

## S 08 Support material

### Best practice

**Challenges, obstacles and new approaches regarding vocational education / training for SMEs**  
SAZ Schweriner Ausbildungszentrum e.V. / Germany

### **Incorporating small and medium size enterprises (SME) for one`s own vocational training and further education and collaborative cooperation – acquisition and educational marketing**

The performance and sustainability of the SAZ as an educational provider depends mainly on the acceptance and approval within regional businesses. It was because of this, that an active education marketing approach was adopted. The marketing concept implemented in SAZ is based on expectations, preferences and aims of small and medium size businesses. It was developed primarily by building up our vocational education and continued training and collaboration within the framework of different projects.

Most SME`s in MV consider that further training of their staff is important. But there are a number of obstacles to continuing training at company. However, SMEs often rightly realize that most of the educational products, courses and trainings are standard products, not adapted to the specific needs and demands of SMEs.

SMEs have to use good outside training providers because they do not have the possibility to organize on-the-job training adequate to their specific needs or to employ permanent training experts.

A very important provider in our region is the SAZ. It`s strategy is composed of four known instruments which yield the desired marketing mix:

- product policy,
- price policy,
- distribution policy and
- communication policy.

The **product policy** opts for and develops adequate training places on offer. Those constitutive processes and their development are connected closely with the introduction of a continuous quality management. It is essential, first of all, to even more consider corporate practice of small and medium size businesses, and secondly, to account for SME`s acquisition of additional qualifications.

The **price policy** is aiming at financial barriers of small and medium sized enterprises, especially if these enterprises are re-established or re-structured. Special conditions and introductory offers will, although requiring a tight costing, help to overcome these barriers. Other means are for example accessible subsidies

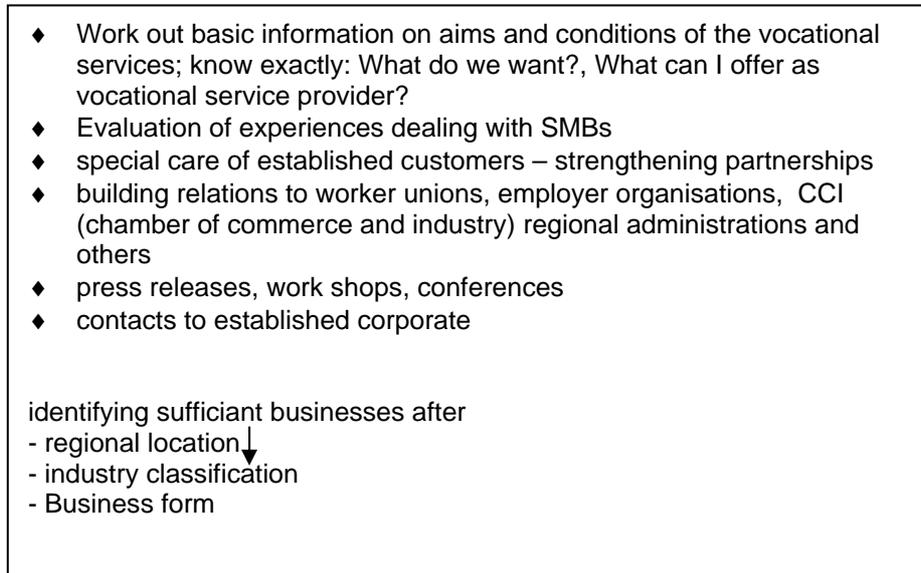
**Distribution policy** builds up and develops a stable network of small and medium sized businesses by detecting multipliers and using the formal and informal contacts to enterprises.

Furthermore, it is essential to provide solid information for organisations, worker unions and other institutions. These partnerships will help to reach the target group more efficiently.

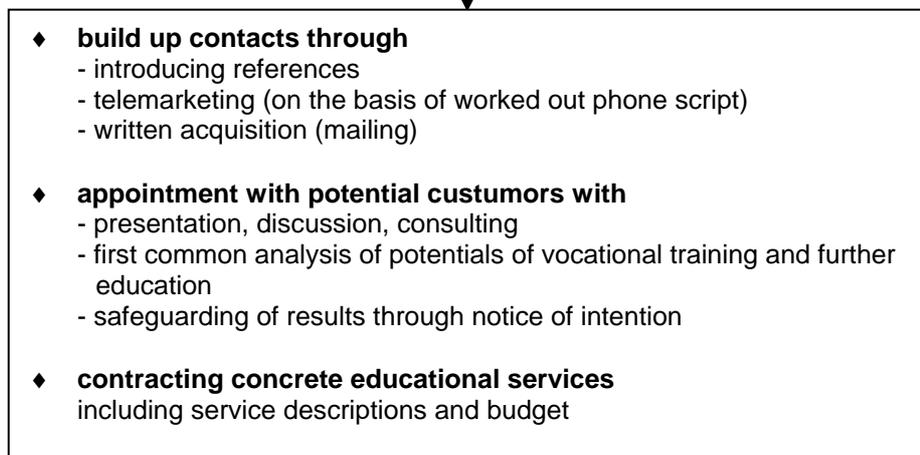
**Communication policy** has two aims: First, existing business relations bound by a contract are further strengthened and stabilized. Secondly, new relations to network partners are established. An active advertising, consulting and informing policy consists not only of e-mail services and tele marketing, but also presentations, personal advisory meetings in the companies, a permanent written information service, an active public relation and media work and others.

In the following the steps to a business bound development of vocational services are displayed:

## First phase:



## Second phase:



While the offer oriented approach dominated the first years of business acquisition, the network has now taken root in the region and demands of educational services are increasing. Most notably, a number of businesses connected to us, have turned into “stable vocational training and education providers” and are for instance already in their 10<sup>th</sup> year of providing training in our vocational network.