a crowded market a differentiation strategy should be used. On a market that is unfamiliar with a product a category need has to be realized.

Research of these themes results in an advice. Marmassistance operates on the B2B market. There are many competitors. For Marmassistance, the best strategy is differentiation. On the B2B market it is important to work on relations and cooperate with business partners. This are important ingredients of the strategy.

Marmassistance currently has no contracts with consumers on the B2C market. However, it intends to work on this. Turkish consumers do not know the service. Marmassistance should create a category need. Turkish consumers are hard to reach. The most suitable way will be informing consumers via business partners.
Nederlandse samenvatting

In dit hoofdstuk vindt u een samenvatting van onze scriptie.

De hoofdvraag van onze scriptie is: Op welke strategische manier kan Marmassistance haar wegenwachtzervice promoten op de Turkse markt, daarbij gebruik makend van relevante kennis en ervaring van Europese automobilclubs?

Deze vraag kan onderscheiden worden in zes thema’s: wegenwachtzervice, Marmassistance, de Turkse cultuur, de Turkse markt, Europese automobilclubs en strategieën. Deze zes thema’s hebben we onderzocht. De uitkomst van dat onderzoek resulteert in een advies. We zullen in deze samenvatting kort onze resultaten en ons uiteindelijk advies benoemen.

Wegenwachtzervice is het verlenen van service aan een klant in het geval van motorpech, met als doel de klant zodanig te assisteren dat hij of zij veilig en zo snel mogelijk verder kan reizen. Wegenwachtzervice kun je verdelen in twee hoofdtaken: reparatie ter plekke, bij eenvoudige problemen en wegslepen naar garages bij complexe problemen.


De Turkse cultuur is heel verschillend van de ons bekende West-Europese cultuur. Turk en zijn collectivistisch, relaties en families zijn erg belangrijk. Ook in het zakenleven hecht men waarde aan relaties en de mening van de groep.

Marmassistance opereert op de Turkse automarkt. Deze branche heeft de afgelopen jaren veel ontwikkeling ondergaan. Door onderhandelingen met de Europese Unie trad Turkije toe op Europese automarkt. Dat resulteerde in sterkere concurrentie op Europees niveau. Met de introductie van de Chinese auto, nam ook op wereld niveau de concurrentie toe. De reactie van auto fabrikanten op de toegenomen competitie is een grote drang naar merkentrouw. Wegenwachtzervice werd een marketing om merkentrouw te creëren.

Wegenwachtzervice is in Turije lang niet zo ontwikkeld als in Europa. Europese automobilclubs bestaan al jaren en hebben daardoor veel kennis en ervaring. Het delen van deze kennis en ervaring verloopt via ARC. ARC is een Europese overkoepelende organisatie voor wegenwachtzervice verleners.

Het onderwerp ‘strategie’ is van groot belang voor onze scriptie. Wij geloven dat Marmassistance moet werken aan onderscheid tussen de technische en de medische diensten, maar wel één merk als doel moet houden. Eén merk waarin diversiteit kracht is. Op een concurrerende markt is het belangrijk om te differentiëren, om een differentiatie strategie te hanteren. Op een markt waar het product onbekend is, is het belangrijk om een product/categorie behoefte te creëren.

Onderzoek naar deze zes thema’s resulteert in een advies. Marmassistance opereert op de zakelijke markt. Daar is de concurrentie groot. Op zo’n markt is het voor Marmassistance belangrijk om te differentiëren. Bovendien is het van groot belang om te werken aan relaties en samen te werken met zakelijke partners. Differentiatie en samenwerking zijn belangrijke ingrediënten van de strategie.

Marmassistance heeft op dit moment geen contracten met consumenten op de consumentenmarkt. Maar in de toekomst wil ze wel graag de consumentenmarkt betreden. Turken kennen wegenwachtzervice echter nog niet als lidmaatschap, daarom zou Marmassistance een categoriebehoefte moeten creëren. De Turkse consument is lastig te bereiken. Wij vinden dat Marmassistance de consumenten het beste kan informeren via haar zakelijke partners.
## Short table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colophon</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English summary</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nederlandse samenvatting</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short table of contents</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full table of contents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Guide through our thesis</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Main question and sub questions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Theoretic frame</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Method</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Guide through our desk research</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Roadside assistance</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Marmassistance</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Turkish culture</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Turkish automotive market</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 European automobile clubs</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Marketing and communication strategies</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Interviews</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Conclusion</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Relevance for the communication study</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Full table of contents

Colophon ................................................................................................................. 3
Foreword .................................................................................................................... 4
English summary ....................................................................................................... 5
Nederlandse samenvatting ....................................................................................... 6
Short table of contents ............................................................................................. 7
Full table of contents ............................................................................................... 8
1 Guide through our thesis ....................................................................................... 11
2 Main question and sub questions ........................................................................ 13
   2.1 Main question .................................................................................................. 13
   2.2 Sub questions .................................................................................................. 13
3 Theoretic frame ..................................................................................................... 15
   3.1 Communication mix ....................................................................................... 15
   3.2 Corporate communications .......................................................................... 15
   3.3 Marketing communications .......................................................................... 15
   3.4 Integrated communications .......................................................................... 15
4 Method .................................................................................................................. 17
   4.1 Explanation of promote ............................................................................... 17
   4.2 Explanation of sub questions ........................................................................ 17
   4.3 Research design ............................................................................................ 18
      4.2.1 Methodology ......................................................................................... 18
      4.3.2 Data collection methods ...................................................................... 18
   4.4 Accountability of our research ..................................................................... 20
4.5 Evaluation of our research ............................................................................... 20
5 Guide through our desk research ........................................................................ 22
6 Roadside assistance ............................................................................................. 23
   6.1 Roadside assistance in general .................................................................... 24
      6.1.1 Beware the gaps ................................................................................... 24
      6.1.2 Do you have roadside assistance and not even realize it? ............... 24
   6.2 Turkish roadside assistance .......................................................................... 25
      6.2.1 Competitors ......................................................................................... 25
      6.2.2 Competitors from higher perspective ............................................... 26
      6.2.3 Turkish roadside assistance history makers ...................................... 27
7 Marmassistance .................................................................................................... 28
   7.1 Company profile .......................................................................................... 29
   7.2 Marmassistance departments ...................................................................... 29
      7.2.2 Medical department ............................................................................ 30
      7.2.1.1 Medical services ............................................................................ 30
      7.2.1.2 Cost containment ............................................................................ 30
      7.2.2 Technical department .......................................................................... 30
      7.2.2.1 Organizational services .................................................................. 30
      7.2.2.2 Technical services .......................................................................... 30
   7.3 Analysis of Marmassistance’s communication tools ................................... 32
8 Turkish culture ....................................................................................................... 33
   8.1 Turks described ............................................................................................ 34
      8.1.1 Turks in dimensions ............................................................................ 34
      8.1.2 Turks; high or low context? ................................................................. 35
   8.2 Turkish public relations culture ................................................................. 36
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.2.1</td>
<td>Growth of public relations sector</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2.2</td>
<td>Public Relations; active in every area</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2.3</td>
<td>The role of PR</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2.4</td>
<td>Conclusion on developments and the role of Public Relations</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Turkish automotive market</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>EU-Turkey relations</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>The market in figures</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>European automobile clubs</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>ARC Europe, the umbrella</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1.1</td>
<td>The providers</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>Developments on the European automotive market</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.1</td>
<td>Trends</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.2</td>
<td>Relations change</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.3</td>
<td>Strategy of car manufacturers</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2.4</td>
<td>Strategy of roadside assistance providers</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Marketing and communication strategies</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>Marketing and communication strategies in general</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.1</td>
<td>The target group</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.2</td>
<td>The objectives</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.3</td>
<td>The strategy</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.3.1</td>
<td>Strategy for a new product</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.3.2</td>
<td>Strategy for a growing product</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.3.3</td>
<td>The push and pull strategy</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>Marketing on the automotive market</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2.1</td>
<td>Situation and context analysis</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2.2</td>
<td>Customer segments</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2.3</td>
<td>Marketing communication methods</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2.4</td>
<td>Strategic options</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2.5</td>
<td>Communication options</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>Business-to-business Marketing</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3.1</td>
<td>Introducing 900 Help me</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3.2</td>
<td>Marketing strategy</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3.3</td>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>Interview Mr. O. Alemdaroğlu</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>Interview Ms. E. Sahinkaya</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>Interview Dr. G. Bolat</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>Interview Mr. H. Biekmann</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>Interview Mr. E. Grootmeijer</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>Interview Dr. E. Bozyazi</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>Meeting Mr S. Sarti</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>Meeting Mr. R. Delanote</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>Meeting Mr. Kulakovskiy</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.10</td>
<td>Interview Dr. C. Celik</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.11</td>
<td>Interview Mr. B. Lomas and Mr. D. Hinchin</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.12</td>
<td>Interview Mr. R. Verel</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>Interview Mrs. Y. Yilmaz</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.14</td>
<td>Interview Mrs A. Ergül</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>Second interview Mr O. Alemdaroğlu</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13.1 How is the roadside assistance of Marmassistance organized?..............90
  13.1.1 What is roadside assistance?..............................................90
  13.1.2 What is Marmassistance?..................................................92
  13.1.3 Which roadside assistance services does Marmassistance offer?...94
  13.1.4 How does Marmassistance currently promote itself on the Turkish market..................................................95
  13.1.5 Answer to sub question one .............................................95
13.2 How is the Turkish automotive market structured?.........................97
  13.2.1 What are the recent developments on the Turkish automotive market?.................................................................97
  13.2.2 Which stakeholders does Marmassistance have on the Turkish automotive market?......................................................98
  13.2.3 What are the expectations on promotion, of stakeholders on the automotive market?................................................99
  13.2.4 In general, how are programs promoted on the Turkish automotive market?.............................................................99
  13.2.5 Answer to sub question two ..............................................100
13.3. What are specific characteristics of the Turkish culture?...............101
  13.3.1 In general, how does one describe the Turkish culture?..........101
  13.3.2 In general, how do Turkish people respond to promotional activities?.................................................................102
  13.3.3. Answer to sub question three..........................................103
13.4 How can the relevant knowhow and experience of European clubs be applied in Turkey?......................................................105
  13.4.1 What is the relation between Marmassistance and European automobile clubs?....................................................105
  13.4.2 Which experienced European automobile clubs could be useful?105
  13.4.3 Which knowledge and experience of European automobile clubs could be useful?..............................................106
  13.4.4 Answer to sub question four ..........................................106
13.5 Which strategy is best to promote the roadside assistance program on the Turkish market?..............................................108
  13.5.1 Which strategy fits best to the characteristics of the Turkish culture?.................................................................108
  13.5.2 Which strategy fits best to the automotive market?............108
  13.5.3 Which strategy fits best to Marmassistance?.........................109
  13.5.4 Answer to sub question five .........................................110
13.6 Answer to the main question...............................................111
14 Relevance for the communication study ..................................112
Bibliography .............................................................................1144
1 Guide through our thesis

In this chapter we explain the composition of our thesis. This way our reader will not get lost on the road to promote roadside assistance.
1 Guide through our thesis

We will briefly guide you through our thesis and enumerate the chapters.

The next chapter is chapter 2. It describes the main purpose, the main question and the sub questions of our thesis.

Chapter 3 is our theoretic frame, in which we outline the communication context of our thesis.

In chapter 4 we describe the method of our research. It will base and explain some terms and our questions. In addition it will evaluate and give account of our research.

Having read about the method, this thesis continues with our desk research. Also this desk researched is introduced with a guide, this is chapter 5. The desk research itself consists of 5 themes, 5 chapters: roadside assistance (chapter 6), Marmassistance (chapter 7), the Turkish culture (chapter 8), the Turkish automotive market (chapter 9), European automobile clubs (chapter 10) and finally marketing communication strategies (chapter 11).

The desk research is followed by eighteen interviews with professionals in chapter 12.

In chapter 13 our conclusion starts. It consists of the answers on our sub questions and our main question.

We end our thesis with chapter 14, the relevance for the communication study. In this chapter we illuminate the ideas we gained during the process of writing our thesis.
2 Main question and sub questions

“The best road for Marmassistance to promote its roadside assistance program.”

This chapter is divided into two parts: the main purpose and the main question (2.1) and the sub questions (2.2) of this thesis.

2.1 Main question

Before defining our main question, the main purpose of our research will be displayed. Recently Marmassistance started to provide roadside assistance services on quite a large level. Due to the bankruptcy of the past roadside assistance provider of Turkey, Marmassistance received many roadside assistance cases from one to the other day.

Currently the process of service is up and running but still requires developments to take it to a more professional level. Part of this developments are the marketing activities which includes promotion of the roadside assistance. The marketing communication is very ad lib at the moment and needs to be structured in a strategy.

Roadside assistance is not well developed in Turkey. And the input of knowledge and experience from European clubs is most desired. For this reason and also to maintain the international character of our thesis European clubs will be involved.

Studying the company, the market and the Turkish culture combined with the roadside assistance experience of European clubs will help us reach our target: To find the best road for Marmassistance to promote its roadside assistance program.

The main question of our study will be:

In which strategic way can Marmassistance promote its roadside assistance program on the Turkish market, using therewith relevant knowhow and experience of European automobile associations?

2.2 Sub questions

The main question is supported by a division of sub questions.

1. How is the roadside assistance of Marmassistance organized?
   - What is roadside assistance in general?
   - What is Marmassistance?
   - Which roadside assistance services does Marmassistance offer?
   - How does Marmassistance currently promote itself on the Turkish market?

2. How is the Turkish automotive market structured?
   - What are the recent developments on the Turkish automotive market?
   - Which stakeholders does Marmassistance have on the Turkish automotive market?
   - What are the expectations on promotion, of stakeholders on the Turkish automotive market?
   - In general, how are programs promoted on the Turkish automotive market?

3. What are specific characteristics of the Turkish culture?
   - In general, how does one describe the Turkish culture?
   - In general, how do Turkish people respond to promotional activities?
4. How can the relevant knowhow and experience of European clubs be applied in Turkey?
   - What is the relation between Marmassistance and European automobile clubs?
   - Which experienced European automobile clubs could be useful?
   - Which knowledge and experience of European automobile clubs could be useful?

5. Which strategy is best to promote the roadside assistance program on the Turkish market?
   - Which strategy fits best to the characteristics of the Turkish culture?
   - Which strategy fits best to the automotive market?
   - Which strategy fits best to Marmassistance?

Based on the information gathered by answering these questions, we will write a strategic marketing communication advice for Marmassistance. This advice will be the executed answer of the main question.

Note: for the ranking of our sub questions, we used the same order of subjects that is used in our main question.
3 Theoretic frame

“Marketing communication activities spread a certain image of a company.”

Before we enter the road to promote roadside assistance, we would like to outline the communication context of our thesis.

3.1 Communication mix

Communication in the work field and as a study is a far-reaching subject. Therefore, we wanted to clarify the place of our thesis in the wide variety of communication views. Starting of with the basic forms of communication in organizations: the communication mix.

The communication mix is described by Floor and van Raaij in their book marketing communication strategy. The communication mix consists of corporate communication and marketing communication.

3.2 Corporate communications

First of all, we will define corporate communication. Corporate communication, according to Jackson (1987, cited by Venekamp, 2009), “is the total communication activity generated by a company to achieve its planned objectives.” To us, this definition lacks an essential element. Which will be: image. Therefore we stay with, Knoers’ definition, which covers this element. He describes corporate communication as: “The management instrument, which tunes all aware used forms of in- and external communication to gain and maintain the aimed image at its main target group.” (Knoers cited by Mastenbroek, 2004, p. 37)

3.3 Marketing communications

The aim of marketing communication differs from corporate communication. Floor and Van Raaij define marketing communication as: “To get in contact with business and/or consumers to influence their knowledge, attitude of behaviour in a direction that is favourable for marketing”. (Floor and Van Raaij, 2006, p. 77)

3.4 Integrated communications

Nowadays there’s a trend to integrate communications. The term integrated communication is used on several levels: 1. integration within one communication instrument 2. integration within marketing communication 3. integration of corporate and marketing communication. (Hultink and Schoormans, 2006) We would like to use the third level, which is emphasized by Hill and Knowlton: “integration of both corporate communications and marketing communication into one department.” (Hill and Knowlton, 2006)

J. Mastenbroek states that the term ‘integrated communications’ is somewhat infelicitous because of its ease of wrong interpretation. “Integrated communications is not a matter of making the communication expressions a whole. But integrated communications is a matter of tuning them into one policy.” (Mastenbroek, 2004, p. 36)

This opinion matches the vision of Pelsmacker, Geuens and van den Bergh in their book Marketing Communicatie. “The communication activities of a company should include more than just communicating with customers. The organization should also reckon with stakeholders. When using integrated communications, stakeholder- and marketing communication are completely tuned.” (Pelsmacker, Geuens and van den Bergh, 2005, pg. 28)
Although most sources for integrated communications are Dutch, in the international field the term integrated communication is also mentioned. For instance, Caywood opines that “the first steps in achieving integrated communications are to define an overall goal for the entire organization.” (Caywood, L., ed., 1997, p. 55)

We are aware of the fact that integrated communications is not something completely new. And integrated communications is difficult to achieve. According to Frank Peters integrated communications is hindered by several causes. Amongst other things the short term scoring vision of marketers clashes with the long-term relation vision of corporate communication managers. And corporate communication managers lack understanding of marketing communication. (Peters 2007)

We feel it is important to radiate a uniform image of a company. Therefore the use of one policy is important. One should realize that marketing communication activities also spread a certain image of a company. By realizing and making use of this knowledge one can kill two birds with one stone. The marketing communication can contribute to a corporate image. This also works the other way round; a strong corporate image can contribute to reaching marketing goals.

While studying our thesis and writing our advice we aim to keep in mind the importance of integrated communications.

Chiaravalle and Findlay Schenck (2006, p. 186) believe that consistency builds brands. “When you deliver the same look, message and promise (…) you develop an integrated marketing campaign that conveys one strong, clear image and builds one strong, clear brand.” Building a brand is what one calls branding.

### 3.5 Branding

“Branding is the driving force of marketing and as such is the central focus of marketing communications.” The primary purpose of branding is the locating of the product. This locating is valuable for the consumer. Also an informational and transformational functions of brands are beneficial for consumers. Branding helps consumers to place the brand amongst all other brands. Therefore, brands should speak the customers language and talk about the informational and transformational benefits. (Dahlen, Lange and Smith, 2010, p. 204)

According to Schultz, Antorini, Csaba (2005, p. 10) over the years there have been two waves of branding. The first wave has a tactical and visual focus. The second wave has a more strategic and integrated approach. Tactical and visual focus is exactly what we aim with branding Marmassistance. Because one has to start at the very beginning.

![Figure 1](image-url)
4 Method

“The challenge of connecting assembled information.”

This chapter is divided into four parts. We will explain the term promote (4.1) and our sub questions (4.2). In addition we will look into our research design (4.3), the accountability of our research (4.4) and the evaluation of our research (4.5).

4.1 Explanation of promote

We realize that the term promotion of our main question can easily be misunderstood. Due to the fact that in the communication sector there are so many interpretations on the different aspects of the profession. The term promotion in Dutch is commonly referred to as: “An marketing instrument which is used to generate extra sales during the promotion time.” (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p.434) Regarding our thesis it might be clear that this is kind of promotion is not quite enough for Marmassistance.

With the term promote, we aim at the meaning of promotion in the broader all inclusive term “Promotion includes all the ways available to make a product and/or service known to and purchased by customers and clients.” (Ward, n.d.) This explanation combined with the explanation of thematic promotion of Floor and van Raaij will take the term promote to a higher level.

Thematic promotion according to Floor and van Raaij (2006, p. 435-435) is not focused on a short term sales increase but it is focused on attitudes and used to support the brand identity and add values to it. Therewith thematic promotion is very close related with marketing public relations. This level of promotion is a level on which we would like to work for Marmassistance.

Promote then means; strategic communication to influence the knowledge and attitude of the market towards the service.

4.2 Explanation of sub questions

1. How is the roadside assistance of Marmassistance organized?

With this sub question we want to get a clear view on the service Marmassistance offers and how it offers these services. First of all we need to research the term roadside assistance. We wonder what the term actually means, which services it includes and how it works on the business to business market and business to consumer market. In addition roadside assistance service general information we will also describe the situation in Turkey. Knowing that we will further question Marmassistance, what is its daily business and how fits roadside assistance in this business. What are the services it offers and to whom does it offer these? We want to find out who its clients are and where they come from. And at last we discover how Marmassistance currently promotes itself and its services on the market.

2. How is the Turkish automotive market structured?

At the start of this thesis the automotive market is a mystery to us. Therefore we need to research this subject. We discover the companies that are present on the market and the amount and kind of products they produce. Thereafter we look into the recent developments on the automotive market in Turkey and the effects of the European Union. To ensure the information is useful for our thesis we also needed to find the place of Marmassistance in the market and see who its stakeholders are. In addition we want to learn more about the communication on the automotive market. What are the expectations and common ways of promoting.
3. What are specific characteristics of the Turkish culture?
Working on a thesis in a different culture requires studying the culture. We start with general characteristics of Turks as described by well known culture researchers. Besides Turkish population in general we also like to look into the characteristic and developments of Turkish communication sector. To finally find out what culture and communication mean to the Turkish consumer.

4. How can the relevant knowhow and experience of European clubs be applied in Turkey?
We know many European automobile clubs have years of experience. Unfortunately roadside assistance is not so developed in Turkey. The knowledge and experience of Europe will be necessary to realize a strategy. First of all it is essential to locate and understand the relation between Marmassistance and the European clubs. In addition we want to prospect which club and which information is relevant for Marmassistance. To finally be able to project their knowledge and experience on our subject.

5. Which strategy is best to promote the roadside assistance program on the Turkish market?
The last link to complete our main question is: strategy. We look into useful strategies for the three main subjects of our thesis. What is a good strategy to the Turkish culture, to the automotive market and to Marmassistance. Finally we form these three into the final answer, which strategy is best to promote roadside assistance on the Turkish market.

4.3 Research design
In this paragraph we will expose our research design. We will show how we assembled information, who we have interviewed and how we processed the collected information.

4.2.1 Methodology
To get closer insights into the subject of our thesis we assembled information. We had two main information sources for our thesis: written documents and professionals. From these sources we learned more about the five main themes:
- Roadside assistance;
- Marmassistance;
- Turkish culture;
- Turkish automotive market;
- European automobile clubs;
- Marketing and communication strategies.

These themes are the subjects of our main question and sub questions. We also mounted these themes for the following reason. Unfortunately, there is not much ready made information available that fits our subject ‘communication and promotion of roadside assistance’ perfectly. Especially when it concerns Turkey. We accepted the challenge to assemble literature on several subjects and to merge it into one solution.

Studying the written documents to collect information on these themes, is what we call our desk research. In addition we interviewed professionals working on these fields. For the ease of use, we will name our contact with the professionals: field research.

4.3.2 Data collection methods
Desk research
To discover the existing relevant information about our six themes, we did research. For each theme we found literature. The literature on roadside assistance contains articles and internal documents. Logically, we studies internal documents to learn more of Marmassistance. For the third theme
we studied books of the experts Hall and Hofstede. To learn more on the Turkish automotive market we studied statistics and articles. For the theme promotion we made use of books on strategies and articles by professionals. And finally, we studied power points and other documents of European automobile clubs to get better insight in these clubs. Following sources helped us find the literature:

**Persons:**
- Ozan Alemdaroğlu, Marketing Supervisor at Marmassistance;
- Ton Veen, Teacher an International Course Coordinator at Christelijke Hogeschool Ede;
- Feray Alpay, Partner and General Manager at Promedia Marketing Public Relations Turkey;
- Ronald Verel, Director Sales and Marketing at ARC Europe.

**Organizations:**
- ARC Europe;
- Automotive Manufacturers Association (OSD);
- International Public Relations Association (IPRA).

**Internet:**
- Google;
- Google Books;
- PaperC;
- HBO Kennisbank.

We made use of these sources for several reasons. We wanted to orientate us on the themes, we wanted to go into the themes and to substructure our advice. During our research we found links and references to other valuable information, which we also studied. For a full insight into our literature, we redirect you to the bibliography.

**Field research**
For the field research we used depth interviews with experts to get their relevant knowledge and experience on paper. “In-depth interviews are useful when you want detailed information about a person’s thoughts and behaviors or want to explore new issues in depth. Interviews are often used to provide context to other data (such as outcome data), offering a more complete picture.” (Conducting in-depth interviews, 2006, p. 3) For this matter, interviews are useful for us.

As said before, our study is spread over five main fields. We have tried to make a good selection of people who could provide us interesting information on one and preferably more of the fields. We assembled visions on our subject from different angles. We interviewed them following a half structured topic list. We believe a half structured topic list is beneficial, both for the interviewer and the interviewees.

We got in contact with our inspiring interviewees in different ways. We have met some very interesting international people at the office of Marmassistance. Our supervisor Ozan Alemdaroğlu, contacted Turkish people for us, we found some names on the internet and twice an interviewee named someone else who could also help us. We have spoken with the following persons, in- and outside the company:

**Intern:**
- Mr. O. Alemdaroğlu, Project and marketing supervisor roadside assistance of Marmassistance;
- Ms. E. Sahinkaya, Operator at Marmassistance;
- Dr. G. Bolat, Medical marketing manager at Marmassistance;
Extern:

- Mr. H. Biekmann, Network manager of ARC Europe;
- Mr. R. Verel, Marketing manager of ARC Europe;
- Mr. R. Delanote, Network and account manager of Europe Net;
- Mr. E. Grootmeijer, Network manager of ANWB Holland;
- Dr. E. Bozyazi, Integration Manager of ADAC Germany;
- Mr. Kulakovskiy, Manager at Global Medical Alliance;
- Mr. S. Sarti, CEO of Europ assistance and Europ assistance Turkey;
- Mrs. Ergül, After sales consultant at Mercedes-Benz;
- Ms. Y. Yilmaz, Workshop manager of an Opel and Chevrolet dealer;
- Mr. B. Lomas and D. Hinchin, After sales managers of Jaguar & Land Rover of the UK and Turkey;
- Mr. S. Turkmen, Group account director at Lowe Advertising Istanbul;
- Dr. Candan Celik, Lecturer at University of Central Lancashire.

After these interviews, we had a second interview with our supervisor Mr. O. Alemdaroğlu and with Mr. H. Biekmann to verify some of our findings.

4.4 Accountability of our research

We considered achieving a quantitative survey, but several important considerations led us to the decision not to. These considerations were: the language barrier, the feasibility time and population wise, the relevance and the benefit of shallow response. It makes more sense to investigate the Turkish culture and market, using high-level valid literature and to interview experts of marketing and the automotive market.

Making use of two sources enlarges the validity of a research. In our case, we used literature and professionals. We studied literature to research our subject. Thereafter we deepened and applied the information by talking to professionals. The other way around, we were able to verify the information given by the professionals. We believe this is a very valid method.

This is an interpretive approach of research, as qualitative research often is interpretative. Interpretive means that “the researcher is looking for interpretation and meanings persons give to situations rather than plain numbers.” (Hjobasics, n.d.) “If researching reality, one should not be restricted by standard registration methods. In contrary, one should reckon the human act and interpretation.” (Korzilius, 2000, p.5)

And again to maintain the validity of the research, it is “important to essay the plausibility by considering whether the consistency of interpretation is applied on every aspect.” (Digital study centre of the Utrecht University, n.d.) We ensure this through the interaction and comparison of the vision of written documents and professionals.

4.5 Evaluation of our research

Because there was not much ready made information, we started our desk- and field research based on the six themes:

- Roadside assistance;
- Marmassistance;
- Turkish culture;
- Turkish automotive market;
- European automobile clubs;
- Marketing and communication strategies.

Our research started very well in Holland. With a briefing of Mr. Biekmann and Mr. Grootmeijer on roadside assistance. And well begun is half done. But unfortunately, this was not the case. It was only when we were in
Turkey that we discovered how complex the roadside assistance market is. With the help of many articles and interviews we got better insight.

Thereafter we assembled information from our sources on the six themes, in the above mentioned order. We selected the information, we thought was relevant. Given the situation and the amount of time, we assembled enough information and spoke to many people to answer our main question and give good advice. However, we do realize one could always extend its information sources. And one might find missing information.

Having assembled the information, we connected the information into answers for our sub questions and ultimately for our main question. All our answers are based on information in our desk- or field research. Which will give our reader the possibility to check our answers. The attentive reader even might discover links in our research, which we also use in our answers.

We believe linking and connecting the information from six themes, was a very good way to describe an unused and unwritten subject. And it was a nice challenge. Because we liked to learn more of the Turkish culture and the automotive market. Especially we enjoyed to interview people and learn more of their point of view. For us it was a chance to look beyond communications. It certainly broadened our vision.

During this experience our colleagues and many others were very supportive. We are aware of the fact that it sounds cliché, but it is the truth: we could not have managed writing this thesis without their help. We believe this is worth a mention in our evaluation.
5 Guide through our desk research

“Our reader will not get lost on the road.”

In this chapter we will briefly guide you through our desk research. This way our reader will not get lost on the road to promote roadside assistance.

We chose to spread our five desk research themes over five chapters. The following chapter, chapter 6, contains assembled information on roadside assistance. It will define roadside assistance in general and in Turkey.

Chapter 7 is about Marmassistance. It will give a better insight on Marmassistance company profile, its core business and its services.

This chapter is being followed by chapter 8. It will give a description of the Turkish culture. Though it is a grand and extensive subject, we will give a brief description of the Turkish culture, based on explanations given by experts.

Then we will describe the Turkish automotive market in chapter 9. Which will give insight in features, developments and figures.

Next, is chapter 10. It is about the European service providers, and their trends and developments. We believe this could be really useful for Marmassistance.

Finally, chapter 11 consists of marketing communication strategies.
6 Roadside assistance

“Roadside assistance service comes in many forms, for many prices and in- and excluding many diverse services.”

This chapter is divided into two parts. We will first look into roadside assistance services in general (6.1) followed by roadside assistance services in Turkey (6.2).
6.1 Roadside assistance in general

Our first research subject is roadside assistance. Finding non-commercial information in order to learn more about this subject turned out to be hard. We start off with the definition of roadside assistance. Followed by the summary of two independent articles. Also a table of the meaning of roadside assistance in diverse countries and companies is added.

The existing definition is: “Roadside assistance warranty offers emergency assistance such as towing, jump starting, changing a flat tire, fuel and fluid delivery, pulling out a vehicle that is stuck in snow or helping people who are locked out of their vehicles.” (About automobile, n.d.)

6.1.1 Beware the gaps

Many companies offer roadside assistance. “Motor clubs such as AAA or Better World Club used to be a driver’s only option. But these days, an army of other businesses are offering roadside assistance plans: insurance companies, carmakers, oil companies, credit-card issuers, even cell-phone service providers.” (Consumer Report, 2008)

Comparing the companies it seems that “roadside assistance services offerings vary”. For an annual charge of about $36 to $100, they provide towing, flat-tire changing, lost-key replacement, help with vehicles that are stuck, and delivery of fuel or coolant. They also offer maps and directions, travel and hotel discounts, trip-interruption insurance, and help in locating hotels or alternative transportation when your car is disabled.” (Consumer Report, 2008) Memberships are not the only option. Also car-manufacturers have plans that come free with a new car for the length of the warranty, usually three or four years.

6.1.2 Do you have roadside assistance and not even realize it?

There are different kind of programs that offers one help in case of a breakdown.

Roadside assistance is available from almost every car manufacturer. “In most cases the coverage matches the new-car warranty. The level of service you get varies. Some programs include trip interruption reimbursement, others simply tow the car away. Tow trucks come from a local service company that is part of a network that currently holds the contract with the carmaker.” (Shea, 2010) Beyond new-car coverage periods, some manufacturers will allow you to renew your coverage on an ongoing basis, which can be a nice option.

“If you don’t have a new car, the odds are pretty strong that you have other options available to you. Many credit cards offer roadside assistance coverage as either a benefit to “gold” or higher cards, or as a fee-based option for standard cards. You can either pay annually or on an as-needed basis, depending on your card. Some cell phone companies also offer coverage for a few dollars a month. Many insurance companies also offer plans.” (Shea, 2010)

Of course, there also are third-party motor clubs that offer roadside assistance, such as the American Automobile Association. The biggest difference between programs of a motor club and manufacturer-provided programs is that while your car is covered from the car manufacturer, you are covered personally by AAA even as a passenger.

Conclusively, roadside assistance service comes in many forms, for many prices and in- and excluding many diverse services.
6.2 Turkish roadside assistance

Above we have seen what roadside assistance in general means. Now we will have a closer look into roadside assistance in Turkey. Turkish roadside assistance service is not as much developed as it is in European countries.

For example, in the Netherlands there is a long history of roadside assistance. Such history does not exist in Turkey. But even though the roadside assistance is not as developed, it does exist. There are several companies offering roadside assistance. Below is a brief description of these companies, their aims and history.

6.2.1 Competitors

Mondial assistance
Mondial Assistance Turkey is a subsidiary of Mondial Assistance Group. This company provides a wide range of programs of which roadside assistance to the clients of their B2B partners is one. The roadside assistance programs includes roadside assistance, towing, rent-a-car and if necessary personal service like hotel and transportation arrangements.

Mondial Assistance aims that “to be able to effectively close the file, a Europlus agent considers always the customer satisfaction in the first place and results each case in a shortest period of time with the help of a trusted network.” (Mondial-assistance, n.d.)

Europe assistance
Europe assistance is an international company with agents in many countries. Their mission is to find a solution and bring immediate aid to travelers in distress. They provide several services to B2B and B2C clients. Roadside assistance services is one of them.

It includes:
- Repairing/towing the vehicle
- Covering accommodation costs
- Providing a replacement vehicle
- Arranging/paying for you to return home
- Following up repairs
- Returning your vehicle to your home

(Europ Assistance, n.d.)

Inter partner assistance
Inter Partner Assistance Turkey is part of Inter Partner Assistance Worldwide. They supply services in four large domains: vehicle, travel, home, health. They have vehicle programs for insurance companies, manufacturers, rental car companies, etc. The services they provide are:
- Vehicle towing and rescue;
- Roadside repairs;
- Personal assistance such as hotel arrangements, onward-travel, rental car, etc.

The mission of the vehicle services is to guarantee mobility for its motorist, everywhere and in every situation. (Interpartnerassistance, n.d.)

Tur Assist
Tur Assist a subsidiary of Mapfre. Mapfre is a Spanish insurance multinational with companies in many countries, in and out of Europe. They offer diverse assistance programs and one of the programs is roadside assistance.

Roadside assistance is a service they only offer to their business partners. The exact description of the service is: “In the event of a vehicle breakdown, Tur Assistance will send a tow truck or repair vehicle to repair the breakdown on site or tow it. Also, if the insured vehicle is immobilized due
to a breakdown or accident, Tur Assistance will provide a replacement vehicle, arranging its delivery and collection.”

The benefit of these services for the business partners is the fact that “assistance services is one of the key elements to stand out from the competition. It is for this reason that incorporating our range of services, you will be offering your customers fast and effective solutions which in return increase their loyalty and improve your corporate image.” (Turassist, n.d.)

Assist Line
Assist Line is a Turkish insurance company. They offer diverse service programs to banks, automotive companies, major textile and clothing companies, furniture companies etc.

The main principle of Assist line is quality service. Learn about the problem from the customer as soon as possible, follow up and ensure customer satisfaction after overcoming the problem.

The roadside assistance services are categorized as follows:
- Towing;
- Roadside Assistance such as locksmiths, glass, tire replacement;
- Personal Assistance such as on-ward travel, hotel organization;
- Vehicle Replacement.
(Assistline, n.d.)

6.2.2 Competitors from higher perspective
Marmassistance is the Turkish service provider for ARC Europe. The competitors called above are not related to ARC, but some of them are related to another European company an some of the competitors are independent. In the figure below the relation of the first three competitors is made visual.

Together with ARC these are the major actors on the automotive service market. The business model of these three and ARC differ. AXA, Europe assistance and Mondial assistance “Use service provision as a medium for insurance and banking” (Blanckenburg, 2010) For ARC service provision is its only business and its existence is based on this.

Not only the business model of ARC and her competitors differ, also the areas they work in differ as shown in figure 3. In addition, figure 4 shows the place of ARC Europe in the market.
Conclusion
On European level ARC Europe has some competitors. The subsidiaries of their competitors are direct competitors of Marmassistance. However we have seen that the focus and main purposes of ARC and its competitors and therefore of the subsidiaries and Marmassistance differ.

6.2.3 Turkish roadside assistance history makers
We described the current situation and competition on the roadside assistance market in Turkey. But there are also two noticeable companies that have tried, but in the end failed, in offering roadside assistance services. These two companies are ADAC Turkey and the Turkish Touring Club.

ADAC is the automobile club of Germany. It is the biggest automobile club from Europe and the third biggest of the world. In 2008 ADAC expanded its business towards Turkey, providing international assistance and call center services for carmakers and ADAC members. The carmakers they served included Ford, Mercedes, Opel and Volkswagen.

In April 2010 ADAC Turkey introduced a new business model on the Turkish market; exclusive membership club services. They served 25,000 members and the cost of a membership was 95 Turkish lira.

The good news of growing business was announced in April 2010 and only short after that in December ADAC closed the Turkish company and submitted a bankruptcy petition. According to the article “ADAC has decided to withdraw from the Turkish market after determining its investments in the country were not productive.” (Çelebi, 2011)

Before ADAC there also was a Turkish Touring Club. The Touring and Automobile Club of Turkey, was founded in 1923 at the behest of Atatürk, the leader of Turkey at that moment. It was founded similar to the clubs in Europe. But other than European clubs it was an arm of the government in the fields of tourism, culture and technical issues. It produced Turkey’s first prospectuses, posters, tourist guides and road maps.
This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part outlines the profile of Marmassistance (7.1). Followed by more in-depth information on the diverse departments of Marmassistance and the services they provide (7.2). We conclude this chapter with an analysis of Marmassistance’s communication tools (7.3).
7.1 Company profile

Marmassistance is a leading and ISO certificated assistance company in Turkey. Which offers medical and technical services.

Marmassistance vision is:
*To continue as the market leader in the provision of medical and technical assistance in Turkey and the neighboring states, the Arab Peninsula, the Turkic Republics, the Balkans, the Caspian Region and Russia through the use of state-of-the-art technology and provision of tailor-made B2B assistance services to international insurance companies.* (Marmassistance, n.d.)

The mission of Marmassistance is:
*To take a pro-active, innovative and flexible approach towards the assistance services.* (Marmassistance, n.d.)

Marmassistance was founded in 1986. Marmassistance entered the assistance market as a medical solution provider, working 24/7 with supportive medical officers. Mainly for business-to-business. Over the years Marmassistance expanded her services on several areas. In these areas the main business activities are providing services for clients of their partner organizations. Marmassistance has a lot of partner organizations abroad. These organisations are mainly insurance companies. For instance, ANWB and SOS International. These partners supply travel insurance to clients. If anything happens to their clients while they are staying in Turkey or in any other region Marmassistance covers, Marmassistance provides services to these clients.

To provide these services Marmassistance makes use of national partners. These partners execute the assistance services. They are called the subcontractors of Marmassistance.

7.2 Marmassistance departments

As said before, Marmassistance initial services were medical. The other services contain operational activities. The medical and operational service, both have main activities. Below the construction and the activities are made visual and in the following paragraphs the departments will be explained.

![Marmassistance Department Diagram](image.png)

7.2.2 Medical department

Marmassistance provides medical services throughout Turkey, the region of the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Middle East, and Central Asia. The medical department of Marmassistance is divided in two parts: medical services and cost containment.
7.2.1.1 Medical services
The medical service basically means that Marmassistance contacts with the hospitals and has her in house doctors study the client’s case as well. All to assure that every client receives appropriate care.

7.2.1.2 Cost containment
When there has been reached an agreement on the care of the client, the request goes to the medical cost containment department. The cost containment service is a service that controls all costs based on the invoices. But also has price agreements with hospitals. All to assure that every client pays the right prices for the services that are necessary.

7.2.2 Technical department
Marmassistance also provides operational services. These services include organizational and technical activities.

7.2.2.1 Organizational services
The organizational part of mechanical breakdown is done by Marmassistance. The organizational services consist of various activities, such as:
- Visa acquirements;
- Flight arrangements;
- Hotel accommodation;
- Taxi transfers;
- Accident management;
- Funeral arrangements.

7.2.2.2 Technical services
The technical services provided by Marmassistance, at first included roadside assistance for only a few tourists in Turkey. Since December 2010 Marmassistance expanded her roadside assistance activities, due to the take-over of the collapsed ADAC Turkey activities. Present Marmassistance provides roadside assistance to both Turkish population and tourists. Below is described how the Turkish population and the tourists become Marmassistance’s clients.

Marmassistance is the business partner of ARC in Turkey. ARC is a European network company, owned by eight automobile associations. Within the huge network of ARC, automobile associations cooperate to cover their services in whole Europe. ARC has contracts with car manufacturers in Europe. Being a partner of ARC means that Marmassistance not only provides services for car manufacturers, but also for ARC’s business partners. (ARC Europe, n.d.) According to their contracts Marmassistance provides road side assistance to these car manufacturers: Opel, Chevrolet, Jaguar and Iveco Trucks. For instance, if a client with an Opel has a car breakdown, he or she gets directly in contact with Marmassistance. For Marmassistance has a contract with ARC, which has a contract with Opel.

The execution of roadside assistance
Marmassistance does not do the practical execution of roadside assistance (repairing, towing, replacing). It has a call centre and contracts for the execution with 2,200 garages and 500 towing companies. These garages and towing companies do the actual towing and repairing services. Besides these, Marmassistance has a lot of other contracted partners for example, rental companies, hotels, taxi companies and travel agencies.
All together they provide these services:
- (Temporary) repair after breakdown;
- Towing services;
- Facilitation and monitoring of vehicle repair;
- Car replacement arrangement;
- Provision of spare parts;
- Vehicle repatriation.

**Towing services**
Marmassistance also offers towing services for vehicles with serious damage. Therefore, Marmassistance has contracts with many towing companies. This towing network can respond and provide service whenever and wherever necessary.

**Facilitation and monitoring of vehicle repair**
Once a vehicle is towed to the nearest garage, Marmassistance monitors the facilitation of the vehicle repair. She sends detailed damage reports to the insurance company of the client.

**Car replacement arrangement**
If a car cannot be mended, Marmassistance arranges replacement cars for the travellers, while their vehicles are in repair. Almost every car brand or model can be hired in Turkey.

**Provision of spare parts**
If there are spare parts needed in order to fix the car, Marmassistance will try to find the spare parts if they are not available in the cars garage.

**Vehicle repatriation**
Finally, Marmassistance also offers customs services. If a car cannot be fixed at all, the vehicle registration has to be removed from the tourist’s passport or registration. For a client cannot travel abroad without the car in its passport. Marmassistance assists the client in this process paperwork and helps to transfer the car to its hometown destination. (Marmassistance, 2010)
7.3 Analysis of Marmassistance’s communication tools

Now that we know the company Marmassistance, we take a closer look into their communication tools. The only media they use are the website and some PowerPoint presentations.

The first impression of Marmassistance to us is medical. This is because of the use of red and white in pictures, logo and design. These colors are both used on the website and in the diverse power points. Red and white are a typical medical combination of colors in Europe. These colors represent the medical part of Marmassistance very well. However, these colors do not give a technical impression.

Besides the colors there are other typical aspects in the communication of Marmassistance. First of all the use of many figures and numbers. This is a businesslike manner to express the performance of the company. Another way of expressing this performance is always mentioning the ISO certification.

On every PowerPoint and often the website there is mentioned their 24/7 service and accessibility. This is to emphasize their mentality.

The division of the technical and medical part is made very clear. We notice that they are aware of the difference between these two parts under the same brand. Nevertheless this division is not made clear in the design. The overall look of Marmassistance is very medical.

We also notice that employees of Marmassistance make PowerPoint’s without a format and therefore all presentations look very different. There is no such thing as corporate design. And even the use of red and white is not always consistent. Blue or purple PowerPoint’s are no exception.
8 Turkish culture

“From traditional eastern ways of trading to western business practices.”

This chapter exist of two parts namely Turkish culture in general (8.1) followed by the Turkish public relations culture (8.1). The second part gives us insight in the development, the role and the vision on the Turkish communication sector.
8.1 Turks described

We start our research on the Turkish culture with the well known description of Mr. Hofstede. We describe the four dimensions and explain them connected to Turks (8.1.1). Since the figures of Hofstede are quite old and not very up to date, we also portray the Turks using Mr. Halls description (8.1.2).

8.1.1 Turks in dimensions

Hofstede formed five dimensions to describe a culture. In his opinion a framework to describe cultures must consist of empirically verifiable and independent dimensions on which cultures can be meaningfully ordered. He created such a framework by doing a survey across more than 50 countries. Therefore, his model is very reliably and useful. And generally accepted. We use his model to describe the Turkish culture. (Hofstede, 2001, p. 29) These are the five dimensions:

- Power distance, this dimension is related with solutions for human inequality;
- Individualism versus collectivism, this dimension is about the integration of individuals into groups;
- Masculinity versus femininity, this dimension concerns emotional roles between men and women;
- Uncertainty avoidance, this dimension deals with society’s tolerance for uncertainty;
- Long-term orientation versus short-term orientation, this dimension deals with the importance attached to the future in regard to the past.

Describing the Turkish culture based on five dimensions

Below the Turkish culture is scaled on a scale of 0 - 100, based on these dimensions.

Power distance score: 66 (Hofstede, 2001, p. 87)
The power distance in Turkey is very high. Social distance and respect is very important in Turkey. For example, one should call a manager “Mr. Manager”, and not just call him by his first name or surname. (Kwintessential, n.d.)

Individualism versus collectivism score: 37 (Hofstede, 2001, p. 215)
Turks are very collectivistic, not individualistic. They are integrated into strong groups, mostly extended families. (Hofstede, n.d.)

Masculinity versus femininity score: 45 (Hofstede, 2001, p. 286)
In this dimension Turks score is medium, although Turkey tends to femininity. Turks are modest and caring. According to Hofstede (n.d.), “the women in feminine countries have the same modest, caring values as the men.”

Uncertainty avoidance score: 85 (Hofstede, 2001, p. 151)
Turkey scores very high on the uncertainty avoidance index. This indicates a high value on absolute truth (Hofstede, n.d.). Turks do not like to take risks.

Long-term orientation versus short-term orientation score: -
Turkish culture has not been measured with this dimension. That is why we do not use this dimension in our literature study.

We are aware of the fact that Hofstedes figures are dated. That is why we also make use of other cultural academics to verify it. Hereafter we will
describe the Turkish culture following the high and low culture terms of Hall.

8.1.2 Turks; high or low context?
People all over the world give different meanings to aspects in life, in business; in general. According to Hall (1990) the meaning one gives is produced by two aspects; the event and the context. Context is: “the information that surrounds an event” (Hall, 1990, p.6) Contexts differ between cultures and therefore meanings differ between cultures. One can compare cultures based on the context, using a scale from low to high contexts.

“A high context communication or message is one which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the code, explicit, transmitted part of the message. A low context communication is just the opposite.” (Hall, 1976, cited by Hall 1990, p.6) This means that in a low context communication much of the information has to be shared explicit in the message.

Low context cultures are Americans and Northern Europeans. “They compartmentalize their personal relationships, their work, and many aspects of day to day life”(Hall, 1990, p.7) This results in the fact that every time when they have interaction they need much and detailed background information. And their messages include much explicit context information.

On the opposite are the: Japanese, Arabs and Mediterranean people, including Turkey. They have high context cultures and so use high context communications. High context cultures are characterized by extensive informational networks among family, friends, colleagues, and clients and close personal relationships. These cultures “do not require, nor do they expect much in-depth, background information”, for most normal transactions in daily life. They make sure they are always and on forehand informed on what is going on with the important people in their life.

Conclusively we can say that the message send to either low or high context cultures should contain more or less and different information. A high context person can get irritated by receiving too much ‘useless’ information and a low context person is at loss and might feel left out on too little information.

The last note we should add is; that of course “within each culture there are specific individual differences in the need for context.” But it is useful to know whether a person or company in a particularly country is more low of high context. (Hall, 1990, p.10)
8.2 Turkish public relations culture

Before we write a strategy on promoting roadside assistance it is very important for us to get better insight in the meaning of the communication sector in Turkey. We analyzed diverse articles to get a clear view on the developments, the current place and the role of communication.

We are aware of the fact that we outlined our thesis with the communication mix and that we are currently using the term public relations. We would like to explain this. In Turkey, it is a little bit indistinct what the difference is between public relations and communication. Sometimes the term public relations is used for all activities of the communication mix. Alpay says there are a lot of independent public relations companies in Turkey. “They are working on press releases, media relations, integrated marketing communications, corporate communication, road show organizations, event organizations, seminar and conference organizing and advertisement for their clients.” (Alpay, 2009.) We can conclude that public relations in this case includes all communication aspects from corporate communication to product advertising. For the sake of convenience, we use the term public relations in our literature study.

8.2.1 Growth of public relations sector

Turkey is a merging economy on the border of east and west. The location of Turkey as well as the merging economy and the changing society and culture, combined with the vision of entering the European Union, has a big impact on the public relations industry. The attitude towards the public relations industry reflects the modernization “from traditional eastern ways of trading to western business practices.” (Ruler and Vercic, 2004, p. 442).

Major opportunities in the fields of communications and marketing appear, according to McGeachin (n.d.) of the international public relations association.

Public relations is heading upwards. But that was not always the case. Public relations used to have a negative image referred to as “a profession of young ladies wearing stockings under miniskirts.” But with change of culture, the view on public relations change as well. (Ruler and Vercic, 2004, p. 443)

Public relations as an unprepared story

While public relations is known in Turkey for a long time, only recently it started to develop. The public relations market is not on the same level as the public relations sector of Western Europe. Many public relations is very ad lib. It is an unprepared story. Public relations advisor Cigdem Akkaya (cited by Selbach, 2010, p. 27) says “Especially the large holdings and company groups from Central Anatolia are still traditionally oriented and make little PR.” The problem of the public relations sector in Turkey is that public relations for a very long time was “a loosely used term for a wide range of activities, the profession is not regulated: there are no legal or professional requirements.” (Ruler and Vercic, 2004, p. 443) Because of the little developed state of public relations in Turkey, finding data and research on the profession, especially in English, is not easy.

However, we analyzed the publications that we could find, to get a clear view on the developments and especially the current state of public relations in Turkey.

The current state of public relations

Alpay (n.d.a) says companies in Turkey began to appreciate “the magic of public relations in recent years, and began transferring a part of their advertising budgets to public relations activities.” His positive view is confirmed with figures by the international public relations association. They announced that the sector grew with 20% in 2005 and this grow will only continue. Apparently companies in Turkey start to understand the advantage of a clear public relations strategy. (McGeachin, n.d.)
recently, ICCO surveyed the increase of the sectoral income. It turns out that Turkey of all countries has the highest increased sectoral income in public relations: “Turkish public relations sector displayed an increase of 27% compared to the year 2007. It is estimated that such increase will continue in the year 2008 as well.” (Alpay, n.d.a)

As said, public relations has grown over the years. One of the main reasons for this growth is “the competitive need for Turkish corporations to keep pace with European and United States corporate communications advancements.” (Sharpe, 1992 cited in Ruler and Vercic, 2004, p. 446)

Cem İlhan, explains the cause of the growth in the public relations sector different. In his opinion, after 2001 crisis, the Turkish manufacturing and service industries became more competitive. For this reason they started to invest heavily in communications, especially advertising. Cem İlhan doubts if this growth is very healthy. In short, while the total income of the public relations industry increased, profitability declined considerably. The rise of many new firms troubled the emerge of large firms that could further institutionalization of the public relations industry. One could say there’s a huge price value struggle going on. (Cem İlhan n.d.)

We feel Cem İlhan’s opinion on this-so-called struggle is somewhat unrefined. Therefore, we would like to compare his statement to McGeachin’s opinion. “The growing volume of the foreign direct investment in the Turkish economy has resulted in a significant rise in the number of trans-national communication companies competing in the Turkish marketplace. Such development has had a very positive impact as competition increases and the quality of services provided improves.” (McGeachin’s n.d.)

However, Cem İlhan is not completely pessimistic. Just like, McGeachin, he has hopes for the future. Because the rise of these many new public relations companies which handle cutthroat pricing policies, also contributed to the expansion of demand for public relations services. In paragraph 8.2.4 we cover more of the exact services of public relations in Turkey. But first we would like to get more insights of the active areas of public relations. (Cem İlhan n.d.)

8.2.2 Public Relations; active in every area

Today, public relations finds its place in government, non-profit organizations, and politics. And it is practiced by “an increasing number of public relations practitioners with degrees in public relations, economics, or journalism. Public relations departments, firms, and practitioners are a part of the Turkish business world today.” (Ruler and Vercic, 2004, p. 448) The business they serve are explicit active in a few branches.

According to Alpay (n.d.a), “most public relations activities are seen especially in the sectors of pharmaceutics, personal care, food, finance, information, recreation and the automotive market.”

8.2.3 The role of PR

Above information shows that public relations has an increasing role in Turkish profit, non-profit companies and governments. Below we will further look into the role of public relations.

A survey among 46 leading Turkish firms showed that most of the companies view public relations as a one-way communication activity. In this one-way way of thinking public relations includes activities such as “informing customers, organizing media relations, reaching the audience with newsletters and news, and publicity.” (Strateji and Mori, 1999 cited in Ruler and Vercic, 2004, p. 443) However, a study towards the understanding of public relations using Grunig’s four models* showed that some organizations use the two-way asymmetrical and the two-way symmetrical
model, only rarely (Okay and Okay, 2001 cited in Ruler and Vercic, 2004, p. 444)

* Grunig’s four models.

The communication models of Grunig (1992 cited by De Vries 2001, p.8) initially make use of two dimensions: One-way/two-way and asymmetrical/symmetrical. One-way model means that organizations only spreads information towards the public, it is a monologue. In a Two-way model an organization exchanges information with the public: it is a dialogue.

When an organization uses the asymmetrical model it tries to change the public’s behavior without changing itself. Making use of the symmetrical model means that the organization is also willing to adapt. This last dimensions is about un(equality) of parties. (De Vries, 2001, p.8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Press agentry/publicity</th>
<th>The aim of communications is acquiring positive publicity in the mass media.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one-way asymmetrical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Information</td>
<td>Communications is using journalism to spread relatively objective information about the organization via the media towards the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one-way asymmetrical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way asymmetrical</td>
<td>The organization examines the attitude of the public to develop messages that persuade the public to act in a way that is profitable for the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way symmetrical</td>
<td>The organization uses research and dialogue to manage conflict, improve understanding and build relations with the public.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above cited study, public relations in Turkey is mainly performed following the one-way model. This outcome corresponds with different articles as cited below. They show that the most wanted services are mainly focused on sending information.

Alpay in his article states that the main services Turkish public relations agencies provide are: media relations (94%), activity management (74%), corporate social responsibility works (69%) and product and brand public relations (66%). These figures explain us that "PR sector in Turkey obtains its income mainly from operational public relations services they provide to their clients. Instead of corporate communication consultancy such as reputation management, perception management, crisis management, they concentrate on company and product publicity.” (Alpay n.d.a) This is exactly what Cem Ilhan (n.d.) says: “The Turkish public relations industry makes most of its income through the operational public relations services it provides to its customers.” He continues with stating that public relations currently is rather recognized as a service that concentrates on the promotion of companies and products, than as a communication instrument.

Also McGeachin (n.d.) agrees. “Despite the growing interest on public relations in of the market, media relations continue to be the most wanted service. Usually, the success of Turkish public relations agencies is measured by the coverage numbers.” Companies also feel that “media relations and event management as the most important goals for PR”. (Cem Ilhan, n.d.)

The figures mentioned by Alpay (n.d.a) show the importance of these two goals; media relations (96.3%) and activity management (92.6%)

**Media usage of the Turkish consumer**

There is slight difference between the basics of media relations in Europe and in Turkey. “Media relations in Turkey are based on close and personal friendships, rather than corporate and standardized practices as in EU and USA. It would be too optimistic to e-mail press releases to Turkish media and expect them to be published because the desired result can only be achieved with a media pitch via telephone or visits.” (Alpay, n.d.b)

McGeachin (n.d.) thinks that the public relations sector will soon be asked to
expand its services beyond media relations. The reason for this is, “the degradation of media as sources of trustworthy information. Turkish readers are becoming increasingly sceptical of the ‘ad-like’ articles in the country’s media.” (McGeachin, n.d.)

Turkish consumers like watching television. In Turkey, it is nearly a tradition to watch television the whole evening. The watching rates of the Turkish population are 94%, according to Alpay (cited by Selbach, 2010, p.24) In addition 2009 30% of the Turkish households had internet connection, this percentage raised to 42.6% in 2010.

The promising future of public relations
In her article McGeachin (n.d.) refers to an survey amongst: business leaders, media and public relations representatives. The outcome of this survey shows a remarkable fact and a promising future.

First of all the remarkable fact: “Strategic communications consultancy and public relations are considered as two different professional areas.” (McGeachin, n.d.) Apparently integrated communication is not so developed yet in Turkey. Apart from this, the promising future for public relations is the fact that:

“The most important message for the public relations industry is that all the three groups participating in the research agree that corporate communications is crucial for companies to achieve their business objectives and therefore believe that corporate communications consultancy, media relations, research and measurement will be the most important services in the following couple of years. (McGeachin, n.d.)

Cem İlhan also has a vision on the future of public relations. In his article he says that in future there are going to be extra advertising activities in five main areas:
- Online communications;
- Corporate social responsibility;
- Lobbying;
- Sponsorship management;
- Direct Marketing.

Besides the increasing activities Cem İlhan names various competences of communication managers that CEO’s will expect to be developed in future, amongst others: creativity, economic and political knowledge, creation of solutions and strategic thinking. Last but not least they want the quality of the services to be on par with their price. (Cem İlhan n.d.)

8.2.4 Conclusion on developments and the role of Public Relations
The growth of the economy, the modernization and the strengthened relation with the EU led to more competition on the Turkish market. Therefore public relations sector became more important and increased its service. The public relations service developed over the last few years. Most of the current communications do not include corporate communications. But studies show that there is a change towards awareness of the importance of corporate communications. Also this development might lead to two-way communications. Whereas we saw above that companies mainly make use of the one-way model due to the fact that communications is only operational; information sending.
9 Turkish automotive market

“Turkey stands 17th in the rank of world’s largest automotive manufacturers.”

This chapter exists of one part namely the Turkish automotive market. To begin with the increased competitiveness due to the agreement with the European union (9.1) Followed by some statistics on production, import and export to emphasize the improved automotive market. (9.2) But first we will start off with a general introduction of the global automotive market.
9 Turkish automotive market

One can describe the automotive market in general (worldwide) as follows:

The automotive market is strongly developed. And also very competitive. There are a number of global car producers, who compete insistently in various sectors. They juggle for market positions and try to enlarge their profitability by scaling in productions. “For instance, Ford has acquired Jaguar and Volvo to position itself more prominently in the sports and prestige sector of the market.” (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, p.514)

For our thesis we researched only the automotive market in turkey. Which has of course strong relations with the market worldwide. Because as said above a few car brands dominate the market worldwide and therefore they also are the main stakeholders on the Turkish automotive market. Now we will look into the changes on the Turkish automotive market due to the first steps towards integration in the European Union.

9.1 EU-Turkey relations

In 1999, Turkey was officially recognized as a candidate for full membership of the European Union. They signed a custom union agreement as the first step to become full member of the European Union. (Arikan, 2006, p. 227) These negotiations have accelerated the economic relations as well as the competition process between the EU and Turkey.

Competition on European level

Bekmez and Komut from the Mugla University, studied this issue and published a paper on ‘Competitiveness of Turkish Automotive Industry: A Comparison with European Union Countries’. Bekmez and Komut stated that decisions of the government, liberalizations and cooperation with the EU specifically have affected the automotive sector. Mobility of capital increased and developments in technology took place.

Competition on global level

The European Union has the largest automotive sector in the world. By signing the custom union agreement, the Turkish automotive sector became a part of the global automotive sector.

This globalization created unavoidable competitiveness among the automotive sectors. Not just competitiveness in price level, but also in quality, on time delivery, profit rate and widespread services. This worldwide trend affects the Turkish automotive industry as well. (Bekmez and Komut, 2006, p. 184)

Turkish automotive sector increased the productivity and quality in order to become competitive in the global world. Thereafter, the Turkish automotive sector became exporter rather than importer. Currently, Turkey is Europe’s leading bus manufacturer. Also, Turkey stands 17th in the rank of world’s largest automotive manufacturers. (OSD, 2010)

Importance of automotive sector in the Turkey

As written before, the automotive market is a very dynamic and changing market. The changes not only affect the automotive market, but also many other sectors. Because the automotive market is one of the leading sectors in Turkey, it influences all the other sectors.

Conclusively, the figures in the study of Bekmez and Komut show that the situation of Turkey compared to the whole EU has made considerable improvements over the last years. With the customs union agreement, Turkey has caught an increasing trend for some years in terms of quality and productivity.
9.2 The market in figures

To emphasize the Turkish increasing trend, below some recent figures from TSKB research show the Turkish increasing trend in figures of production, retail and sales, import and export.

Production
As shown in figure 8, 2010 was a good year for the Turkish automotive industry. They manufactured 1,094,557 units. This is a 26% annual growth, compared to 2009.

Domestic Retail and Sales
After a slowdown in the first months of 2010, growth of the domestic retail sales resumed. Over whole 2010 domestic retail sold 793,172 units. They reached their record level in December with 154,734 units.

Import
The amount of imported cars raised in 2010. As have all rates in the automotive market compared to 2009. The amount of imported cars in 2010 was 465,408. (Fındıkçıoğlu, G. and Yıldırım, B., 2010)
Export
Like Bekmez and Komut say: Turkey is an exporter rather than importer. The motor vehicles, parts, and accessories sector completed 2010 as leader with $17.4 billion exports. That is 15.6 % in Turkey’s overall exports. In 2010, total automotive exports materialized as 754,469 units. (Fındıkçıoğlu, G. and Yıldırım, B., 2010)

Automotive manufacturers association
These figures together are produced by a lot of stakeholders, such as the Turkish car manufacturers, the government en some other stakeholders. They are united in the Automotive Manufacturers Association (OSD).

Figure 12 shows the manufacturers in Turkey, the type of vehicles they produce and the production amount in 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Products</th>
<th>Production 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honda Türkiye</td>
<td>Gebze Kocaeli</td>
<td>Passenger cars</td>
<td>20.305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anadolu Isuzu o.s.</td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>Trucks, pick-ups, midibuses</td>
<td>3.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMC</td>
<td>Izmir</td>
<td>Trucks, pick-ups, buses, minibuses, midibuses</td>
<td>3.342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford Otosan</td>
<td>Istanbul, Eskisehir, Kocaeli</td>
<td>Trucks, pick-ups, minibuses</td>
<td>242.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyundai Assan</td>
<td>Kocaeli</td>
<td>Passenger cars, pick-ups, minibuses</td>
<td>77.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karsan</td>
<td>Bursa</td>
<td>Pick-ups, minibuses, midibuses</td>
<td>24.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.N. Türkiye</td>
<td>Ankara</td>
<td>Buses</td>
<td>1.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercedes Benz Türk</td>
<td>Istanbul, Aksaray</td>
<td>Trucks, buses, minibuses</td>
<td>14.480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otokar</td>
<td>Sakarya</td>
<td>Pick-ups, minibuses, midibuses</td>
<td>2.236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyak Renault</td>
<td>Bursa</td>
<td>Passenger cars</td>
<td>307.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temsa</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Trucks, pick-ups, buses</td>
<td>3.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tofaş-Fiat</td>
<td>Bursa</td>
<td>Passenger cars, pick-ups</td>
<td>312.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyota</td>
<td>Sakarya</td>
<td>Passenger cars</td>
<td>83.286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12 - Automotive manufacturers association (OSD, 2010)
10 European automobile clubs

“The aim to maximally satisfy the car drivers.”

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part gives a brief introduction on how the European clubs are connected, namely via ARC (10.1). The second part is again about the changes of the automotive market, but different from chapter 9, it is focused on the reaction of the European automobile clubs on the changes (10.2).
10.1 ARC Europe, the umbrella

ARC Europe was founded in 1991. Its aim was to offer high-quality mobility services to business partners and develop an international network of service providers. ARC facilitates a relation between these service providers. Nowadays, ARC is an expert on not only roadside assistance but also on customer loyalty solutions, offering a wide range of products and services that will help business partners to establish and/or further improve their return on sales.

Besides maintaining the relation between service providers, ARC Europe also has Pan European agreements with car manufacturers. These result in assistance contracts for the service providers.

10.1.1 The providers

ARC’s network for roadside assistance services consists of more than 40 professional service providers. Most of them do have patrol vehicles (the famous yellow fleet), equipped with diagnostic tools, and in many cases they can repair the vehicle at the site of breakdown. This is very important, not only because it impacts customer satisfaction, but also results in substantial savings in terms of replacement vehicles as well as warranty repair costs.

In markets where there is no full patrol network available, services are being rendered by a network of franchised contractors, trained to get the vehicle mobile again or provide towage to an authorized repair facility.

ARCs approach is quality driven. In order to maintain high standards all ARC Europe service providers and subcontractors have to fulfill quality service levels. The subcontractors are regularly inspected and audited by ARC’s field team.

Listed below are all the countries and companies, who are ARCs service providers.

Albania - ACA
Austria - ÖAMTC
Belarus - BKA
Belgium - TCB
Bosnia-Herzegovina - BIHAMK
Bulgaria - UAB
Croatia - HAK
Republic of Cyprus - CAA
Czech Republic - UAMK
Denmark - FDM VEJHJAELP
Estonia Falck Autoabi - ÜÜ
Finland - AL
France - ACTA
FYrom (Macedonia) - AMSM
Germany - ADAC
Greece - ELPA
Hungary - MAK
Iceland - FIB
Ireland - AA Ireland
Italy - ACI global

Latvia - LAMB
Lithuania - Euro Asista
Luxembourg - ACL
Malta - RMF
Montenegro - AMSCG
Netherlands - ANWB
Norway - NAF
Poland - Starter
Portugal - ACP
Romania - ACR
Russia - RAMC
Serbia - AMSS
Slovakia - ASA
Slovenia - AMZS
Spain - RACE
Sweden - SOS international
Switzerland - TCS
Turkey - Marmassistance
Ukraine - Garant Assistance
United Kingdom - AA
10.2 Developments on the European automotive market

The above described service providers and the umbrella organization ARC are stakeholders on the automotive market. Therefore trends on the automotive market affects them.

Below we will define the general trends on the automotive market, the changing relations and chain in the automotive market, the shifting focus of car manufacturers and finally the reaction of the roadside assistance industry.

10.2.1 Trends

There are two important ongoing trends on the automotive market in general. Sustainability is the first one. Sustainability is a trend one can see in every industry, but especially in the automotive market. In this market, the subjects of main concern for the environment, like irreplaceable fuels and materials and the emit of CO2, are daily business. Besides sustainability the other trend is the growing competition on the automotive market. (ARC Europe, 2010)

10.2.2 Relations change

Trends as well as time has its effect of the relations in the automotive industry. The chain has changed as figure 13 shows.

The notes of the ARC Europe 2008 source that accompany this figure explain the changes on the automotive market. Because of the competitiveness, manufacturers and importers try to directly contact the customer. In addition Blanckenburg (2010) says that manufacturers, to keep direct dialogue with customers, mainly use the internet. Also, the relation between dealers and importers changed. Importers try to get more grip on dealers. (ARC, 2008) While the loyalty of dealers towards brands erodes and an increased amount of multi-brand dealers appears. (Blanckenburg, 2010)

As a result of the trends and changing relationships, the focus of the car manufacturer changes. The first shift is called by ARC Europe (2008) ‘driver instead of vehicle’. The main focus used to be only on the car. These days this focus shifts towards the driver. (ARC Europe, 2010) As a result of driver attention, mobility concepts become important. The second shift of focus of the car manufacturer concerns customer loyalty or customer retention. Customer loyalty is becoming more and more important. (ARC, 2008)
10.2.3 Strategy of car manufacturers

Car manufacturers have specific objectives to maintain or improve their financial status. To obtain these objectives they make use of diverse marketing strategies: increase customer loyalty, cross selling and cost reduction. (ARC Europe, 2008) Concerning cost reduction and also because of ease, car manufacturers interest recently shifted from national programs to European tenders. Due to the increasing importance of customer loyalty CRM data becomes highly important. As well as warranty. (ARC Europe, 2010)

Lately product and mobility warranty increased in duration. Due to Asian manufacturers the duration and conditions stretched. For example Kia offers 7 years or up to 150,000 km warranty. The other side of the coin is that warranty is “still not a sexy topic” and only some manufacturers use it only partly as a USP. (Blanckenburg, 2010)

10.2.4 Strategy of roadside assistance providers

Above we have seen that one of the marketing strategies of car manufacturers is customer loyalty and closely related to this: warranty. This are the subjects and trends that are interesting for roadside assistance providers. Because the increased interest in customer loyalty results in:

- Roadside assistance becoming a marketing instrument for customer loyalty;
- The introduction of Service Activated Roadside Assistance (SARA). (ARC Europe, 2008)

SARA means that, when a customer is loyal towards the brand authorized garage and gets his car served there, the warranty may be extended for free, with one or two years.

ARC Europe adjusted its strategy to better meet the car manufacturers needs. These new strategies are also advised to ARCs service providers such as Marmassistance and ANWB.

The new strategy includes:

- Improve basic processes, in order to optimize service delivery;
- Increase profit by introducing new assistance programs/services for instance upgrade packages;
- Improve product portfolio by adding new insurances, extended warranty;
- Develop for all major clients a tailor made strategy;
- Become a strategic partner for the clients (car manufacturers).

(ARC Europe, 2010)

The B2B marketing strategy of ANWB shows the influence of ARCs strategy. The strategy works as a circle process with not a certain beginning or certain end. Basically ANWB improves and develops its service programs in cooperation with its B2B partners. With the aim to maximally satisfy the car drivers. This strategy is defined in the figure below.
Conclusion

We see that the trend of increasing attention to customer loyalty offers chances to roadside assistance providers. But on the other hand there also occur some consequences.

Due to the extra attention car manufacturers pay to roadside assistance packages, many car drivers get services via the car manufacturer. This leads to cancelation of memberships. ANWB experienced that 60% of the cancelations was due to “use of alternative programs (by car manufacturer and/or insurer)”.

We conclude that the growing attention of manufacturers to customer loyalty leads to increasing chances for roadside assistance. The other side of the coin, is that these development lead to decreasing consumer memberships. The main chances are in the B2B market and can be exploited by cooperation between car manufacturers and roadside assistance providers.
11 Marketing and communication strategies

“Organizations are not faceless.”

This chapter is divided in four parts. The first part is about marketing and communication strategies in general (11.1) Followed by marketing strategies on the automotive market (11.2). Marmassistance current market is a B2B market. Therefore we look further into marketing on the B2B market (11.3) To finally finish this chapter with a case study(11.4).
11.1 Marketing and communication strategies in general

Good marketing strategies require specified information on the product and especially on the consumer. Insights in the consumer gives one the opportunity to make the most suitable strategy. When talking about strategies we should take a look into the opinions of Floor and van Raaij.

11.1.1 The target group

Floor and van Raaij distinguish a consumer and a business target group. According to Tooker (2010) there is a third category that represents the relationship of a significant percentage of the companies that market goods and services. “It is neither strictly B2B nor strictly B2C. It is both. B2B2C marketers distribute their products and services through intermediaries. They sell to another business that in turn resells to the consumer.” (Tooker, 2010)

Also, Beuk, Luczak and Pfoertsch (2007) describe this third class: business-to-business-to-consumer. According to them brands in this category are primarily B2B in origin. However, they have found ways to reach the consumer to strengthen their brand proposition. We think exploring B2B2C is not only done to strengthen a brand proposition, it is also done to explore new markets and to extend market share.

In the table below the difference between the B2B and B2C market are briefly described.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>B2C market</th>
<th>B2B market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of (potential) buyers</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase price</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for information</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people involved in the decision making process</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of these differences, the approach of these target groups differs. In the promotion of a product towards business, the technical and functional product characteristics are accentuated. Whereas consumer promotion responds to human emotions. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 363)

At the business market, there are a lot of people involved in the decision making process of buying products or services. These people are called the DMU’s, the Decision Making Units. In paragraph 11.3 we will extensively discuss the business-to-business market and communications.

11.1.2 The objectives

The next step in forming a strategy is defining the objectives. Floor and van Raaij distinguish three types of objectives.

- The reach objective: this objective describes the target group that needs to be reached;
- The process objective: this objective concerns the communication process;
- The effect objective: it seems logical, but this objective describes the effect that must be achieved in the target group with the strategy. The reach and process objectives are the ingredients for this important effect objective. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 190)

Objectives are often in terms of category need, brand awareness, brand knowledge, attitude, purchase intention, purchase facilitation, buying behavior and satisfaction. During our research process, we remarked the terms category need and customer loyalty quite often with our interviewees. Therefore we will describe these terms based on Floor and van Raaij.

Category need means: “the customers primary demand and need for a product category and not (yet) necessary for a certain brand.” When a product or service is new, it is unknown amongst customers. A brand then
needs to use a specific strategy focused on explaining the customer the benefits of the product. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 196)

Floor and van Raaij use the Dutch word for brand loyalty to describe customer loyalty. “Brand loyalty is a behavior, namely regularly or always buying a particular brand. Brand loyalty is also an attitude, a preference for a certain brand which results in re-buying behavior.” (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 181)

Many brands in the automotive branch want to bond with their clients to achieve customer loyalty. Saving campaigns, loyalty cards and coupons surely contribute to customer loyalty but also the image of the brand contributes. Therefore, car brands develop loyalty programs. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 503)

11.1.3 The strategy
After having defined the target group and the objectives, a strategy needs to be determined. The strategy defines the core message and the positioning of the brand. The core message is the promise of the product or service towards the target group. The position of the brand is the place of the brand compared to other brands. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 216)

Different objectives and target groups, lead to different strategies. Below we will describe some possible strategies.

11.1.3.1 Strategy for a new product
First of all, there is a communication strategy for brands that develop a complete new product. Consumers need to learn about the use and the benefits of the product. Communication objectives that need to be accomplished, are: category need, brand awareness and brand knowledge. Within this strategy, the consumer needs to be informed about the characteristics of the product. For instance about the practice, the use and the expense of the product. It is very risky to come with a new product, because the future of the product is uncertain. However, if the product becomes a success, the first brand that sells it, most likely will become market leader. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 227)

11.1.3.2 Strategy for a growing product
In a phase of growth, a brand needs a different strategy. In this phase, potential buyers know the product and service of a brand. They know the use of the product or service. But there are different brands that sell similar products and services. The position of the brand must be defended against attacks of competitors. A brand must position itself compared to other brands. The brand needs to create a preference for its product. Two strategies can be applied in this situation:

- The strategy of informational positioning;
- The strategy of transformational positioning.

The strategy of informational positioning means, brands emphasize the distinctive functional benefits of the product. There are many companies that offer the same product or service, with the same functional benefits. These functional benefits no longer can be linked to one brand. A brand needs to accentuate why its brand product is better. In this phase a brand needs a functional claim that is not being claimed by another brand. It needs to emphasize original product benefits.

The second strategy is the strategy of transformational positioning. This means brands should add psychosocial value to the brand. The brand responds to emotions of potential buyers. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 230)
11.1.3.3 The push and pull strategy

To approach the consumer there are two different strategies: the push and the pull strategy. In the push strategy a producer targets the commission business and intermediate trade with its marketing communication. The business is being convinced to admit the brand into the product range the business sells. The producer assumes its brand will automatically be resold. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 51)

The pull strategy has a different approach. Within the pull strategy the producer targets its marketing communication directly to the consumer. The producer tries to create a brand preference amongst consumers. Without using the help of commission business. If the producer succeeds to do so, there will arise a demand for the product or service. (Floor and van Raaij, 2006, p. 52)

To verify these push- and pull strategy definitions we will add additional definitions from Cheverton. According to Cheverton (2004, p. 123) the choice of using a push or pull strategy has to relate to ones capability. “For instance, pull strategies might call for expertise in consumer research and promotion, often with significant budgets (…) while push strategies might call for large sales resources and channel management skills.”

Another important aspect to consider when choosing push of pull strategy is the reputation of your brand. Brands with a good brand name and strong reputation are more expected to use the pull strategy. “Without such reputation and market position, you will be more used to push the market.” (Cheverton, 2004, p. 134)

11.2 Marketing on the automotive market

In most parts of the world, products and marketing on automotive markets are very well developed. The world’s largest companies produce cars in many different countries but market them globally. Therefore, their marketing communication is very sophisticated.

11.2.1 Situation and context analysis

The automotive market is strongly developed. Also, it is a very competitive market. There are a number of global car producers, who compete insistently in various sectors. They juggle for market positions and try to enlarge their profitability by scaling in productions. “For instance, Ford has acquired Jaguar and Volvo to position itself more prominently in the sports and prestige sector of the market.” (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, 514)

11.2.2 Customer segments

Each car brand has its own target group. That is why cars are produced for various customer segments, in different prices and for specifications. The car brands adapt their product models more and more in response to changing lifestyles of customers. Besides customers there are a lot of other stakeholders in the automotive market. All these stakeholders, such as financial investors, employees, suppliers, distributors, and governments have different communication needs. Therefore, there are used many different communication methods on the automotive market. According to Tench and Yeomans, this trend provides an interesting platform for positioning and communications development.

11.2.3 Marketing communication methods

Besides the fact that the marketing communication objectives need to converge with the customer lifestyle, it also has to be consistent with the company’s marketing and business objectives. Marketing communication
objectives are based on all aspects of the marketing mix, not just promotion. Marketing communication objectives centre on customer’s awareness, attitude and behavior.

### 11.2.4 Strategic options

Once the objectives are determined, the appropriate communications strategies must be created. These strategies mostly include a mix of pull, push and profile. Tech and Yeomans state that there is a need to “communicate directly with the customers to promote product benefits and establish positioning concepts. And work with distributors and dealers who sell vehicles on a personal basis. In addition, the brands want to develop the overall image of the company.” (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, 515)

### 11.2.5 Communication options

Each strategy needs a communications mix to execute the strategy. Pull strategies mostly use communication tools such as TV and print advertising, in order to reach awareness objectives. Push strategies include showroom design and point of sale displays, sales literature, merchandising good and personal sales incentives to create consumer demand. Price discounting and extended warranties are very suitable for trade promotions. And public relations and sponsorships are proper for profile strategies.

### 11.3 Business-to-business Marketing

Marmassistance’s current market is B2B. We researched more about the marketing on the B2B market.

The business market is very different from the consumer market. According to Tench and Yeomans (2006, p.432) The basic of business-to-business public relations is understanding the marketplace and the products. This is different from the business-to-consumer public relations where the most important knowledge concerns the consumer behavior.

According to Brennan, Canning and McDowell the key distinguishing feature of a business-to-business market is that the customer is an organization rather than an individual customer. Often they buy the same products. (Brennan, Canning, McDowell, 2011, p.5)

However, the practice of marketing in business markets differs from that in consumer markets because of fundamental differences in market structure and in buyer behavior. “For example it would be wrong to assert that business markets differ from consumer markets because the most frequently used promotional tool in the business markets is personal selling, while in the consumer market it is advertising.” (Brennan, Canning, McDowell, 2011, p.10) There is an extensive use of personal selling in business markets because of the market structure and buying behavior characteristics. These characteristics are usually not found in consumer markets.

There are numerous differences between business and consumer markets. Below a table shows these differences. The first column of the table contains the dimensions to distinguish business markets from other markets. The second column represents the business market and the third column represents the consumer market. (Brennan, Canning, McDowell, 2011, p.11)
As you can see in the table, there is an extensive use of personal selling in the business market. But how can one make use of the personal selling tool towards an organization? Well, organizations are not faceless. They have persons who represent them and who make decisions regarding buying products: the Decision Making Units. Of course these Decision Making Units have different personalities. But according to Brennan, Canning and McDowell the DMU’s have to be placed in the broader context of the company’s strategy. “Being familiar with purchase of the orientation and business strategy allows the vendor to accurately meet the supply expectations of the buying organizations.” (Brennan, Canning, McDowell, 2011, p.53) And when formulating marketing communication strategies, one should also keep in mind that depending on the value of the product or service, the DMU’s and the companies have a certain relationship expectation. Communication can meet these expectations. (Brennan, Canning, McDowell, 2011, p.53)

According to Brennan, Canning, McDowell, in business-to-business marketing, relationship communication is very important. “Communication is central to positioning strategy and, as such, companies must ensure that communication is integrated and that consistent messages are conveyed to target audiences.” (Brennan, Canning, McDowell, 2011, p.198)

The main communication instruments used in relationship communication are direct marketing and personal selling. Direct marketing and personal selling can be combined to obtain new customers and to retain current customers. Using these tools, one can build and manage relationships. (Brennan, Canning, McDowell, 2011, p.230)

Concerning the importance of communication, Tench and Yeomans do agree. They say B2B public relations was traditionally focused on: “the use of editorial in trade magazines as a direct method of prompting sales enquiries.” (Tench and Yeomans, eds., 2006, p.431) With the main and often
only task to support sales. However, recently an examination shows that B2B public relations is been used successful to manage corporate reputations as well as sales support.

As described above an essential element of most B2B public relations is media relations. This element is used as a support to sales. And so public relations has a place in the marketing four P’s diagram. Underneath the P of promotion, public relations mentioned as one of the promotional tools, and its use is effective in combination. Tench and Yeomans (2006, p.439) say: “Sales promotion is very different from public relations but the disciplines do have much in common. When they run in tandem their effectives in creating sales opportunities can be enhanced.”

We already mentioned that B2B public relations is not only used to support sales but also to build a corporate reputation. Reputation building is critical because no organization wants to do business with a company that has no or, even worse, a poor reputation. Also reputation building is becoming more important as external stakeholders including customers “start to look at the organization behind the brand and make purchasing decisions based on wider judgments”. (Tench and Yeomans, 2006, p.442)

Conclusively with the words of Tench and Yeomans (2006, p.442) “Organizational leaders with understanding of public relations are using public relations in two interconnected ways (...) Public relations works as a promotional tool with the other marketing disciplines. But public relations is also being used to manage the organizational reputation with audiences beyond marketing.”

11.4 Case study

At last, we will discuss the case of an assistance service. It describes the service, the strategy and the promotion of its roadside assistance service.

11.3.1 Introducing 900 Help me

900 HELP ME provides a telecommunications technology in the United States, that connects a person with a car breakdown to the nearest service provider that has a contract with 900 HELP ME. The person in need for help does not have to worry which insurance or assistance company to call. The idea of 900 HELP ME is, that anyone can call this number to get in contact with the nearest service provider. (Vega, 2001, p. 16) When this case of 900 HELP ME was written, it was the world’s only known provider with this kind of service.

The service process is as follows:
1. The caller dials 900 HELP ME;
2. A database determines where the caller is and which provider is the nearest;
3. The call is routed to this provider;
4. The caller can speak directly with the provider. (Vega, 2001, p. 20)

900 HELP ME is not interested in competing with the largest roadside assistance providers in the United States. In contrary, 900 HELP ME believes start up businesses are more successful when they operate in a niche which is “not being well served by an industry leader than when they target the leader’s cash cow.” (Vega, 2001, p. 24) When bringing a new service to a market, there is always a chance a new or an existing company starts to sell a similar service. Therefore, 900 HELP ME strives to gain brand recognition. 900 HELP ME wants to build a relationship with their customers, based on trust.
Who are these customers? The target market that 900 HELP ME provides service to, are women and price conscious automobile drivers. Women, because of their vulnerability and price conscious drivers because one only pays 900 HELP ME when help is needed, one does not have to pay an annual fee.

11.3.2 Marketing strategy
To differentiate itself from other stakeholders in the roadside assistance branch, “900 HELP ME positions itself as a company which offers high quality service at an affordable price while always trying to exceed customer expectations.” (Vega, 2001, p. 25) They inform their customers about this service through advertising and promotions. Advertising and promotion are also used to create a top of mind awareness with the target market. The most important advertising instruments for 900 HELP ME are: outdoor billboards and radio stations.

11.3.3 Promotion
900 HELP ME sponsors anti-drunk driving organizations. This helps valuable organizations as well as it helps spreading the name 900 HELP ME. Most promotion activities reach persons from the target group while they are driving their car. For example, there are a lot of cars driving around with 900 HELP ME stickers and the name of an easy listening radio station. The radio station announces a contest. The radio announces the license plate number of a car with a 900 HELP ME sticker. If the driver of the car with this license plate calls the radio station within a specific period of time, the winner receives prizes from the radio station. Both the radio station, the listener and 900 HELP ME benefit from this contest. Because the listener will carry stickers of 900 HELP ME, this will create brand awareness amongst consumers. And the listener will tune to the radio station in order to win prices.

Also, 900 HELP ME gives useful printed items to listeners. For example: snow scrapers, sponges and windshields. 900 HELP ME also promotes her technology via gas stations, used car dealers and car washes. (Vega, 2001, p. 25)
This chapter is divided into eighteen interviews. This chapter will start off with interviews with employees of Marmassistance. These are followed by interviews with external people.
Here you will find a list of people we interviewed:

**Intern:**
- Mr. O. Alemdaroğlu*, Project and marketing supervisor roadside assistance of Marmassistance;
- Ms. E. Sahinkaya, Operator at Marmassistance;
- Dr. G. Bolat, Medical marketing manager at Marmassistance;

**Extern:**
- Mr. H. Biekmann*, Network manager of ARC Europe;
- Mr. E. Grootmeijer, Network manager of ANWB Holland;
- Dr. E. Bozyazi, Integration manager of ADAC Germany;
- Mr. S. Sarti, CEO of Europ assistance and Europ assistance Turkey;
- Mr. R. Delanote, Network and account manager of Europe Net;
- Mr. K. Kulakovskiy, Manager at Global Medical Alliance;
- Dr. C. Celik, Lecturer at University of Central Lancashire;
- Mr. B. Lomas and D. Hinchin, After sales managers of Jaguar and Land Rover of the UK and Turkey;
- Mr. R. Verel, Marketing manager of ARC Europe;
- Ms. Y. Yilmaz, Workshop manager of an Opel and Chevrolet dealer;
- Mrs. A. Ergül, After sales consultant at Mercedes-Benz;
- Mr. S. Turkmen, Account director at Lowe Advertising Istanbul;
- Mrs. N. Davutoğlu**, Chairman of Lowe Advertising

*Note: In the end we did a second interview with Mr. O. Alemdaroğlu and with Mr. H. Biekmann to verify some of our findings.

**Note: We added an already existing interview of N. Davutoğlu. We believe this interview is very relevant for our thesis. We would not have asked her any other questions.
Internal interviews
12.1 Interview Mr. O. Alemdaroğlu

“Very busy extending the roadside assistance activities.”

Date: 01-03-2011

Mr. Alemdaroğlu is marketing supervisor at the operation department of Marmassistance. As well as the supervisor of our thesis. He is, like he always says, very pleased to help us.

The roadside assistance project is main part of Mr. Alemdaroğlu’s work. Together with colleagues and consultants he organizes the roadside project. Recently they are very busy extending their roadside assistance activities. The amount of cases Marmassistance handles, has grown a lot because Marmassistance took over the roadside assistance activities of ADAC.

Marmassistance and its business partners
Marmassistance provides the organizational part of roadside assistance to car manufacturers. Marmassistance does not do the practical execution (repairing, towing, replacing), however Marmassistance has a call centre and contracts with garages and towing companies.

According to their contracts Marmassistance provides roadside assistance to these car manufacturers: Opel, Chevrolet, Jaguar and Iveco Trucks. Also, Marmassistance has a contract with Mercedes. The service they provide to Mercedes is different, because the main service provider of Mercedes is Mondial assistance. Marmassistance only provides service in a program of Mondial Assistance: Mobilo, concerning theft, vandalism etc.

Marmassistance handles different price models for different car manufacturers.

But how did Marmassistance get in contact with these car manufacturers in the first place? Marmassistance is ARC’s and Europe Net’s only partner in Turkey. Which means that ARC chose Marmassistance to provide services to its business partners. Part of these business partners are contracted in a PAN European contract. Via ARC and Europe Net, Marmassistance got in contact and got contracts with business partners: car manufacturers and other European service providers.

Marmassistance does not have contracts with insurance companies yet, because Marmassistance finds it really hard to work with insurance companies. But they do intend to. However, they do have contracts with European insurance companies.

Mr. Alemdaroğlu believes marketing is an important part of this roadside assistance project. His marketing activities include maintaining relationships with car manufacturers. An important note here is that Mr. Verel of ARC Europe is a key figure in these marketing activities. We are glad to hear this, because we are planning on talking to Mr. Verel ourselves.

The service Marmassistance provides
Marmassistance provides primary and secondary services. The primary service includes: repairing, towing and car replacement. The secondary service includes: accommodation, evacuation and transportation.

Marmassistance does not own a patrol car fleet, like ANWB and ADAC do. This means they do not have their own cars and equipment. But as said before, they make use of subcontractors. Marmassistance has most contracts with garages and towing companies in the Marmara region and other touristic regions.

Tourists in Turkey get their roadside assistance mainly from Marmassistance. They also can get advice from specialized advisers on the Turkish procedures in case of accidents.
Because of the contract with ARC, Marmassistance needs to reach certain service levels, considering call to intendance and call to answer. It is all about quick help and short waiting times.

Recently, ARC started with training and education for the Marmassistance office staff. And in future, ARC will also give trainings to garages and towing companies.

**Exact procedure**

After receiving all this information, we are really curious to hear more of the exact procedure of incoming calls. So Mr. Alemdaroğlu explains it to us.

Owners of cars with mechanical defects call the helpline that is mentioned on their insurance form/pass/sticker. For the car manufacturers Marmassistance works with, the number of the helpline is Marmassistance number. This is how calls come in at the helpline of Marmassistance.

First of all, the call centre agents log on to a Front Desk Data sheet. They follow a certain procedure, which starts with filling in a form that contains all sorts of information about the client and his or her problem. The datasheet is on the intranet of Marmassistance which has strong links to the intranet of ARC Europe. This way information can be transferred both ways.

Agents fill in the information in the datasheet, like: the name of the client, type of call (incident, problems, break down), type of insurance/guaranty. Also information about the car is required: plate number, brand model and other vehicle details. Next, the agents fill in the date, time, location and description of the problem. The most important information is the home dealer of the client and the VIN number: which directs one to the ARC database.

A completed datasheet can be set into action by the agents. The agents can arrange roadside repair, towing or garage repair easily by choosing the action and nearest garage or towing company. Marmassistance main target is: trying to fix the car on spot. Other arrangements that can be made are replacement cars, hotel etc.

During the whole process the agent takes notes: which problems and which actions need to be done. Whether the defect car was repaired on spot, or towed and mended at the garage. All this information and time notation is important to see if Marmassistance puts up with ARC’s service levels.

At the end, the accounts department will finalize the case. They insure the payments will be fulfilled. Also Marmassistance will report to ARC and the manufacturers.

**Future plans**

Marmassistance is planning on convincing more B2B clients to contract them. For instance: Runner Trucks, Volkswagen and Ford. Most car manufacturers do not have contracts for a very long period. In most cases, only one year. Next year Marmassistance will try to get a contract with these other car manufacturers. Next year Marmassistance will send potential and old B2B clients a proposal. To get new contracts, Marmassistance needs to have low prices. This is their attempt, anyway. In general, Turkish people have contracts with the same companies, just not very long contracts.
12.2 Interview Ms. E. Sahinkaya

“Roadside assistance service is not very developed in Turkey.”

Date: 11-03-2011

Ms. Sahinkaya is an intelligent young lady who is an operator for Marmassistance. We interview her at her desk, because she needs to be near her phone. Like a spider at the center of the web, Ms. Sahinkaya is coordinating the contact with the client and the service providers. That is why she is the right person to tell us some additional information about the services of Marmassistance.

The main service Marmassistance provides is towing. “Mostly towing, because the roadside assistance service is not very developed in Turkey. I believe in Holland and Germany it is. With all these ADAC and ANWB cars. In Turkey this is not the case. The easy problems do get repaired on spot, like: empty batteries, flat tires, broken cables and empty petrol reservoirs. These easy problems get solved by, let’s say, mostly garages.”

Monitoring the service

“To monitor the towing or repairing activities, we keep on calling the companies. At first, the client with the car breakdown calls us. Then we get in contact with the towing company or garage to inform them about the problem, the car, the client and the location. After that we keep on calling, to follow up the assistance process.” According to Ms. Sahinkaya, the most important calls in this process, are the call at arrival and at finishing. These calls are necessary to measure the waiting time of a client.

Additional services

In addition to the assistance on spot, there are also other services provided. When a car can be fixed right away, it has to be towed to a garage. Even when the car is at the garage, Marmassistance still monitors the repairing process to be able to give feedback to the home country insurance company. It also arranges a temporary replacement vehicle. When a car cannot be fixed in Turkey at all, Marmassistance transports the car to its home country. And it also arranges all the paperwork for the transportation. Which can get very tricky. For one cannot come into Turkey with a car and leave without it, unless one fills in loads of forms for various agencies.

Marmassistance’s clients

The main clients are Turkish people who live abroad. For instance in Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Germany and France. Also, tourists from abroad. For example, Dutch people who are ANWB insured. And since the takeover of car manufacturer contracts from ADAC, a large part of the clients are Turkish people. Marmassistance has a contract with some car brands. Marmassistance serves Turkish people with cars of these brands.
**12.3 Interview Dr. G. Bolat**

“Excellent service is the most successful marketing strategy.”

*Date: 11-04-2011*

**Dr. Bolat works as a medical marketing manager at Marmassistance. He is educated as a doctor and works only since 3 months as medical marketing manager. However he has a strategy and a vision on how the marketing of Marmassistance could be improved.**

Dr. Bolat tells us that “Marmassistance is the leading company on medical assistance in Turkey. It is only since 10 years that the competition grew. Therefore marketing becomes more important.” Marmassistance is always working on improving its business. “We make use of audits to check the customer satisfaction. And we are now working on combining medical and roadside assistance to offer care packages.”

**The beneficial position of Marmassistance**

Marmassistance has a very beneficial position. It already works with a nice spectrum of companies and has these relations for over 20 years. It always chases new companies to start business relationships with. “Because we do know that even though we have a very long relation with our clients, they might not stay forever.”

“I believe excellent service is the most successful marketing strategy. When you offer good products, you will automatically get more clients.” This is why Marmassistance continually works on improving its services.

**Communicating services towards consumers**

We wonder which tools Marmassistance uses to communicate their excellent service towards prospects and customers. “We have a nice portfolio in presentation form. Which we support with verbal explanation. And of course, the website supports our communication.” Currently Dr. Bolat is working on improving the website and in future he also wants to make a Facebook page for the company. He feels Facebook is a necessity these days.

**The best story to tell**

The unique position of Marmassistance is its strength and unique selling point. Marmassistance has a 24/7 call center where there are always doctors to reach. The two sister companies of Marmassistance are also a strong point. Because of these relations we have access to a plane, helicopter, ground ambulances etc. Also the fact that we are based in Turkey, and we used to be the only one really strengthens our position. “I believe the given strong points and our history and reputation makes Marmassistance a leading medical company.” Such strong points are the best story to tell in your marketing.
External interviews
12.4 Interview Mr. H. Biekmann

“One does not have to reinvent the wheel. Neither one can copy and paste strategies.”

Date: 07-02-2011

Mr. Biekmann is the network manager of ARC Europe, a European network company. ARC offers mobility services to business partners and develops an international network of service providers. Mr. Biekmann will tell us more about ARC’s relation with Marmassistance.

Mr. Biekmann briefly introduces ARC. ARC is owned by eight automobile clubs, of which ANWB is one. ARC concludes contracts with car manufacturers. With many car manufacturers: 40% of the new sold cars have ARC service. To offer this service, an international network is necessary. ARC has contracts with service providers in each country, that provides roadside assistance for car brands.

It was only in December 2010, that Marmassistance took over the roadside assistance activities of ADAC in Turkey. Nowadays, both Turkish cars and other European cars get roadside assistance from Marmassistance. Initially, Marmassistance core business is medical assistance. If a client of a European service provider is sick or injured in Turkey, Marmassistance provides services. Next to it, Marmassistance already had some activities in the field of roadside assistance. Marmassistance provided roadside assistance services for tourists, the clients of the European service providers. Also, to the car drivers of Ferrari and Lamborghini.

And now Marmassistance has taken over the contracts of ADAC. “For Marmassistance, the next step should be: take a stand and position in the Turkish market.”

B2B and B2C market
ARC operates on the B2B market. It enters contracts between car manufacturers and service providers. But according to Mr. Biekmann, Marmassistance has to enter contracts itself as well with car manufacturers, lease businesses, fleet owners, insurance companies and banks. For example, Marmassistance could offer packages to banks. So the bank can offer both car credits and car assistance. Turkey is a booming market. Over the past few years, more and more new cars have been sold on the Turkish market. That is why there are many chances on the B2B market for Marmassistance. Marmassistance should strengthen its position on both the B2B and B2C market, because the markets can support each other.

In Turkey, there is no roadside assistance service being offered at the B2C market yet. The ANWB has a very large B2C market. But their B2B market is much smaller. This scale differs per country. Countries that do not have a large history in roadside assistance, like Marmassistance, in general have a larger B2B market than a B2C market.

“In my opinion, a company needs as much volume as possible on both markets. For this reason, Marmassistance should explore and try to extent its service to the B2C market. To sell products or services to individual consumers.” That is why Mr. Biekmann thinks it could be useful for us to talk to a network manager of ANWB. We should find out how ANWB does sell its service on the B2C market and how one can project this on Turkey. However, Mr. Biekmann tells us we must realize, that ANWB is quite a large and heavy organization. With a very dominant position. For ANWB it took years to grow in this position. Marmassistance will not be able to grow into such a dominant position from one day to the other.
Transfer of knowhow
Of course, ANWB has a lot of expertise and knowledge. However, the marketing department is specialized in promoting roadside assistance on the Dutch market and in the Dutch culture. “They know how to improve roadside assistance towards Dutch consumers. Transfer them to another country, and they do not understand their customers anymore. In addition, ANWB already had a very good position in roadside assistance in the Netherlands. They are not used to promote an utter new and unknown service on the market. They do not know how to start promoting a service from scratch.” Mr. Biekmann feels it is important to listen to experienced people and make use of it. One does not have to reinvent the wheel. Neither one can copy and paste the knowledge to another culture. One has to project it on the other culture. “As it were, you could draft a palette with all possibilities and knowledge. You could present it to Marmassistance and then they can chose whatever knowledge they want and adjust it to something that fits into their business.”

Speaking about learning from someone else’s experience, we are wondering what went wrong with ADAC Turkey? ADAC Turkey mainly served business partners. Mr. Biekmann thinks ADAC entered contracts with too low prices.

Improvements for Marmassistance
Mr. Biekmann sees many chances for improvements. Marmassistance could give education to a few towing companies, so they can repair cars on spot. Marmassistance should always try to improve on ARC’s service levels. There are several criteria to measure roadside assistance service:
- The percentage of repairs on spot;
- Call to attendance, the rapidity of help;
- Speed of answer.
Marmassistance should meet these service levels. ARC wants to provide the best service in every country.

Marmassistance should organize its B2B more professional. Every business partner needs his own professional approach. Marmassistance already is a very professional company. It is a good and strong company. They are open for new and innovative ideas. However, their public relations is only little. Many competitors of Marmassistance have an amateurish service, but a very good public relations department. That could be dangerous. Therefore, it is important for Marmassistance to improve its PR.

Marketing improvements
Mr. Biekmann has some suggestions for the marketing of Marmassistance. Maybe there is an covering organization of car importers or manufacturers Marmassistance should go to. “When writing a plan for promoting Marmassistance, you could even go further. I mean, take a look at the website. Should Marmassistance create a new website? The look and feel of the current website is very medical. Should Marmassistance create different websites for both B2B and B2C? Maybe Marmassistance should even create a second brand?”

Possibilities of extending services
Mr. Biekmann has experience for many years in the car branch. He just knocks many suggestions off. One by one. He sees some more possibilities for additional services. Marmassistance could start a dealer hotline. A service to answer the dealers telephone calls after office hours. To make appointments with customers and to give information. Also Marmassistance could offer accreditation to car importers. This means Marmassistance should offer car importers dealer tests, to check whether the service of its dealers and garages is good.

This way, Marmassistance will be able to offer the whole package to business partners: towing, repair, replacement cars, 24/7 dealer hotline and accreditation.
12.5 Interview Mr. E. Grootmeijer

“Service and marketing should be at the same level.”

09-02-2011

The ANWB. Which real Dutch does not know this organization? In Holland, the ANWB is everywhere. On roadside signs and probably even on every doormat once a month in form of a member magazine. We really wanted to talk to someone of ANWB, because it has such a great history in roadside assistance.

Originally ARC had an agreement with ADAC Turkey for the contracts with car manufacturers in Turkey. But then, ADAC Turkey went bankrupt. That is why ARC secured its service contracts at Marmassistance. ARC sells car assistance to car manufacturers that sell their cars in Turkey. They provide services to car manufacturers, that they in return can offer their clients.

Marmassistance has a very beneficial position because of its contacts with the European automobile clubs.

The relation between Marmassistance and ANWB

ANWB has known Marmassistance for at least 30 years. According to contracts, ANWB calls Marmassistance when ANWB members are in a Turkish hospital. Marmassistance than assists the ANWB member and negotiates on time an prices. “We were already working together. Marmassistance did a few hundred cases a year for ANWB. However, with the new business contracts of ARC, they all of a sudden have many more cases for other business partners. Now Dr. Ataç probable wants to know how Marmassistance can develop its car assistance. How can Marmassistance do something in Turkey, like ANWB does in Holland.”

Mr. Grootmeijer is a little bit skeptical of this last question. “In the Netherlands, you can easily find many roadside assistance cars. They are well supplied with full technical equipped. The roadside assistance staff has had a very good education. It is impossible to built something similar in Turkey from one day on the other. In any case, it is a huge investment. Therefore many new starting companies offer towing services.” At the moment, that is what happens in Turkey as well.

“But I think it is great if Marmassistance wants to develop a similar organization as ANWB. But one has to be aware that it is a huge investment. In money and time, because many members should be recruited. And that exactly went wrong with ADAC Turkey. Again: I think it is a great aim, but it does not seem very realistic.”

Transfer of knowhow
In future, it would be possible that ANWB would go to Turkey to develop and educate the roadside assistance staff. However, as any company, ANWB is not an charitable organization. ANWB would train Turkish staff or towing companies so that eventually the ANWB members will get better roadside assistance. Therefore, we should make a very good agreement.

Speaking of transferring knowhow, it is important to do so without causing a cultural conflict. While educating someone from another culture, one should not get smarmy-smarty and have a pedantic attitude. That way one will reject people. One should not start telling what the other person should do. One should start asking what the other person would like to learn.

Mr. Grootmeijer feels we should listen to what Dr. Ataç tells us. We should ask him what his business question is. We should not apply anything from one culture to the other. Each country is different. It is a fact of life.
Create a category need
Mr. Grootmeijer is not sure how ANWB can help on the field of marketing communications. “Look, ANWB is far beyond these first steps. ANWB already has brand awareness. ANWB is as known as the Queen. In Turkey, this is not the case. If Marmassistance puts an advert in the newspaper on roadside assistance, than in the first place, no-one knows Marmassistance and second, no-one knows what roadside assistance is. The whole roadside assistance concept is unknown in Turkey.” This could be a good chance for Marmassistance, because the Turkish market is not satisfied at all, like in Holland. In Turkey, there is a huge young potential market. Marmassistance could try to create a category need.

Improving the B2B and B2C market
Mr. Grootmeijer believes it is very important to first develop the B2B market. Marmassistance should expand its contracts with car manufacturers via ARC. This way, Marmassistance can make use of the marketing strains of ARC. Thereafter, Marmassistance can reach Turkish car manufacturers itself. Expanding the B2B market will be a good base for creating a B2C market. Expanding roadside assistance to the B2C market, is much more difficult. One has to recruit members one by one. If one establishes a contract with a car manufacturer, then all of a sudden one has many people in contract.

Mr. Grootmeijer advises us to ask whether Dr. Ataç wants to:
- Establish more contracts with towing companies (to broaden the service);
- Educate towing companies so that they can repair (to deepen the service).

One of these could be the first steps for Marmassistance to work towards the consumer market.

Service and marketing are equally important
Mr. Grootmeijer wants to emphasise that Marmassistance could improve the B2C through improving the speed of service and through investments in new equipments. The next step would be improving the content of the service. Grootmeijer would like to impress something on us: we should look beyond marketing. “If you promise a good service, but you cannot offer a good service, that gets you nowhere.” Service and marketing should be at the same level.

Success story
Mr. Grootmeijer thinks it is difficult to start roadside assistance from scratch. He has an example of a provider that started from scratch: STARTER. ARC, ADAC and ANWB had a strategic interest in a good roadside assistance provider in Poland. If tourists in Poland had a car breakdown, they were in big trouble. That is why ARC, ADAC and ANWB started STARTER. “They had the same issue you have: how do you start a roadside assistance company from nothing?”

Basically, Starter convinced towing companies enter the roadside assistance market. To tow and to fix. They made towing companies enthusiastic to buy second hand roadside assistance cars and equipment. STARTERs core business is B2B and a little bit B2C. Because in Poland, there is no need for roadside assistance memberships on the consumer market. If ones car has a low battery, he or she just calls someone in their family network. And everything will be fine.

Also, STARTER provides services to non-members when they have a car breakdown. But when non-members make use of STARTERs service, they pay extra money. In future, according to Mr. Grootmeijer a similar model could be successful in Turkey.
12.6 Interview Dr. E. Bozyazi

“Be aware of the differences and take them into account.”

25-02-2011

We met Dr. Bozyazi in the office of Marmassistance. We were very lucky to run into her, because she has a PhD in Turkish Traffic and even more important: she worked on the integration of the collapsed ADAC in Turkey.

ADAC Germany has become the third largest automobile club in the world. Its core service concern breakdowns, medical and travel assistance, air rescue, traffic and travel information as well as insurance products across the full range of mobility. ADAC Germany started their road side assistance activities in Turkey about two years ago. The new assistance company was called ADAC Turkey. In December 2010 ADAC Turkey collapsed. Marmassistance took over the business contracts. In the process of writing our thesis the information about the startup and breakdown of ADAC Turkey can be very useful. How did it start? And what went wrong with ADAC?

ADAC Germany wanted to bring the yellow angels system to Turkey. They founded the Turkish project on subsidies of the European Union and a certain ministry. ADAC also contacted the Turkish employment agency to create jobs. Unemployed Turks people were going to be educated. This project was a pilot, which started on a low level in 8 parts of Turkey. The pilot was based on contracts with towing companies. The idea was that ADAC took care of the organizational part, the towing companies realized the assistance. ADAC educated and equipped the towing companies to not only tow cars, but also repair the cars at the side of the road.

Cultural differences

The idea was not wrong. The implementation was not wrong. But there were some difficulties with the management of ADAC Turkey. Part of the management of ADAC Turkey was Turkish. They had other interests than ADAC Germany. ADAC Germany had low control on the business. You could say there were some culture difficulties. Not only in the management the different in culture occurred. Also in the relation with towing companies and on the Turkish market, people acted different than expected due to their culture. Dr. Bozyazi explained the cultural differences with some examples:

- The mentality of Turkish people is totally different from the German culture. For instance, in Germany time is money. Therefore, immediate car repair is required. In general, Turkish people do not necessarily feel this way.

- In Germany and most other European countries, roadside assistance technicians should be at least twenty-five or even thirty years old. This is because, for example, when you are a middle aged men, and your very expensive Mercedes-Benz breaks down, you do not feel comfortable having an eighteen year old boy trying to fix it. In Turkey no-one has problems with technicians of the age of eighteen or even sixteen years old.

- Another difference is that Turkish people never have contracts for over one year. They are not like western Europeans, they do not feel the urge to insure the future. In Turkey, people are okay having a contract for one year, but not for two years, let alone your whole life. This insecurity also has to do with inflation of the Turkish Lira.
• In the Turkish culture, people have close relations with family and friends. If you have any problems, you just call your nephew, your uncle, your neighbor or a friend of a friend of a friend.

All these cultural differences do not have to be an obstacle, according to Dr. Bozyazi. You just need to know what is going on, be aware of the differences and take the differences into account. ADAC Turkey could have been more aware of the differences.

Marketing spoken there was another obstacle. ADAC was a new name. Or better said, had no name at all. Not only the name, but also the service was not well known. Because this was a pilot project, ADAC did not invest much time or money in marketing.

Consumer market
Over the short time of period of the existence of ADAC Turkey, they had some consumer members. This is what you call the memberships. The few members that they got were recruited via the towing companies. This was not organized on a very high level. The towing companies would ask their roadside breakdown customers whether they wanted to become a member. However, the few memberships they had, were not enough.

Business market
According to Dr. Bozyazi, the first problem in the business to business market is, that it is not a big deal market. In Turkey it is all about prices, not quality. This result in the prices being low; new companies almost cannot enter the market. In addition, relationships with business partners were really good, even though a lot of political interests were involved.

European relationships
We got the feeling that Dr. Bozyazi thinks that the relationship with ARC Europe was only duty-bound. Because of the ARC-ADAC structure, ADAC Turkey had to have contracts with car manufacturers via ARC. The last thing we asked Dr. Bozyazi was, whether the experiences and knowhow of the cases of Starter Poland and ADAC Turkey had some interaction. She explained to us that the experience in Turkey showed how important it is to think of a way to sell memberships that fits a culture.

What we mainly learned from this interview is the importance of being aware of cultural differences. And not only being aware of them, but also to adjust your marketing tools and activities.
12.7 Meeting Mr S. Sarti

“A change of mental attitude is necessary; the customer should be in the centre.”

03-03-2011

Mr. Sarti is the impassioned CEO of Europ Assistance. A major competitor of Marmassistance. We would have loved to interview him, but he is a very busy man. However, he appeared at the Marmassistance office for a meeting. That is why we were invited to join the meeting.

Dr. Ataç introduces the meeting with a brief description how Marmassistance received the contracts from former ADAC Turkey. These contracts include Opel, Chevrolet, Ivec Trucks and Jaguar.

The fundamentals of the meeting: since the takeover, Marmassistance’s position has changed drastically. Now she handles 2750 cases a month. This shuffle results in Marmassistance and Europ assistance being competitors. However, Marmassistance would like to make clear, that she does not intend to take over any of Europ assistance’s interests and work. For example, Fiat is not even in Marmassistance’s interest. Marmassistance intends to make use of ARC’s channels, not Turkish channels to avoid interrupting Europ assistance business.

Cooperation

However, Dr. Ataç does have some proposals and interests. He admires Europ Assistance. The main question of this meeting is: how can Marmassistance and Europ assistance shake hands in roadside assistance, but still have their own business. Working together should benefit both of the companies.

How can the two companies up line and go together with the same strategy. A strategy which includes price agreements that do not intend to kill service providers, but motivate these companies to fix on spot. Because in Europe 90% of the breakdown cars are fixed on spot. However, in Turkey hardly any cars get fixed on the road. The combine strategy might as well need to include standardization of logos and looking into online strategies.

From Mr. Sarti’s point of view Turkey is an upcoming economy. Just like India, China and Brazil. In the past, Turkey has never been part of PAN European tenders. Turkey has been made by Turkish entrepreneurs, and big families. Now everyone is interested in doing business with Turkey.

Business opportunities

Europ assistance’s competitors in Turkey are Mondial, Axa and ARC. Europ Assistance would like to have a simple business alliance and has some ideas for the automotive branch in Turkey. For instance, Mr. Sarti sees opportunities for the warranty business and also for repairing on spot. Towing companies should be educated. Because manufacturers and distributors will not do so. Concerned to repairing on spot, the reparation is not the only benefit. Also money is saved on all the costs around. For example, hotels etc. Most car repair activities are done by car manufacturers itself. ADAC was the first company in Turkey to try repairing.

The attitude in Turkey is only to sell cars and then leave it. But according to Mr. Sarti this is not the way to go. They should pay more attention to after sales: taking care of the driver and the car. The profit that is made in the automotive industry should be invested in the industry again. Unless we develop this way of thinking, we will make return on investments. Therefore, a change of mental attitude is necessary; the customer should be in the centre. Customer minded strategies, like repairing on spot, will
initially base your relationship on trust, no longer on prices. This way, a company will bond with its customers and maintain long-term relationships. In Turkey they do not understand this, yet. And it most probably will take some time. Currently, many companies have ridiculously low prices and extremely thin margins. But Marmassistance and Europ assistance both share the same thoughts and philosophy on the ‘prices versus quality’ matter. Therefore, cooperation is very interesting. For instance, the two companies could collaborate on a tender for Nissan and Renault.

Sarti based his strategy on talking and listening to people, he is not just going to give his strategy away. For him, an alliance is composing a frame. Once the frame is created by the two companies and they both agree, the frame stands. And it works.

Price versus quality
Dr. Ataç’s only fear is, Marmassistance (and Europ assistance) will appear on the market being expensive and look like robbers. Mr. Sarti replies that selling these services should not be like selling one piece of a cake, but showing companies the whole cake. There is more about the service than price. It makes no sense to just offer your price, without explaining your offer. Companies should trust on your strategy, not on your prices. Europ assistance does not sell products, but services.

An example of trusting on strategy rather than prices, is the relationship between Europ assistance and Toyota. Europ assistance offers Toyota many services for their customers which contribute to the increase in loyalty to their network. For sharing the benefits and costs, a sharing fund might be useful. Because both companies will handle respecting the law and ethics and they will not act risk taking.

Finalizing
The exact way of collaboration is not clear yet. However, protocol wise the two companies could work together. There are places where appearing together is not a wise thing to do. Also, there might be arranged a meeting with Luc Vanden Bussche, Hans Biekmann and Ronald Verel to explain the cooperation.

Last, one should always keep in mind that innovation is not always new. Mostly innovative ideas are already used in other sectors or other countries. But it is innovative to apply these ideas in your company.
12.8 Meeting Mr. R. Delanote

“The aim of truck roadside assistance is deliver the cargo”

18-03-2011

In addition to the interview with Mr. Biekmann, we also talked to Mr. Delanote. He is a network manager of a European network company, similar to ARC. He told us more about his company. To get better insight in the Europe Net and Marmassistance relation.

Europenet is a leading umbrella organization for European Service providers, concerned commercial vehicles. Commercial vehicles are trucks and buses between 3,5 and 40 tons. Europenet’s activities are similar to ARC’s activities. They advance relationships between truck manufacturers and assistance companies.

The main difference between truck and passenger car roadside assistance is that the aim of passenger car roadside assistance is to help the driver, whereas the aim of truck roadside assistance is deliver the cargo. To Europenet’s customers (the truck manufacturers), the truck is more important than the driver. For that reason at least 80% of all repairs are on side.

Europenet works on decentralized bases, which means they use the call centres of the service providers. The reason for this is the fact that the service providers can make use of local knowledge.

Mr. Delanote sees a trend on the truck market where truck manufacturers want to arrange their own roadside assistance and call centres. That way they are able to follow the lifecycle of trucks. This trend is not very good for assistance companies nor for network companies. For these truck manufacturers are becoming competitors.

In Delanote’s opinion, the way roadside assistance company ADAC dropped out of Turkey and stopped their services was very amateurish. It left a bad mark on the Turkish market. For instance, there was a car manufacturer brand that switched to another service provider, because of ADAC’s abrupt leave. This could be a false start for Marmassistance’s roadside assistance.
Meeting Mr. Kulakovskiy

“Direct communication is very poor.”

18-03-2011

Mr. Kulakovskiy is a sales representative of a medical emergency application. We are invited to join a meeting, in which he outlines the product and the marketing of the product.

According to Mr. Kulakovskiy there is an international communication problem between insurance companies and assistance companies. Global Medical Alliance developed a solution for this: the Global Alliance Application. This application applies a digital SOS button on telephones. Pressing the button activates a data flow immediately. This data flow ensures that a help request is been send to the insurance company as well as the local assistance company. It allows easy follow-up: a quality check for customer satisfaction.

Initially this application was designed for medical service. But it also can be very useful for roadside assistance. This system is not used on the Turkish roadside assistance market yet. This is why Dr. Ataç sees the application as an opportunity. Having said that, the conversation switches to communications in roadside service, apart from this new application.

Communicating roadside assistance
In Mr. Kulakovskiy’s opinion, roadside assistance communication should be directed to dealers. Car manufacturers are huge and inflexible organizations and do not have direct contact with the car drivers. However, dealers want to maintain the relation with customers. Therefore, after sales is important. This is the reason why assistance companies like Marmassistance would want direct contact with the dealers. Because of their direct connections assistance companies have the possibility to get closer to the consumer. However, contracts with car manufacturers open doors and make it easier to get in contact with dealers.

Cultural differences
Mr. Kulakovskiy continues. He compares the cultures. In Turkey it is hard to sell memberships. For instance, ADAC tried to sell membership, but they did not succeed, due to the fact that they did not know the Turkish culture. You have to know that Turkey is completely different from Holland and Germany, where memberships are very common. Memberships are in the mindset. ANWB has already been through the learning curve.

“In Russia, where I come from, memberships will start working when people understand roadside assistance. Russian consumers do not know which services include roadside assistance. It will take 10-15 years for roadside assistance to gain recognition. I suppose the same will happen in Turkey.”

Dr. Ataç agrees. They review the Turkish market culture. According to them, Turkish people are very bad consumers. They do not know their rights. Also, consumers in Turkey are very hard to reach because of the media clutter. Direct communication is very poor. We have to start to listen to the consumer. And to think about a way, to pass the message directly.

One also has to keep in mind that ways of communication cannot be copied, due to cultural differences. Mr. Kulakovskiy illustrates this opinion with a example. The AA British automobile club informed consumers with boots in shopping malls. This same concept failed in Belgium. Each culture, requires a different approach. One should find his own approach. Do not dream you can copy membership and promotion concepts. Different countries have different attitudes.
12.10 Interview Dr. C. Celik

“Commercial noise and crazy media.”

23-03-2011

Dr. Celik is a Turkish lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire in England. She also is a course leader of an international business culture course. Plus her Phd was about the effects of culture on international advertising. “I analyzed the American and Turkish advertisements based on the Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. I collected data from 150 advertisements from the United States, and 150 advertisements from Turkey.” She has insight in the Turkish advertising and promotion culture. Therefore, to us, she was the right person to talk to.

First of all, in Dr. Celik’s opinion, the figures from Hofstede’s cultural dimensions of Turkey are now dated. Culture is very dynamic. There’s a global change. She explains some of the cultural dimensions, applied to Turkey.

Collectivism
Turks are collectivistic. Friends and family are very important. A small practical example: every Turk wants a four door car, so friends and family can easily come along. This collectivistic attitude reflects in business life. Western people are very business oriented. Turkish people, on the contrary, they are not very business oriented. Turkish business meetings start with a sociable conversation, including questions about personal life. The Turks want to be friends with you. And trust you. Therefore, oral communication and face-to-face communication is more important than written communication. Turks can agree on matters without signing a contract. A hand shake is enough. Meetings are the best way to communicate. But keep in mind to schedule enough time for the sociable conversation.

Another result of the collectivistic Turkish culture is that it is very hard to share individual opinions in a group. The collective group ideas are more important. Especially sharing your opinion to someone higher in function is very difficult. This has to do with Hofstede’s dimension of power distance.

Power distance
The power distance in Turkey is very high. Respect is important, especially to older people, parents and people in higher functions. Turkish employees cannot criticize management, the manager can take criticism personally.

Uncertainty avoidance
The third dimension Dr. Celik mentions is the uncertainty avoidance. Turks score high on uncertainty avoidance. They do not like changes. Also, they do not like to take risk in their personal life. From Dr. Celik’s point of view, Turks have a non-risk taking attitude. That’s why she supposes insurance is doing very well. However, one has to be careful with concluding based on this high number. Because Turks are not risk-avoiding on every aspect of life. For instance, they do take a lot of risk in traffic. Dr. Celik illustrates this with an example. “Me and my husband (he is English) are driving on the motor way. The petrol runs low. My husband stresses. He immediately wants to find a petrol station. He is scared that the car will stop going when they are in the middle of the motorway. Whereas, I feel very relaxed, like Mediterranean people do. And I say everything is going to be fine.”

Also, this non-risk taking attitude does not mean Turks are not curious. They want to buy new brands and new products, to try it. As saw above, risk avoiding attitude appears not on every aspect. Just like it does not appear in
every person and every group. Dr. Celik feels conservative people in general have a more non-risk taking attitude.

High and low context cultures
Besides Geert Hofstede’s vision, there are some other relevant cross-cultural researchers. For instance, Edward Hall. He is well known for his explanation of high context and low context cultures. Dr. Celik compares Holland and Turkey based on these contexts. Holland is a low context culture, clear messages and clear communications are common. In high context cultures, like Turkey, there are many unwritten rules and small, things are very important. In addition, non-verbal communication, use of gestures and symbols is very important.

Dr. Celik feels each dimension of Hofstede is equally important. Edward Hall is a good completion. They both think the influence of culture is connected to every aspect in life, also advertising.

Media clutter
We ask Dr. Celik about advertising and media clutter. Media clutter is an issue in Turkish advertising, we earlier noticed. She refers to it as ‘commercial noise’ and ‘crazy media’. Turkish people watch a lot of TV. If you see the advertisements on television, you might notice there are a lot of visuals. Every commercial is like a short film. Turks do not like to read. They rather watch visuals. Or ask information face-to-face from a friend.

“I have to say, Turkish advertising agencies are very good. As well as the public relations agencies. They have to deal with a lot of international competition. As well as with an identity problem. It’s the same everywhere. Depending on agency and company, sometimes public relations is used as an umbrella for every communication activity, sometimes it is more marketing and sometimes it is more advertising. There is no one particular chart.

Finally, Dr. Celik thinks we are lucky because we are from abroad and outside the Turkish culture. Therefore we can easily see the dimensions and stereotypes. It is important and good to see different cultures. With cultures it is like “people have a CD in their brain. This CD was uploaded when one is born. It gives instructions and it makes one act following this cultural instructions. So we do not know why we have this attitude, it is just there. Until one realizes this CD is the driving force of ones acts. At this point one realizes cultural differences.”

A Turkish business man in an international company, doing business like an American, “After work, this man still takes of his shoes, enters his flat and wears his slipper. It is his cultural heritage.”
12:11 Interview Mr. B. Lomas and Mr. D. Hinchin

“Roadside assistance is a great story to tell”

29-03-2011

We meet with Mr. Lomas and Mr. Hinchin, after sales managers of Jaguar and Land Rover, respectively in the UK and in Turkey.

To Mr. Lomas and Mr. Hinchin, the most important aspect of roadside assistance is customer satisfaction. “We want to ensure two things: the satisfaction of the customer and the repair of the car.”

Concerning the repair of the car, the feedback on the repair is very important to Jaguar. Because Jaguar can improve their product using the causes of the breakdowns. Technical information feedback is important for car manufacturers to improve their product.

Importance of roadside assistance
When a car breaks down the customer is already unsatisfied. “With good roadside assistance we want to prevent further dissatisfaction. We want to protect the customer from another bad experience.”

When Marmassistance serves a Jaguar driver, they represent the brand Jaguar. It has to go out in the name of Jaguar.

A silent USP
The public relations department of Jaguar does not want to talk about roadside assistance, this is the case with most car manufacturer public relations departments. Roadside assistance of course is required when a car breaks down. public relations departments do not want to communicate about the possible failures of their product. Mr. Lomas feels that roadside assistance is a great story to tell, and he thinks good roadside assistance is a USP. But for sure it a silent one as there is no promotion of it.

Communicating the service
Roadside assistance is a complex issue because communication about it is poor. Most often it is only mentioned in the warranty benefits handbook. Most jaguar drivers do not even know they have Jaguar assistance.

During this meeting we start to get the feeling that there is a problem. Roadside assistance is not part of public relations whereas we feel it should be. Also the after sales managers, the decision makers on roadside assistance, do not know much about public relations or marketing.

Our conversation continues over lunch. Where Mr. Lomas emphasizes our above mentioned thoughts. He feel it is a waste that public relations people do not contact with Marmassistance. Because Marmassistance has direct contact with Jaguar owners and therefore is part of the image building of Jaguar. Is not good if the product as well as the service is disappointing. One does not want to let the customer down twice.

Mr. Lomas tells us more about the formation of the relation between Jaguar and Marmassistance. Like most car manufacturers Jaguar has a PAN European contract. They prefer this contract above national contracts. On European level Jaguar works together with ARC. Because Marmassistance is ARC’s chosen service provider, they assist Jaguar. Mr. Lomas fairly tells that without ARC he would not have been in contact with Marm.

At the end of our interview Mr. Lomas suggests something that in our opinion is a opportunity for Marmassistance. Via the Jaguar guarantee program a Jaguar car and his driver are under guarantee for three years. After this period of time the car owner should be made an offer for a roadside assistance service pack, or better said a membership. The AA in the United Kingdom offers this service via a letter to the car driver.
12.12 Interview Mr. R. Verel

“Marmassistance should respond to the hungry need of car manufacturers.”

30-03-2011

As the Director Sales and Marketing Business-to-Business of ARC Europe, Mr. Verel is willing to tell us more about specific marketing trends in the automotive branch. He is well informed about the situation of Marmassistance and without asking he informs us about everything we want to know.

Until 2000 the automotive market was stable and calm. Car manufacturers produced the cars and importers were responsible for sales and after sales. Since the interference of the EU, rules about warranty have changed. And after sales became a complex issue.

Changes on the automotive market
Warranty used to be guaranteed to car owners as long as their car was serviced by a brand authorized garage. If it was not, your car would no longer be under guaranty. But the EU decided that car warranty should not be repealed whenever a car owner made use of a non-authorized garage. This is to stimulate competitiveness. For car manufacturers this meant that it became harder to have sold cars served at brand authorized garages. Therefore, it became harder to sell brand car parts. Selling car parts provides the main income of car manufacturers. Not only their income, but also customer loyalty became harder to maintain.

Another development on the automotive market is the appearance of Chinese cars. Japanese cars like Hyundai and Kia used to be in the lower price segment. But with the appearance of Chinese brands, they have to shift to the middle segment. In the middle segment after sales is very important. Due to this shift the competition grows. Therefore, customer retention becomes more important.

Customer loyalty the magic word
According to Mr. Verel, these two developments led to customer loyalty being the magic word for car manufacturers. Car manufacturers are all working on customer loyalty. One of their tactics is the SARA program. SARA stands for Service Activated Roadside Assistance. This means when a customer is loyal towards the brand authorized garage and gets his car served there, the warranty may be extended for free, with one or two years. Implicit the customer does of course pay for example through a higher price for the yearly servicing. Using this SARA program, many car manufacturers try to increase the loyalty rate. The loyalty rate is the average amount of years a new car is served in a brand authorized garage. For example the loyalty rate for a new ford car is four years.

Sustainability also becomes more and more important. This sustainability plus customer retention and emotions are popular themes in automotive advertising. Almost everything car manufacturers do, is based on staying in contact with your customer. Marmassistance should respond to this hungry need of car manufacturers.

Service providers response
But how should Marmassistance respond? “In Turkey it is hard for car manufacturers to offer service activated programs for free. Because in Turkey the incident rate is very high, 12%. This high incident rate is very detrimental. Depending on the country car drivers call either the car manufacturer or the independent roadside assistance provider (like ANWB and AA). In England there is a tradition of addressing the producer of the breakdown car. In contrary, in Germany car drivers have a tradition of calling ADAC. In Turkey there is no independent roadside assistance
provider. That means main part of this 12% is going to call the car manufacturer in case of an incident. For the car manufacturers the price should be low. Marmassistance should find a way to earn money on additional services.”

An example of such an additional service, is communicating Marmassistance’s telephone number in cars. For instance, after four years, when a car is no longer under warranty and the car driver experiences a breakdown he calls Marmassistance. Marmassistance than says: “Your car is no longer under warranty. But there are two options: tow you to an independent garage or tow you to a brand authorized garage. Both ways you have to pay for the towing, but when we tow you to the authorized garage you receive quicker and better service and also a price discount.” This way the car manufacturer is happy, because the car is being served at a brand authorized garage. This strengthens the customer bands. And the car manufacturer will pay Marmassistance a certain amount of money.

Mr. Verel thinks Marmassistance should talk to the car manufacturers and together create a suitable and profitable service package. The heart of this package is stimulating customer loyalty. Marmassistance should create a nice product portfolio. This product portfolio should be presented and communicated towards both after sales and marketing managers. Mr. Verel believes these managers are Marmassistance’s target group.
12.13 Interview Mrs. Y. Yilmaz

“Marmassistance should communicate in the most suitable way with clients”

31-03-2011

Mrs. Yilmaz is the manager of the workshop of the biggest Opel and Chevrolet dealer in Europe. She welcomes us in her office which is in the corner of the workshop and where car mechanics walk in and out for her signature.

She tells us about the importance of customer retention and customer satisfaction. Within her company they sell and service Opel and Chevrolet cars and also for Ford they provide services. These brands approach customer retention differently.

Customer communication
Opel/Chevrolet, prefer to e-mail the customers campaign information. To assemble customer feedback they make use of e-mail questionnaires. Ford, on the contrary, likes to call clients directly. They ask specific questions to measure the customer satisfaction. Each member of the after sales team of Ford has to call at least five clients a week. The information they gather via these telephone conversations is used to improve the campaign and loyalty programs.

Mrs. Yilmaz believes direct telephone contact is the most effective strategy to contact and bond with your customer. Driving and owning a car in Turkey is considered expensive. Car manufacturers offer special warranty programs to the clients. The most important thing for the client is that he can get discounts with these programs. Other additional services clients really appreciate are: replacement cars during servicing and home delivery of the car after servicing.

Importance of roadside assistance
According to Mrs. Yilmaz roadside assistance fits perfectly in the loyalty programs. “The most important aspect of the roadside assistance services is speed of service. Speeds of service is close connected with understanding the problem of the breakdown car. Because when the service provider understands the problem correctly, the proper service can be send immediately. The customer loses no time on receiving the wrong attendant.

We also wonder what the knowledge, attitude and behavior of a car driver experiencing a breakdown is. “Basically the number of Marmassistance is communicated in leaflets and the instruction book and clients call directly to Marmassistance. However some customers directly call to the dealer where they bought the car. This is because they have a relation of trust and feel they know the dealer. When they call the dealer, they get transferred by the dealers agent to the call center of Marmassistance.

Marmassistance’s role
Mrs. Yilmaz shares her expectations on Marmassistance with us. First of all she expects that Marmassistance tries everything to get the right information from the customer in order to provide the right service in minimum period of time. The second expectation is, that Marmassistance should communicate in the most suitable way with clients. Because to the customer Marmassistance is part of the Opel or Chevrolet brand.

The communication between Opel/Chevrolet and Marmassistance is very important. And Mrs. Yilmaz is very positive about the communication. In contrary to ADAC Turkey, the former service provider. Marmassistance does not use an automatic telephone answering system. Therefore it is easy to reach an agent and get immediately good telephone answers.
12.14 Interview Mrs A. Ergül

“Roadside assistance is the most important aspect of customer loyalty.”

08-04-2011

Travelling all the way through Istanbul and seen many car drivers in need for roadside assistance, we arrive at the Mercedes head quarters. Mrs. Arzu Ergül, after sales consultant, is concerned with the roadside assistance of Mercedes. She is happy to tell us more about roadside assistance of Mercedes.

Mercedes is a strong brand. Last year its sales rate was very high. And for a strong brand as Mercedes it is the same as for every other car brand: customer loyalty is very important. Mrs. Ergül believes roadside assistance is the most important aspect of customer loyalty. Because she thinks that roadside assistance is a very important reason to buy the car (again).

Customer information
Mercedes has a CRM department. This department tries to gets as much information from the client as possible. They use surveys on their webpage to question the customers satisfaction. The information they get from this survey is very valuable for Mercedes. A specialized research company analyzes the results. According to the results improvements for dealers are made.

Importance of roadside assistance
To the customers of Mercedes the most important part of roadside assistance is mobility. They want to continue their way as soon as possible. To commercial vehicles mobility is even more important because they need to deliver goods in time. When a car cannot be fixed, a replacement vehicle is a suitable solution.

The Mercedes clients are well aware of the fact that roadside assistance is available. The service is communicated towards the clients via the website, the warranty booklet and stickers in the car. In addition, dealers give specific information on roadside assistance when selling a car.

Marmassistance’s role
How can service providers meet the expectations of Mercedes? “Generally, we are very happy. Especially with the new answering tactic of the call center. In the past, every agent could answer every call, this year there is a special trained team to answer the Mercedes calls.” To Mercedes this is very important. This way the service provider works ultimately under the name of the brand Mercedes.

The first contact between Marmassistance and Mercedes was organized by ARC. ARC informed Mercedes and Marmassistance, gave contact details and a meeting was arranged. Mercedes first impression of Marmassistance was that Marmassistance is very cooperative. “We are also pleased with the way we currently communicate with Marmassistance. We use face-to-face communication during meetings for the important issues. In between we stay informed via e-mail.” Marmassistance has not received many cases yet, but Mrs. Ergül sees a growing volume in the future.
“Creating differentiating products is very important.”

08-04-2011

In our second interview with Mr. Alemdaroğlu we would like to confirm some of our recent findings. We also like to hear his opinion on these recent findings from a Turkish/Marmassistance point of view. We presented him some of our findings, his reaction is written below.

Car manufacturers try to increase the loyalty rate (to brand-authorized garages). Everything car manufacturers do, is based on staying in contact with their customer.

“That is correct. For example, we also have a loyalty increasing package. For Opel and Chevrolet we created a special program. Normally, in case of an accident car drivers cannot call upon warranty. With this new special package car drivers get free towing to an authorized garage when their car breaks down in an accident.” Mr. Alemdaroğlu also says that Marmassistance is planning to make such packages for other brands and dealers. Maybe Marmassistance can also try to sell these packages to consumers on the B2C market. Marmassistance intends to get in contact with the Turkish touring club to try to reach the consumer market.

In Turkey it is hard for car manufacturers to offer service activated programs for free. Because in Turkey the incident rate is very high, 12%. In Turkey there is no independent roadside assistance provider. That means the main part of this 12% is going to call the car manufacturer in case of an incident. For the car manufacturers the price should be low. Marmassistance should find a way to earn money on additional services.

Last year it was very difficult to make appropriate tenders. Because the incident rates were very high: 18% and because we had not much experience. Currently, the incident rate has decreased to 12%. Together with our assembled experience we will be able to offer lower prices to the manufacturers. Concerning the additional services to earn money, Marmassistance is already trying to do so.

An example of such an additional service, is communicating Marmassistance telephone number in cars and making agreements on towing non-warranty cars.

“We do something alike. When a client calls Marmassistance and his car is no longer under warranty, we offer him to a tow to a brand authorized garage where the client gets a special discount. Marmassistance has a profit margin on the price of the tow. Also, in future we might want to offer additional medical services to the client. Another additional service which could be offered is e-call and b-call. This is a device that automatically connects with a call center in case of an emergency or a breakdown. It also sends some information about the car breakdown. These additional services and the quality of the service will make Marmassistance different.

Creating differentiating products is very important, because in Turkey, there is roadside assistance is offered everywhere. Even in supermarkets. All you need to provide Turkish standard roadside assistance is a call center and contracts with towing companies. In Turkey towing is so common because the car warranty agreement states that whenever one has his car repaired at a non-authorized garage, the warranty expires immediately. Therefore, roadside repair is nearly impossible, because repair within the warranty can
only be done by the brand authorized garages. Towing is the best solution, because one does not want his warranty to expire.

The heart of a suitable and profitable service package is stimulating customer loyalty.

Mr. Alemdaroğlu agrees. This is the most important aspect. But before all other things, we need to work on roadside mentality in Turkey. Turks need to be informed what roadside assistance is and why people need it. Currently, they do not know anything about it. Therefore, Mr. Alemdaroğlu is making a plan to enter the consumer market. The plan consists of several steps: 1. Teaching people about roadside assistance in Turkey 2. Inform them about Marmassistance 3. Contact other brands 4. Contact government.

How does Marmassistance currently promotes itself?

“Last December when ADAC collapsed, ARC send us all the contact details of the car brands. We got in contact, we made appointments, we met and introduced Marmassistance with some presentations. For this year we are making a list of all brand representatives using our network. We tried to make appointments with them to introduce ourselves, just like we did with the contacts of ARC.”
12·16 Interview Mrs S. Turkmen

“Keep the brand’s rhythm according to the clients heart and soul.”

11-04-2011

Mrs. Turkmen works for Lowe advertising Turkey based in Istanbul. She is willing to answer some of our questions on promotion in Turkey.

For our thesis we work in the automotive market. Lowe advertising worked for five years in this market for their client Hyundai. “The Turkish automotive market is a tough market; highly competitive, aggressive and fluctuating. It is also a large market where all the brands are present.” The aspirations and expectations are unique and diversified. Characteristics are the irresistible and head turning incentives, attractive bank credits, excessive spending of the consumers. The consumers make use of word-of-mouth advertising and friends suggestions are important. Both communication tools are sadly enough unsubstantiated. At last TV, print, outdoor and internet are indispensable mediums of the automotive market.

Media clutter
Talking about outdoor advertising and television. We wonder what Mrs. Turkmen’s vision on the media clutter in Turkey is. “Nowadays, there is advertising clutter all around the world and I believe that this fact would only be an excuse for not up-to-date or not creative agencies.” Apparently the regulations on television advertising are being revised to reduce the clutter on television. In Mrs. Turkmen’s perspective this only brings new opportunities for advertising agencies. “Creative agencies should outstand in the crowd via differentiating their core creative idea, inventing or using new media channels or creating new product opportunities.”

Product promotion
In all this media violence how should one introduce an new product on the market and especially how can you reach your customer? One should not forget that a new product launch may not be alienated from the category dynamics, competitors or consumer trends. “And before you make any move, you need to pay attention to the market and try to find a strong and crystal clear consumer insight that you may link with the product’s unique offer.” When you find this link and think about positioning this should be related to attributes, benefits, users or even to the experience the customer has while using the product. “The key is to know the new product, sort out its differentiation point in line with consumer insight” Then all you need to do is be edgy in what you say, how, where and when you say it.

In addition in all your differentiating, positioning and communication “you need to be open, to anyone you interact with”. Do not react overpromising or pushy. But really listen and interact. “You need to get their heart and soul and then keep the brand’s rhythm according to it.” This way your brand may become a lovemark.

We wonder which product communication aspect to Turks is important. “Most of Turkish people are price sensitive.” Promotions work well in most products categories and especially on fast moving consumer goods. However, people have lost confidence in big lotteries. They rather have instant wins and get immediate response.

The business-to-business market
Finally we would like to know how one should act on the B2B market to be successful. What are do’s and what are the don’t’s? “On the b2b market it is important to be up to date and well informed.” Business partners appreciate it when one is informed and functions as a good speaking partner and listener. Also transparency in the relation is very important and
highly appreciated. “Underestimating your partner being pushy and rigid will not be loved. A flexible and cooperative relationship will be valued.”

12.17 Interview Mrs N. Davutoğlu

“Combining Ottoman past and Turkishness.”

11-04-2011

As the chairman of a leading trade-union of the advertising sector, Mrs. Davutoğlu has masterminded a lot of communication campaigns for many brands. Recently, she was a judge at the Effie awards in Turkey. Her years of experience make her very interesting. We found an article in which she describes the state of marketing in Turkey.

Understanding the consumer

According to Mrs. Davutoğlu, Turkish people are really friendly, excited, proud and emotional. Also, they are very “attached to families, communities and roots.” To them their social environment is important and they really set value on the opinion of this environment. Turkish people are flooded by media clutter. More and more they are getting indifferent to advertising messages. Only a few brands do succeed to impress the public and set the game. In a country where human relations are really important, “key to everything is understanding the consumer” says Mrs. Davutoğlu.

Successful strategies in Turkey

Mrs. Davutoğlu describes strategies that are successful in Turkey. “The global brands, which respect and take into account the local values are more likely to become one of us.” Avoiding these local values is a bad thing. Eventually your strategy will fail. Exploiting local values is considered really annoying by Turks. It may deflect the brand.

Engagement and participation

The successful brands try to engage and interact with the Turkish people. In Mrs. Davutoğlus opinion, one way communication is history now, two-way communications has the future. Her opinion here complements with the study mentioned before. She thinks it is a challenge to bring a high value idea to the heart of every day. To engage the consumers. “And using interaction in communication is a relatively new level in our lives... It works! We like being involved.” Following Mrs. Davutoğlus creating a platform for engagement is the winner card. For brands who use this method, success is inevitable. Also, the media clutter and message bombardment incites a more creative use of media by advertisers.

Transparency and sincerity

Mrs. Davutoğlu also thinks transparency and sincerity are a great success. “Brands should bring out their potential to become a lovemark and communicate their messages in sincerity”. Nowadays the relationship with the consumer should be built upon trust. The public no longer accepts overpromising messages.

Advertising on television

TV is very popular in Turkey. Turkish people watch TV average 3 hours daily. “Due to family and cultural characteristics in Turkey, a major part of the society spends their whole evening watching television. Therefore, television is still the most important medium in Turkey.” In turkey it is nearly a tradition to watch television the whole evening. The reach of TV as a communication tool is high and the cost per thousand is low. However, this results in an incredible media clutter. Within these media messages, it becomes harder to differentiate.

Using the digital arena

Following Mrs. Davutoğlu, Turkey has a long way to go in digital. Still, she thinks Turkey has huge potential. She explains her thoughts: Turkey is one
of the highest penetration countries. Also, Turkish internet population is young. 77% of internet users are aged 16-34 years old. Even, in low social economic status groups internet usage is reasonable as well. Brands who use the digital channel right and interact with customers, do benefit.

Trends on the Turkish market
Mrs. Davutoğlu witnesses three trends at macro level: ‘In search for the better’, ‘In search for more’ and ‘searching for beyond the limits’. In addition, she witnesses some other trends. We will enumerate the trends below:

- Following new trends with respect to your own style. “Being modern and traditional at the same time (....) is a rising trend in terms of dining, home decoration, hobbies and daily life”;
- Especially youngsters are combining the Ottoman past and Turkishness, “applying these cultural values to daily modern life”;
- Spending time at home together with friends is becoming very important;
- Benefiting from the little comforts and luxury of the daily life to ‘pamper’ yourself;
- Brands offering ‘happiness’ to consumers is definitely a rising trend in such economical conditions where the whole population seeks ways to ‘happiness’;
- Internet technology brings increase and variety in internet communication;
- The Iphone as a gadget is becoming very popular. Although, it is only used by around 3 million people in Turkey, it is desired by an increasing number of people;
- Mobile marketing doesn’t work in Turkey. Many brands have abused it with their discount text messages and people are really annoyed by it. “Same goes for spam e-mails as well. Consumers attitude here is like ‘I will interact with you when I desire to do so’”.

Social media
Some technologies have impacted the way brands in Turkey effectively engage with their targets. Turkish people, especially youngsters, became part of social media: 70% of young internet users declare they use social media. The most economic entertainment gadget is the internet. Turkish people are number 4 on active Facebook usage, and Turkey ranks number 3 in MSN. Mrs. Davutoğlu thinks that’s because of the partially closed society. In such a society, internet gives people the freedom to conceal their identity and socialize at the same time.

Also most of the public relations agencies and public relations professionals use the internet as an effective communication tool. Mrs. Davutoğlu has some really interesting thoughts on using the internet: “It is not the technology itself but how to use it right that is what matters at this point. It is not important for a brand to have a page on Facebook or an account on Twitter but rather what it offers there. (...) The most important challenge is to manage social networking well, with relevance to the medium and the target audience, because just being present there will not help at all but look just dull”.

We think Mrs. Davutoğlus opinion is very interesting because she describes the Turkish culture and explains how to connect to this culture communication wise. She does not step backward to also explain communication tools that do not work. For us these do’s and don’ts can help us to define a strategy on promoting roadside assistance.
There is no big story to tell about B2B communications."

Two and a half months ago, we started this project and interviewed Mr. Biekmann. Since then we unraveled the Turkish culture and automotive market. Now we would like to ask him some more specific questions. Because he has experience with setting up roadside assistance in amongst others Russia.

Business-to-business market

As you probably noticed, currently Marmassistance has only B2B relations. There is no big story to tell about B2B communications. One should make a list of prospects and just approach them.” Giving huge incentives is a successful method of approaching business partners on the automotive market. For example, invite potential business partners for a luxurious boat trip. Demonstrate and inform them about your assistance. Events always work.

Business-to-business market

On the consumer market, there are used different approaches. Many European automobile clubs advertise to their customers on the road, for example one could advertise on taxis or buses. Turks like gadgets, so successful advertising in Turkey would involve a gadget.

But building a consumer database in Turkey, is very difficult. Many Dutch people have an ANWB subscription. The money for their subscription is automatically been transferred from the customers bank account to ANWB. Which means, if they want to stop their subscription, they have to discontinue it before a specific time of the year. “You know how it works. Dutch consumers are very lazy. Mostly you forget to discontinue, or you just forgot you have a subscription at all. That is why it is less difficult to built a customer database.” Members stay out of ease.

In Turkey, this is a real challenge. Because direct debits are not very common. Which means a service providers has to convince the subscriber every year, to keep its membership.

Another reason why it will be very hard to create memberships, is that “In Turkey, many people do not know what roadside assistance is. This is what we call a non mature business market. Plus, many people do not know Marmassistance. Building awareness around Marmassistance and roadside assistance, is a huge investment.”

“If Marmassistance wants to offer roadside assistance directly to the consumer, I think a non-membership model could work. This means Turks with a car breakdown, but without a subscription, call Marmassistance. They get roadside assistance, but they will have to pay for their case.”

“And I think, becoming an ANWB likewise organization in Turkey, is nearly impossible. The ANWB has a large history in roadside assistance. They started providing roadside assistance more than 50 years ago. But the automotive market changed. I do not think an ANWB likewise organization can be build nowadays.”

Mr. Biekmann wants to emphasize that one cannot copy a business model, like ANWB’s, from one culture to the other. The mentality of people in each country differs. Therefore, ones approach must differ.
Business-to-business-to-consumer approach

According to Mr. Biekmann, B2B2C relations are much more successful for assistance companies that start to provide roadside assistance services. One can reach the end consumers via banks and insurance companies. Marmassistance can offer them packages, which they can offer their potential clients. This way the banks and insurance companies can differentiate themselves.

Marmassistance also could build B2B2C relations via dealers. There are two ways to apply roadside assistance services on secondhand cars. First of all, the SARA program, which offers warranty extension to loyal consumers. Second of all, Marmassistance could offer packages to the second hand multi brand dealers.
13 Conclusion

“It is most important to project strategies, to adjust and reform them.”

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part answers the sub questions (13.1-13.5). The second part answers the main question (13.6).
13.1 How is the roadside assistance of Marmassistance organized?

In order to answer this question we will first answer the four sub questions:

- What is roadside assistance? (13.1.1)
- What is Marmassistance? (13.1.2)
- Which roadside services does Marmassistance offer? (13.1.3)
- How does Marmassistance currently promote itself on the Turkish market? (13.1.4)

13.1.1 What is roadside assistance?

We will answer this question on two fields, roadside in general and roadside assistance in Turkey.

In general

During our study on roadside assistance, we could not find a reliable definition on the subject. That is why we decided to compare the services of international roadside assistance companies. With this comparison we ensured the existing definition of roadside assistance.

The existing definition is thus: “Roadside assistance warranty offers emergency assistance such as towing, jump starting, changing a flat tire, fuel and fluid delivery, pulling out a vehicle that is stuck in snow or helping people who are locked out of their vehicles.” (aboutautomobile)

This definition complements the description of the services that American automobile associations provide. For instance, according to the Auto Club of America roadside assistance provides the following services in case of an emergency breakdown: towing, battery service, flat tire assistance, gasoline, oil, fluid and water delivery service and lockout assistance. All to get the client back on the road again.

However, several European automobile clubs have a more extensive vision on roadside assistance services. For European automobile clubs like ANWB, AA and ADAC, towing is only the second option. The first option always is repairing the car on spot. Repairs may be temporary solutions or they can be permanent fixes. Either way, it ensures that the vehicle gets back on the road, enabling driver and passengers to get on with their journey. Because of the importance of repair on spot: the average roadside repair rate in Europe is 60 %. The reparation of repairing on spot is not the only benefit. Also money is saved on all the costs around the mechanical breakdown.

The conclusion of our comparison is that the basics of roadside assistance are the same, but the approach differs. However, the intention in Europe as well as in America and many other countries is to get the customer back behind the steering wheel, as quick as possible. The existing definition lacks the variety in service levels. Also, the issue that requires roadside assistance and the main purpose are missing. The current definition is only about how things should be solved. Whereas to us, roadside assistance is not about how problems exactly are going to be solved, but that no matter what the problem, the aim of roadside assistance is that the problem will be solved.

The current definition is nothing more than an enumeration of services whereas roadside assistance is about issues and purposes. The issue that requires roadside assistance is mechanical breakdown and the purpose is to make sure the client is assisted and continues his or her way as soon as possible. The following definition includes all the missing elements:
Roadside assistance is providing services to a client in case of a vehicle breakdown, that aims to assist the client to safety continue his/her way as soon as possible.

The final consumer of roadside assistance services is always the person who experiences a car breakdown. One should keep in mind that the breakdown can happen to a passenger car, but also to a commercial vehicle like a truck or a bus. Next we will describe the relationship of roadside assistance providers and their customers: B2C, B2B and B2B2C.

Business-to-consumer
On the B2C market products are sold to individual consumers. These products are called memberships. The quantity of the B2C market differs. Countries with a large history in roadside assistance, in general have more B2C customers. Whereas recently new markets have more B2B customers.

Business-to-business
Roadside assistance providers have relations with business partners. For instance, they have contracts with car manufacturers, lease companies, insurance companies and fleetowners, such as taxi companies. These business partners want to offer roadside assistance with their products to their clients. They do not organize roadside assistance themselves, which is why they have contracts with service providers like ANWB and Marmassistance. The business partners benefit from offering these services because it complements their product and it makes the life of the client easier. If a client has a car breakdown, he or she gets direct contact and service of the service provider the business partner has a contract with.

Business-to-business to consumer
The contact between car driver and the service provider is based on B2B2C. It is neither strictly B2B nor strictly B2C. It is both. The first B represents the service provider. The second B represents the business partner described above. The service provider distributes its service through intermediaries, their business partners. The contract of the service provider with the car driver is exclusively possible via the business partner.

For the end consumer, the offer that is done, differs in B2C, B2B and B2B2C relation. On the B2C market, the consumer buys roadside assistance directly from the service provider. On the B2B market the consumer receives the service from the business partner for free. The business partner pays the service provider. On the B2B2C market, the consumer has contact with the business partner and has the possibility to buy roadside assistance via the business partner.

![Figure 16](image)

On this figure you see the relations a service provider can have: directly with the consumer (b2c), directly with the business partner (b2b) and indirectly via the business partner with the consumer (b2b2c).
The story of roadside assistance
Conclusively, we will describe the simple story of roadside assistance. You are a car driver. Your car breaks down. You stop at the roadside and call the number on your in case of emergency card. You either got this card together with your new bought car or you got this card when you became a member of an automobile club. Both ways you end up speaking to an agent of a roadside assistance provider call center. You explain your problem and they send a tow truck or a patrol car, depending on your problem and their capability. Your car either gets fixed and you can continue your way. Or your car is towed to a garage where it gets repaired while you wait or continue your journey with another vehicle. This can be a replacement car or bus or taxi.

In Turkey
Roadside assistance in Turkey is not as much developed as it is in many other European countries. On the Turkish roadside assistance market there are no B2C contracts. This means that the Turkish population do not have roadside assistance memberships. The existing roadside assistance contracts are B2B contracts. Turks get roadside assistance with many products as a bonus. For example together with car insurance or tires. But roadside assistance memberships as an independent product you can actually buy is unknown.

Roadside assistance service is less extended in Turkey compared to European roadside assistance services. Simple operations are done on spot: changing battery, jump start and changing tires. Repairing on spot of more complex problems is less common.

The main service in Turkey is towing. This is because the car warranty agreement states that whenever one has his car repaired by a non-authorized garage, the warranty expires immediately. Therefore, roadside repair is nearly impossible, because repair within the warranty can only be done by the brand authorized garages. Towing is the best solution, because one does not want his warranty to expire. All you need to provide Turkish standard roadside assistance is a call center and contracts with towing companies. That is why roadside assistance is offered everywhere.

In the history of roadside assistance the Turkish Touring Club played an important role. The Turkish Touring Club was a successful government organization. They were like ANWB in the Netherlands. With the liberalization, the Club drastically neglected.

In the recent past, there collapsed a service provider: ADAC Turkey. In 2008 ADAC Germany expanded its business towards Turkey, providing international assistance and call center services for carmakers and ADAC members. Over the short time of period of the existence of ADAC Turkey, also tried to sell memberships. In December 2010 they went bankrupt. Most probably the reason for this bankruptcy is a combination of their unknown brand and service, losing too much on low price offers and cultural difficulties.

13.1.2 What is Marmassistance?
The second question towards answering the first sub question of this thesis is; what is Marmassistance.

Marmassistance is a leading assistance company in Turkey. Marmassistance has 90 employees and two offices, one of them is located on the Sabiha Göckcn airport. They have a 24/7 call center for both medical and technical cases.
Initially Marmassistance was a medical service provider. Since the bankruptcy of ADAC Turkey December 2010, Marmassistance extended its services on the technical field. They took over ADAC’s B2B service contracts with several Turkish car manufacturers.

The medical division is less relevant for our thesis, however for more information we direct you to paragraph 7.2. The technical division is relevant. It exists of an organizational and technical part. The organizational services include administrative activities and arrangements of several cliental needs, such as visa acquirements, flight arrangements and arrangements in case of an accident. The technical part includes the roadside assistance call center and the organization of repairing and towing. Figure 17 shows the divisions.

In both the medical and technical field the main business goal of Marmassistance is providing services for its business partners. On the medical field Marmassistance business partners are (travel) insurance companies. On the technical side Marmassistance provides services to car manufacturers and European automobile clubs. To provide services to these business partners Marmassistance makes use of a network of subcontractors. The subcontractors on the medical side are medical facilitators and ground ambulances. The technical subcontractors are garages and towing companies.

In figure 18 the position of Marmassistance is illustrated. Marmassistance is a spider at the center of the web. Organizing the services for the clients of the business partners, with the help of subcontractors.

Marmassistance is a quality focused company. With much experience in the medical field. Its roadside assistance experience is limited, but they have a strong willing to improve the current standard of roadside assistance. Also the experience and level of marketing is little. This is something to remember when giving an marketing and communication advice.
13.1.3 Which roadside assistance services does Marmassistance offer?

Marmassistance provides the organizational part of roadside assistance. In the call centre, calls from clients of business partners come in and arrangements of towing or repairing go out. The practical execution of the service is done by the subcontractors: garages and towing companies. Marmassistance does not have its own patrol fleet. Marmassistance has subcontractors all over Turkey.

The services

The services Marmassistance offers are divided in primary and secondary services. First of all, the primary services are repairing and towing. The main service of these two is towing. Because the roadside assistance service is not very developed in Turkey. However the easy problems do get repaired on spot, like: empty batteries, flat tires, broken cables and empty petrol reservoirs. The car repairing is done by the contracted garages. They have a patrol car they can send to the breakdown spot. The towing is done by the towing companies.

In addition there are secondary services. Whenever a car cannot be repaired within a certain period of time. Arrangements for accommodation, evacuation and transportation will be made by Marmassistance.

During this whole process the agents of Marmassistance execute follow up. They stay in contact with the patrol or tow attendant to measure the waiting time for the client. On European level the quality of roadside assistance is measured by the time every step in the process takes. The quicker the better.

The clients

roadside assistance services are offered in a package. The car driver either has this package because he is a member of a European automobile club. Or he has this package because it came with the new car he bought. He got it from the car manufacturer.

Thus, the clients that Marmassistance serves are Turks from Turkey or other Europeans visiting Turkey. For clarity, the Turks from Turkey are clients of the car manufacturers. The other people visiting Turkey are clients from the European automobile clubs.

The European automobile clubs and the car manufacturers are the business partners of Marmassistance. Marmassistance has contracts with these business partners via ARC. ARC is a European network company which establishes contact and contracts with European automobile clubs and car brands. So agreements can be made on a European level.

The European automobile clubs

ARC has many service providers like Marmassistance in many countries in Europe. For example ANWB in the Netherlands. Between these service providers there is an agreement to provide service for each other’s clients, when they are abroad.

The car manufacturers

ARC also has contracts with car manufacturers, this are PAN European contracts. The service providers of ARC serve the cars of this brand, each in its own country. Marmassistance is the roadside assistance provider for the car brands in Turkey that have agreements with ARC. The agreement between Marmassistance and the car manufacturers says that Marmassistance offers roadside assistance services for a certain amount of money. The car manufacturer buys these services and adds the services to
its warranty package. The warranty package includes diverse services for the
driver and his new car.

Besides these packages Marmassistance offers because of the ARC
agreements, it also provides additional service by mutual agreement with
the car manufacturer. This services can also be added to the warranty by
the car manufacturer. Because roadside assistance is part of the warranty, it
is part of the services of the car manufacturer and therefore it is part of its
image. Because roadside assistance is part of the car manufactures image it
is important that Marmassistance acts in the name of the car manufacturer.

13.1.4 How does Marmassistance currently promote
itself on the Turkish market

Marmassistance received the contacts of her current business partners via
ARC. The moment they receive the contact details they make personal
appointments. They meet the partner and give a presentation to introduce
the company.

The main promotion of Marmassistance clearly is using face to face
communication, during meetings supported by PowerPoints. Also individual
PowerPoints with no live presentation are used.

The first impression of Marmassistance is medical. This is because of the use
of red and white in pictures, logo and design. The division of the technical
and medical part is made very clear in text. We notice that they are aware
of the difference between these two parts under the same brand.
Nevertheless this division is not made clear in the design. The overall look of
Marmassistance is medical.

For Marmassistance it is important to mention their excellent quality. One
can read and hear about in every way of communication. This is because
Marmassistance feels this is a very important point. Marketing wise you
could say quality is their unique selling point.

Also the vision and mission of Marmassistance is communicated and this
again underlines the importance of professionalism, quality and their
ambition to be the best.

13.1.5 Answer to sub question one

How is the roadside assistance of Marmassistance
organized?

Initially Marmassistance was a medical service provider. Since the
bankruptcy of ADAC Turkey December 2010, Marmassistance started to
provide roadside assistance services in a B2B context. Roadside assistance is
providing services to a client in case of a vehicle breakdown, that aims to
assist the client to safety continue his/her way as soon as possible.

ARC establishes contact and contracts with European roadside assistance
service providers and car brands on a European level. Marmassistance is
one of these service providers. Using the network of ARC, Marmassistance
has two sorts of business partners: European automobile clubs and car
manufacturers. The communication towards these partners is mainly face-
to-face supported by PowerPoint presentations. According to the ARC
agreement, Marmassistance provides services to travelers in Turkey who
are clients of other service providers.

According to the ARC agreement between Marmassistance and the car
manufacturers, Marmassistance offers roadside assistance services to car
drivers of several brands. To the car manufacturer roadside assistance is part of the warranty package it offers to the client. Outside the ARC agreements, Marmassistance also offers additional service by mutual agreement with the car manufacturer. So to speak, Marmassistance acts in name of the car manufacturer.

The services Marmassistance offers are divided in primary and secondary services. Primary service is repairing and towing. Of which towing occurs the most. In addition there are secondary services whenever a car cannot soon be repaired. Than Marmassistance makes arrangements for accommodation, evacuation and transportation.

To provide services to the business partners Marmassistance makes use of a network of subcontractors: garages and towing companies. Marmassistance is a spider at the center of the web. Organizing the services for the clients of the business partners, with the help of subcontractors.

During this whole process the agents of Marmassistance execute follow up. To measure the waiting time of the client. According to European standards quicker service is better service.

Conclusively, we will describe the simple story of roadside assistance:

1. The car driver receives a roadside assistance package with his new car or buys it himself;
2. The car driver experiences a car break down and calls the assistance number;
3. He explains the problem to a Marmassistance agent;
4. The agent sends the right service attendant (towing or repairing);
5. The drivers car gets repaired;
6. Or the car gets towed and repaired at the garage;
7. The driver continues his way using his repaired car or replacement transportation.

Figure 19
13.2 How is the Turkish automotive market structured?

In order to answer this question we will first answer the four sub questions:

- What are the recent developments on the Turkish automotive market? (13.2.1)
- Which stakeholders does Marmassistance have on the Turkish automotive market? (13.2.2)
- What are the expectations on promotion, of stakeholders on the Turkish automotive market? (13.2.3)
- In general, how are programs promoted on the Turkish automotive market? (13.2.4)

13.2.1 What are the recent developments on the Turkish automotive market?

The Turkish automotive market grew over the last years. Turkey stands 17th in the rank of world’s largest automotive manufacturers. In 2010, Turkey exported almost 7,5 thousand motor vehicles. Turkey also imports a lot of cars, nearly 4,7 thousand vehicles in 2010. The domestic sales of cars in Turkey grew with 38%. More and more Turks own and drive a car. The Turkish automotive market is booming. There are several trends and developments that influence this growth.

European competition

Since the negotiations with the European Union, the Turkish automotive market changed. Also decisions of the government and global trends have influenced the Turkish automotive market.

Due to the interference of the European Union, boundaries faded. Many countries are interested in investing in Turkey. Turkey earned a place on the global map. Mobility of capital increased and developments in technology took place in the automotive market. The other side of the coin of faded boundaries, is the increased competitiveness. Because not only useful capital and knowledge is imported, there also occur export chances. To meet the European standards, and to be able to compete on the European level, Turkish automotive market improved prices and technology and increased the productivity and quality.

Global competition

The competitiveness trend not only appears on a European level, but also on a global level. We are very close to the introduction of the Chinese car. The appearance of new brands, lead to more competition.

Changing rules on warranty

The growing competitiveness combined with changed European rules on warranty, requires action of car manufacturers. First we will explain the changing rules on warranty: The European Union changed the conditions of warranty. Warranty can no longer be repealed when a car is served in a non brand authorized garage. This encourages the customer’s choice to get his car served by a non brand authorized garage. Therefore car manufacturers try harder to retain their customers.

The magic word

Car manufacturers have three reasons to work on customer retention. The first reason is, as said before, the high competition. There are many brands a client can choose for. The second reason is that car manufacturers can no longer fully rely on their dealers. Because many dealers sell several brands. The last reason is car manufacturers need to sell spare parts to their clients, because that is their main income. A loyal customer is worth a lot. Customer loyalty is the magic word.
13.2.2 Which stakeholders does Marmassistance have on the Turkish automotive market?

There are many stakeholders with interests in the automotive market. Roadside assistance is only a small part of the automotive market. The important stakeholders for the roadside assistance part of Marmassistance are: The network organizations ARC and Europe Net, the subcontractors, car manufactures, European Service providers and Turkish service providers. The Turkish service providers of course are competitors.

**ARC Europe and Europe Net**

ARC and Europe Net are network companies that establish contracts and contact between mutual service providers in European countries. And between service providers and car manufactures. ARC Europe is the network partner for the passenger car sector of the automotive market. And Europe Net is the partner for the commercial vehicle part of the market.

**Subcontractors**

Marmassistance has contracts with diverse garages/dealers and towing companies. They provide the executive services to the car drivers. These services of course are roadside repair and towing. The garages/dealers with whom Marmassistance has contracts mainly are brand authorized garages and dealers. To make the whole situation more complex, these garages/dealers are authorized garages and resellers of the car brands Marmassistance has contracts with. Marmassistance also has subcontractors for secondary services like replacement cars and hotel accommodation.

**Car manufacturers**

Using the network of ARC Europe, Marmassistance has contracts with several car brands; Opel, Chevrolet, Jaguar, Mercedes Benz and Iveco Trucks. Besides these contracted brands all other car brands in Europe are prospects. Some brands are closer related to the Turkish automotive market because they have plants in Turkey. Other European and Asian brands do not have manufacturers, but importers in Turkey. This way their cars are sold on the Turkish market. The Turkish car manufacturers produce various kind of vehicles, such as passenger cars, buses, trucks etc. There are five companies producing passenger cars: Fiat, Honda, Hyundai, Renault, and Toyota. Besides, there are nine companies producing pickups and trucks: Anadolu Isuzu, BMC, Ford Otosan, Hyundai, Karsan, Mercedes Benz, Otokar, Temsa, Tofaş and there are also nine companies producing buses and mini buses: BMC, Ford, Hyundai, Anadolu Isuzu, Karsan, M.A.N, Mercedes Benz, Otokar and Temsa.

In addition we would like to mention the Automotive Manufacturer Association (OSD) all the above called brands and some governmental organizations are united is this association.

**European service providers**

Again using the network of ARC Marmassistance is related to the European service providers. For a full list of the service providers of ARC Europe we direct you to paragraph 10.1.1.

**Competitors**

Mondial assistance, Europe assistance, Inter partner assistance Axa, Tur Assist and Assist Line are the competitors of Marmassistance. These competitors are not related to ARC but they are related to other European companies. The competition is not only on national but mainly on European level. We should add that the main goal of ARC’s network companies differs from the competing companies. Because the competition offers a various range in health, home and living insurance services whereas ARC’s core business is roadside assistance.
13.2.3 What are the expectations on promotion, of stakeholders on the automotive market?

As said before there are many stakeholders on the automotive market in Turkey. Their expectations on promotion are similar. Car brands prefer to work and make agreements on an European level. Promotion is not important to them. They want to influence the service and give high value to quality. It certainly is a market where actions speak louder than words.

The actions that are valued by car manufactures are a flexible and cooperative attitude. And the willingness of Marmassistance to work under the name of the car brand. In the communication towards the customers of the business partners, Marmassistance is expected to act in a way that complements the identity of the car brand. This is because Marmassistance client contact is part of the image building of the car brand.

When promoting roadside assistance one should not think of this service as a USP for car brands. To them roadside assistance service is a necessary evil. The car brands do not want to communicate widely about roadside assistance as a USP.

In their communication, stakeholders appreciate face-to-face communication and telephone contact. They believe direct (telephone) contact is the most effective strategy to contact and bond with customers. Of course this direct contact can be supported by written contact such as e-mails.

General appreciations on the B2B market in Turkey are transparency and being a well informed, listening partner. Pushy and rigid communication are not valued.

13.2.4 In general, how are programs promoted on the Turkish automotive market?

While trying to answer this question we discovered that the automotive market is one that promotes a lot towards its customers on the B2C market. But it is very difficult to find information on concrete Turkish automotive promotion programs. Especially concerned the B2B market. This is way we, in the beginning, chose to involve the European experience and knowhow.

Of course there are some characteristics of promotion on the Turkish automotive market. Communication on the automotive market is unique and diversified characterized by irresistible and head turning incentives, attractive bank credits and excessive spending of the consumers. Word-of-mouth advertising and friends suggestions are important amongst consumers. Car brands make use of TV, print, outdoor and internet to reach their customers.

In the B2B market the promotion strategies are about building relationships. In these relations face to face communication is very important.

Note: The subject of this question is closely related with sub question 5 ‘Which strategy is best to promote the roadside assistance program on the Turkish market?’ More insight on this subject is given in the answer to this question in paragraph 13.5.2.
13.2.5 Answer to sub question two

How is the Turkish automotive market structured?

To explain the structure of the automotive market it is important to know that there are car manufacturers and importers. The car manufacturers have a plant, where they produce cars in Turkey. The importers import cars so their cars can be sold on the Turkish market. The manufacturers are united in the OSD, the automotive manufacturers association.

Besides manufacturers and importers, for Marmassistance and so for our thesis, important stakeholder on the automotive market are: The network organizations ARC and Europe Net, the subcontractors, European Service providers and Turkish service providers. Of which the European Service providers, ARC and Europe Net are not part of the Turkish automotive market. It would be wrong to say that they have no relation with the Turkish automotive market, but their relation is not strong.

Over the last few years, the Turkish automotive market grew. The export increased as well as the import. Every year more Turks own and drive a car. This growth is strongly related with the negotiations with the European Union. This led to fading borders where Turkey could enter the European market and where European companies could enter the Turkish market. Therefore, the competition grew.

Also, the European Union changed warranty rules, which made the automotive market even more competitive. With the new rules car drivers no longer naturally stay with the car manufacturers’ authorized dealer. Not only on a European level, but also on a global level the competition grew. Due to the introduction of the Chinese car.

Growing competitiveness on both levels together with the changed conditions of warranty made it more important for car manufacturers to work on customer retention.

On the B2C market there is a lot of communication. Because all stakeholders try to reach the customer to retain the relationship.

On the B2B market, the product itself is more important than the promotion. Cooperation and building relationship is essential. The Turkish B2B automotive market undoubtedly is a market where actions speak louder than words.

Figure 20
13.3. What are specific characteristics of the Turkish culture?

In order to answer this question we will first answer the two sub questions;

- In general, how does one describe the Turkish culture? (13.3.1)
- In general, how do Turkish people respond to promotional activities? (13.3.2)

13.3.1 In general, how does one describe the Turkish culture?

We believe we should divide the answer of this question into the Turkish culture in general and the Turkish public relations and communications culture.

**Turkish culture in general**

In our opinion, the Turkish culture is a rich, fascinating but complicated subject. We could write a book about the Turkish culture. Unfortunately, this would take ages. Therefore, we chose to use the dimensions of Hofstede and Hall to describe the Turkish culture.

Turkey has a very high score on the power distance rate. Respect and hierarchy are keywords. Especially to older people, parents and people in higher functions Turks need to show respect. Because of the high power distance rate, relations between Turkish employees and their managers are different.

The Turkish culture is very collectivistic. Turks are integrated in strong groups of friends and family, where collectivistic ideas and relations are very important. This collectivistic attitude also shows in business life. Turkish colleagues or business partners want to become friends. Meetings are the best way to communicate, because face-to-face communication is very important.

In the masculinity versus femininity Turkey scores medium, but it tends to femininity. Turks are modest and caring in their friends and family relationships. They are not afraid to show emotions.

The uncertainty avoidance in Turkey is very high. Turks do not like changes and have a non-risk taking attitude. This attitude does not mean Turks never take risks or that they are not curious. Turkish people like to try new brands and products. Which is a very interesting thought from a communication point of view.

In addition to Hofstede, we used Hall’s description of cultures. According to Hall, Turkey is a high context culture. Which means that it can be characterized by a networks of friends, families and many other close personal relationships. In contrary to low context cultures, people in Turkey do not require much background information, they stay informed about their close relations. And also non-verbal communication, symbols and gestures send messages. For a high context person it is considered irritating to receive too much ‘useless’ information.

**Turkish public relations and communications culture**

In addition to know the Turkish culture it also is important to get insight in the communication sector in Turkey. At first it is important to know that the term public relations in Turkey is widely used for all communication activities. Please keep in mind that the use of public relations in our thesis refers to all communication activities.

The Turkish public relations sector is on a different level than the European public relations sector. Particularly the companies in Anatolia (the Asian
13 Conclusion

part of Turkey) are still traditionally oriented and make little PR. Generally public relations is an unprepared story and used very ad lib. However the public relations sector in Turkey is growing and becomes more and more important.

There are three interpretations on this growing importance of public relations. First of all due to the economic crises in 2001 the manufacturers and companies in Turkey became more competitive and started to invest in communications. Also on European level the competition toughened, due to the strengthened relations with Europe. Turkish companies need to improve public relations in order to keep up with European businesses. Also the closer relation led to the appearance of European Communication agencies. Which incites the Turkish agencies to advance the quality of services. Altogether we can say that public relations now is commonly used in Turkish profit, non-profit and governmental organizations.

The execution of public relations mainly exists on operational level: information sending. One could say that the Turkish public relations make use of one-way communication. The main public relations service is media relations, promoting the brand and the product. However studies show that companies as well as public relation agencies agree that in future corporate communications is crucial for companies. But currently public relations and strategic communications are considered as two different professional areas. We can say that integrated corporate communication is not so developed in Turkey yet. But future perspectives are hopeful for integrated communication and improved quality and level of services in the Turkish public relations sector.

13.3.2 In general, how do Turkish people respond to promotional activities?

Before looking into the response of the Turkish consumer we will briefly describe this consumer. The Turkish population exists of 73 million people. All common used European media is also used by Turkish consumers. Radio, internet and newspapers are common used. Internet is a rising medium, in 2009 30% of the Turkish households had internet connection, this percentage raised to 42,6% in 2010. But the most popular media is television. 94% of the Turks has access to television and they watch TV average three hours daily. “In turkey it is normal, it is nearly a tradition to watch television the whole evening.” (Alpay, 2010, cited by Selbach 2010, p.24) Watching television matches with the tradition to spend the night with friends and family.

Friends, family and roots are very important to Turks. The opinion of their close friends and family is highly valuable. The newest trend amongst Turkish consumers is being modern and traditional at the same time. They combine the Ottoman roots with the new ‘Turkishness’ and apply this on daily life. This new Turk seeks happiness and little luxury in every days activities.

When this local values are avoided in communication and promotions it is a bad thing. On the other side exploiting local values is considered really annoying by the Turkish consumer. Also overpromising and pushy communication is not good. What the Turkish consumers do like is to be understood, to be listened to. They appreciate openness and interaction. And a relation built upon trust. Interaction is a relatively new in Turkey, and apparently Turks really like it. Turkish consumers enjoy being involved.
Turks are price sensitive. Therefore they really like promotions. They have lost confidence in big lotteries, they like instant wins and prefer to get immediate response. Promotions that include free product and price discounts are popular.

The Turkish consumers make use of word-of-mouth advertising and also value suggestions of friends. Of course this way of advertising is not substantiated. And companies promote via a large range of media. This result in a media clutter. Currently Turks are overwhelmed by the media clutter, and become more and more indifferent to advertising messages.

The indifference especially occurs on the ad-like articles in magazines and newspapers, one can even say that the Turkish consumer is rather sceptical on these articles. When looking at advertising messages one will notice all the visuals that are used. This is because the Turkish consumer does not like to read, or cannot read, as there still are a lot of illiterates in Turkey.

Another very popular way of promoting in Turkey is mobile marketing. The immense use of it made the consumer really annoyed with mobile marketing. This also obtains for spam e-mails. The Turkish attitude towards such pushy media is, similar to the reaction Dutch consumers have. Consumers will interact with companies when they desire to do so.

Something similar occurs on the internet. Being present on the social media for companies only makes sense when it is relevant to the medium and the target audience. If not the Turkish consumer will only think of the company as: dull.

13·3·3. Answer to sub question three
What are specific characteristics of the Turkish culture?

Within each culture there are individuals. Naturally, they differ from each other. However, there are also general characteristics. First of all, we would like to describe the Turkish culture in general. Afterwards we will describe the Turkish public relations and communications culture.

Turkish culture
Respect, relations and hierarchy play a big role in the culture of Turkey. Turks are very collectivistic. They are part of strong groups of friends and families. Because of their close relations, Turks are always in touch with their families and therefore well informed of their situation. That is why Turks do not need much background information while communicating. This is what one calls a high context culture. In a high context culture, described by Hall, non-verbal communication, symbols and gestures are an important part of communication.

One can find the importance of respect and friendly relations reflected in business life. Turkish colleagues or business partners want to become each other friends and they prefer face-to-face contact.

The dislike of changes and their non-risk taking attitude is also a characteristic of the Turkish culture. However, this is not the case in all aspects of life. Because Turkish people are very curious: they like to try new things. They often test new products or brands.

Turkish public relations and communications culture
The growing Turkish public relations and communications culture is in some parts of Turkey very modern and extended. Whereas in some rural areas in Anatolia, companies have little PR. In general, the Turkish public relations sector is on a different level than the European public relations sector. For...
instance, the execution of communications is mainly operational. The main part of communications consists of information sending. Especially the integrated corporate communications is not so developed in Turkey yet.

Currently, public relations and strategic communications are not naturally together. In many companies, strategic communications is not naturally at all. But companies and public relations agencies believe that corporate communication on strategic level in future is crucial.

Turkish consumer
To the Turkish consumer friends, family and roots are very important. In addition they really value the opinion of their close friends and family and make use of word-of-mouth advertising. For Turkish companies word-of-mouth advertising is unsubstantiated and they communicate using all common media like television, radio, internet and newspapers. The Turkish consumer is snowed under by the media clutter. They become more and more indifferent to advertising messages.

There are several aspects in communicating that Turks like and dislike. They are enumerated below.

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<tr>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Dislikes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Honouring local values in communication</td>
<td>Exploiting local values in communicating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Overpromising messages</td>
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<td>Interaction</td>
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<td>Visuals</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct price promotions</td>
<td>Indirect 'big lottery' promotion</td>
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13·4 How can the relevant knowhow and experience of European clubs be applied in Turkey?

In order to answer this question we will first answer the three sub questions;

- What is the relation between Marmassistance and European automobile clubs? (13.4.1)
- Which experienced European automobile clubs could be useful? (13.4.2)
- Which knowledge and experience of European automobile clubs could be useful? (13.4.3)

13·4·1 What is the relation between Marmassistance and European automobile clubs?
Marmassistance and the European automobile clubs are part of the international network of ARC. ARC is a network company that has roadside assistance contracts with car manufacturers. To be able to provide the services they make use of an European Network. This network consists of a service provider in almost every European country.

In Turkey the service provider is Marmassistance. It provides services for the car manufacturers ARC has contracts with. But the service providers of ARC also provide services for each other’s clients. For example when a Dutch car driver with an ANWB membership experiences a breakdown while he is in Turkey, Marmassistance serves him. This also applies to a German ADAC member, English AA member, etc.

All the service providers have to meet the service levels stated by ARC. The service providers have contact with each other initially via ARC. Practically managers and directors also know each other besides ARC. For the service providers it is beneficial that all providers meet the service levels of ARC. Because when ones client is abroad good service is desirable. Therefore they are willing to share knowledge and information, this happens mainly via ARC. Who, in the end, is the link between the European service providers.

13·4·2 Which experienced European automobile clubs could be useful?

We are sure every European club has valuable knowledge and information for Marmassistance. ARC is the centre of all the knowledge. And it provides much information for all the clubs. Therefore the first step to assemble information is via ARC.

Via ARC we got specific information of ANWB. And we also spoke with a manager of ANWB. But the fact is that ANWB is on a whole different level then Marmassistance. ANWB has a long history of providing roadside assistance in Holland. They are used to work in a market that accepts, knows and wants roadside assistance. In contrary to Turkey where roadside assistance is rarely known and therefore currently undesired. One can say Turkey is a whole new market when it comes to roadside assistance. One has to understand that the information from ANWB, as well as from any other club, is very interesting and can teach one a lot. But one can never copy strategies from one culture into the other.

Because ARC works on an international level, they understand that learning from each other is about sharing information and then adjusting it to your situation. Therefore ARC is very useful to receive information from. They have knowledge and experience about almost every automobile club in Europe.
13.4.3 Which knowledge and experience of European automobile clubs could be useful?

All European automobile clubs have to, and do respond to the needy hunger of car manufacturers: customer loyalty. Everything car manufacturers do, is based on staying in contact with their customer. To car manufacturers roadside assistance is a marketing tool for customer loyalty.

ARC Europe has composed new strategies to adapt to the expectation of car manufacturers. This are ARC strategies but they are also used by many European automobile clubs. The relevant strategies are:

- Improve product portfolio by adding new services. This product portfolio should be presented and communicated towards after sales and marketing managers;
- Develop tailor made strategies for car manufacturers and become their strategic partner. It is most important to cooperate and together create a suitable and profitable service package.

In the strategy of ANWB one can clearly see these strategies. Their whole B2B strategy is about improve and develop service programs in cooperation with B2B partners. Eric Grootmeijer manager at ANWB says “Service and marketing are equally important”.

In almost every country roadside assistance providers approach the B2B market similar. It is not very complex. One should make a list of potential car manufacturers and approach them. To support this approach huge incentives such as events are common. On the B2B market besides car manufacturers also covering organisation of car importers or manufacturers might be interesting to approach.

The B2C market is more complex. Building a consumer database is very difficult.

Some European examples towards the B2C market include communicating the telephone number of the service provider. Even when a car does not have warranty and the driver does not have a membership, they can still call and get services they pay for. Other communication tools are roadside advertising.

Consumers can also be reached via other companies, this is called B2B2C. This way is easier to reach the consumers. The consumer is always approached by another company either under their name or the service providers name. B2B partners in the B2B2C channel are for instance insurance companies, banks and dealers.

The AA in the United Kingdom makes use of the B2B2C channel. When the car warranty expires, AA gets the permission and addresses from the car manufactures to send a letter. In this letter they offers their service.

13.4.4 Answer to sub question four

How can the relevant knowhow and experience of European clubs be applied in Turkey?

The marketing and communication strategies of the European clubs amongst others are:

- respond to the need for customer loyalty of car manufacturers;
- creating a product portfolio;
- cooperate with the B2B partners;
- reaching customers via the B2B2C channel;
- communicating the telephone number of the service provider in the car of the prospect.
The most important thing when applying these strategies on Turkey is to keep the cultural characteristics in mind. One can never copy the experience and knowledge from Europe to Turkey. Because the market and the needs of the consumer differ. When one wants to apply European standards and European knowledge on the Turkish market it is most important to project strategies, adjust and reform them.

It should be like drafting a palette with all possibilities and knowledge. Then chose the strategies that are useful. These should be mixed with own knowledge and experience of the culture to make a good strategy.

In this process ARC is a good partner, because she is a source of international information on strategies. The first step is gathering the information. The second step is discuss this information with Turks to find a way to complement the information to the Turkish culture.

One can also learn from the mistakes of ADAC Turkey. ADAC Turkey combined Turkish management with German management, on this level as well as in the relation with subcontractors and consumers they came up against cultural differences. The Turkish mentality differs from the German one. Marmassistance has one large advantage. It is a Turkish company with many Turkish employees and experience on the Turkish market. When learning from European clubs Marmassistance should always consider its own Turkish values.
13.5 Which strategy is best to promote the roadside assistance program on the Turkish market?

In order to answer this question we will first answer the three sub questions;

- Which strategy fits best to the characteristics of the Turkish culture? (13.5.1)
- Which strategy fits best to the automotive market? (13.5.2)
- Which strategy fits best to Marmassistance? (13.5.3)

13.5.1 Which strategy fits best to the characteristics of the Turkish culture?

One cannot just wildly and at random define a strategy. To promote a service on the Turkish market, one should adjust its strategy to the target group. And therefore, one should adjust it to ones culture.

Turks are very collectivistic. The groups opinion is most important. The collectivity shows in the way Turkish people communicate: Turks appreciate interaction, and face-to-face communication.

In addition to these collectivistic values, visuals, trust, openness, transparency, sincerity and honoring local values are important.

The uncertainty avoidance in Turkey is very high. Turks do not like changes and have a non-risk taking attitude. However, they are curious and like to try services. A strategy that involves tactics to make Turks curious would be successful.

Also, one should bear in mind that the Turkish culture is feminine and has a high power distance rate. Emotions, relations, respect and hierarchy are important.

Another characteristic of the Turkish culture is the price sensitiveness. Therefore one could respond to this in its marketing communication strategy towards consumers.

We believe one should reckon with these values when communicating with Turks. In fact, one should take these values into account when defining a company’s profile and proposition.

13.5.2 Which strategy fits best to the automotive market?

The automotive market can be separated into three markets. The business-to-business market, business-to-consumer market and the business-to-business-to-consumer market. Different markets require different strategies.

**Business-to-consumer market**

On the Turkish B2C market, roadside assistance is a very new product. To promote a new product on the market a brand needs to create category need, brand awareness and brand knowledge. This are very difficult objectives. To start with it a company has to inform the customer about the product, about its functional characteristics. Why it is useful and how it is useful. The giving of this information and the promoting of a brand in this ‘practical way’ is called informational positioning. The informational positioning is focused on communicating the functional benefits of a product.
Operating on the B2C market is a difficult task. It requires insights in consumers and most often large budgets. Because roadside assistance memberships have a duration of one year, one has to sell the product again every year. Selling memberships is a recurring mission, ones strategy should be prepared to this.

Business-to-business market
On the Turkish B2B market roadside assistance is an existing and known product. Besides Marmassistance there are other brands who offer roadside assistance services on the B2B market. A brand must position itself compared to other brands. It should accentuate why it is more beneficial than the others. There are two strategic options to differentiate a brand. The informational positioning and transformational positioning. When using the informational positioning one focuses on the distinctive functional benefits of the product. The transformational positioning focuses on the psychosocial values to the brand.

In B2B marketing communications personal contact is the most appreciated and most used tool. It is important to connect and communicate with the right persons in the prospect company. When communicating to business partner a brand should be profiled as a cooperative partner who knows how to meet the customer’s needs. In this case the need of the business partner is creating customer loyalty.

Business-to-business-to-consumer market
The B2B2C market is a market on which a brand approaches it consumers via other companies. On the one hand there needs to be a B2B communication strategy for the companies, on the other hand there needs to be a strategy towards the consumers. The B2B2C market requires a combination of above called strategies.

13.5.3 Which strategy fits best to Marmassistance?
As outlined in the theoretic frame, we want to promote roadside assistance out of a wider perspective. The perspective of corporate and integrated communications. We feel Marmassistance’s strategy to promote roadside assistance should contribute to the overall image of the brand.

First of all, the corporate design could add value to the overall image of the brand. Currently Marmassistance’s corporate design is very medical. In the design a separation of the technical and the medical part of Marmassistance should be made. A separation that still complements the overall and uniform look of Marmassistance.

In the company profile, Marmassistance should collect its USP’s. Marmassistance is a leading medical company, which gives it a very beneficial position. Marmassistance has a 24/7 call center and two sister companies. Also the flexible and cooperative attitude of Marmassistance are very strong points.

Marmassistance should make use of the push strategy to promote roadside assistance towards the end consumer. A push strategy targets its intermediate trade (or business partners) with its promotion. It includes good sales sources and personal selling towards marketing and after sales managers of the business partners. Also, unknown brands use push strategies, to push the market. Because they do not have a strong reputation yet. Of course Marmassistance is a market leader on the medical field. But only recently it started on the technical field. That is why it still need to build a strong image and reputation on the technical field.
13.5.4 Answer to sub question five

Which strategy is best to promote the roadside assistance program on the Turkish market?

Below we will combine the three aspects we explained above: the Turkish culture, the automotive market and Marmassistance. From that, we will explain the important ingredients that form the best strategy to promote roadside assistance on the Turkish market. As we have seen the market is divided into three different markets. Every market needs its own strategy and therefore has other important ingredients to form the strategy. However, some ingredients are important in every strategy:

- Building relationships;
- Interaction;
- Face-to-face communication;
- Corporate design with a medical and technical division;
- Integrate service promotion into corporate communication;
- Mention USP’s.

As said before there are three markets: the B2C, B2B and the B2B2C. Specific ingredients for the B2C strategy are:

- Create category need;
- Create brand awareness;
- Create brand knowledge;
- Informational positioning.

Valuable ingredients for the B2B strategy are:

- Differentiate the brand;
- Informational and/or transformational positioning;
- Personal contact;
- Be cooperative;

- Meet business partner’s needs.

The B2B2C market requires a combination of above called strategies. When communicating via the B2B2C channel, the push strategy is used.
13.6 Answer to the main question

In which strategic way can Marmassistance promote its roadside assistance program on the Turkish market, using therewith relevant knowhow and experience of European automobile associations?

Marmassistance is a medical and technical assistance company. It provides services to the clients of B2B partners. The medical side has a long history and a strong reputation. The technical side only recently developed.

Roadside assistance is one of the technical services. To provide these service Marmassistance makes use of subcontractors. The clients of Marmassistance are B2B partners, car manufacturers and European automobile clubs.

On the Turkish market B2C roadside assistance does not exist. Marmassistance only offers roadside assistance to business partners. These partners gives the services to their clients. The Turkish automotive market is highly competitive. Therefore, customer loyalty is very important for car manufacturers.

Car manufacturers often operate on a European level. Also roadside assistance contracts are often agreed on a European level. To organize the contracts on a European level, there are two network companies. ARC Europe for passenger cars and Europe Net for commercial vehicles. These network companies have a European network of car manufacturers and service providers. They have a service provider in each European country. Marmassistance is the service provider in Turkey.

The European service providers, have a far back reaching history of providing service in Europe. They work on the B2B and B2C market. Especially on developing new products their experience is useful. Also the approach on the B2B market is nearly the same in every country. Therefore, their advices are valuable. However, B2C approaches differ in every country.

On the B2B market roadside assistance is a well known product. And many other companies sell the service. Therefore a differentiation strategy is necessary. Important for the differentiation strategy is the informational and/or transformational positioning. A brand should profile its service using distinctive technical benefits or psychosocial advantages. Important ingredients for the profile of the brand are: personal contact, cooperative attitude and meeting the business partner’s needs. On the Turkish market business partners have a hungry need for customer loyalty.

On the B2C market, roadside assistance as a consumer service is unknown. Therefore awareness and knowledge should be created for the product, in order to create a need for the service. Because there is no knowledge yet amongst consumer of the service, one should use the informational positioning to communicate the technical benefits of the service. However, this are very hard objectives to reach. Because the market is large. An enormous advertising budget is required.

The best way to reach the customer, is not directly. But indirectly via the B2B2C channel. These strategies are explained and elaborated in our communication advice.
14 Relevance for the communication study

“What we studied here, connects and supplements our three years communication study.”

In this chapter we illuminate the ideas we gained during the process of writing our thesis. It explains why we believe our thesis adds value to our education.
Relevance for the communication study

At the end of this document we want to share the personal developments we gained while working on this thesis. What we studied here, connects and supplements our three years communication study.

During our education, the word innovation often was mentioned. We believe innovation is not always new. Like Mr. Sarti said, most innovative ideas are already used in other sectors or other countries. But it is innovative to apply these ideas in your company.

This is exactly what we tried. We made use of existing ideas and applied them to another culture. One does not have to reinvent the wheel. One can learn from the mistakes and the success stories of companies in other cultures.

In our case, there was no ready made solution or example. We tried to assemble knowledge and experience from all adjacent areas and melted these together. With our own knowledge and this assembled knowledge we created a communication solution.

In addition we became acquainted with the B2B market. While writing our thesis, one of our main subjects was the B2B market. We were glad to explore this market. Because during our three year communication study, we only came across the term B2B. This thesis was our chance to develop our vision on B2B communications. We learned that B2B communications requires maximum investment in personal relationships. Besides on the B2B market, even more than on the B2C market, actions speak louder than words.

After all, we personally got involved with integrated communication. Marmassistance is a company where communications is not a separate function. But integrated in every days business. Therefore marketing communications is not separate from corporate communications. Actually on both fields, there is hardly any activity. Therefore, we feel these aspects of communication should not be pulled apart. But integrated in one advice. In which product promotion can add value and contribute to corporate communication. This way product promotion benefits from the corporate image and the corporate image strengthens and is supplemented by the help of product promotion.
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