



# DNDS

Developing New Distribution Skills



## DELIVERABLE 1.2 Progress Report 2 - Month 20

English, available on the web-page



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## 1. Project Outcomes & Results

The **identification of the challenges** and skill deficiencies of automotive distribution companies as the first main aim of the project period is completely fulfilled. In order to be able to explore the future needs concerning skills, competencies and lifelong learning several research steps have been undertaken:

- The investigation of dealers.
- The Delphi Study with experts from various fields and best practice examples.
- The broad analysis of challenges and dealers' skill deficiencies on a North-South axis of the participating countries (Poland, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria and Italy)
- The survey results are available on the project website.
- Moreover, based upon the analysis and findings, the 6 content areas of the training modules were chosen.

### 1) Dealer Analysis – the dealers view

A qualitative research study was conducted in “old” and “new” European member states along a north-south axis through the EU. 215 small and medium sized dealers were interviewed. The added value is the findings concerning cross-cultural and national differences.

### 2) Delphi Study (“Committee of Experts”) – the experts view

21 experts originating from the project partner countries Austria, Poland Italy and the Czech Republic were interviewed a face-to-face or by telephone. These experts were selected from various fields (distribution, green mobility, IT, sales, finance etc.); different countries and different organizations such as automotive enterprises, dealers, training institutions, companies, HEIs and automotive associations.

Common current themes surfaced in most countries:-

1. Sales dynamics and customer relationship management (regional customer base, customer satisfaction, events, local promotion)(all countries except for Poland.
  2. Online sales (all countries except for AT).
  3. Customer mobility needs, mobility as a service (all countries).
  4. More complex dealer offerings including insurance, finance, car rental, accessories rental, substitute vehicles, maintenance (all countries).
  5. The role of emotions in purchasing (all countries except IT).
- The added value was the input and extensive pool of knowledge of the experts from different areas and countries.

Based upon these findings of skill deficiencies, current best skills and future needed skills – the 6 most crucial areas of competences and skills required for future success in distribution were chosen. These chosen areas the basis for the development of the 6 modules (of the curricula) and comprise the following topics:

1. Introductory MACROECONOMICS – Strategic analysis of the environment
2. MOBILITY as a commodity/service
3. MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA
4. SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT and CHANNEL MANAGEMENT
5. SALES AND SALES COMMUNICATION
6. FINANCE

### **3) Best practice examples - “Learning From the Best”:**

15 best practice companies (e.g. highly successful dealers) were selected from the networks of Italian, Austrian, Czech, German and Polish dealers. Each of the 15 dealers is presented (anonymised) and their current skills/knowledge that contributed to their success. The added value was the lessons learned from the best practice cases.

### **4) Self - Assessment Tool**

In order to make a comprehensive assessment of skill deficiencies and future skills requirements an online self-assessment tool was developed for automotive distribution SMEs.

Out of the 6 crucial areas (mentioned above) an online-assessment-tool was developed, translated and pre-tested with 15 selected dealers in I, A, CZ, GER and PL. The final tool is available on the web platform and distribution SMEs are invited either directly through the participating enterprises or indirectly through the stakeholders to test their skills. The instrument provides the users with information about the skills they need to be successful in the future. It also proposes which (training) modules can help to provide the missing future skills.

## 5) **Creating new curricula and training materials and Development of teaching and training materials** (tailored to needs of dealers and business students)

The methods applied were an in-depth analysis of needs, a detailed check of existing programmes and the development of a modular concept. Major focus is put on interactive and multimedia supported materials based upon the case study method:

- 1 Case study fitting best to the topic of the area (e.g. background case, exercise case, complex case, decision case, ...)
- 1 video of managers of enterprises or SMEs explaining the area problems and possible solutions (can be used for the cases, best practices or literature studies)
- Parts of the analysis reports, best practices and literature teaching material

## 6) **Online Self-assessment tool for SMEs:**

The online self-assessment tool for dealers is finalised. It is based upon the 6 crucial areas of competences and skills in distribution. The tool is translated into 5 languages, pre-tested with selected dealers in I, A, CZ, GER and PL and thereafter improved according to their feedback. The tested tool will soon be provided to the public via the web platform. Therefore, the aim of the development and use of an online tool for self-assessment of the target groups (dealers and students) is nearly reached.

## 7) **The development of the teaching and training materials**

regarding the six training modules, containing one case, suitable literature and other previously collected background materials (reports, studies, etc.) is work in progress and will be available soon. The concept for training modules is needed for being able to compose curricula. This activity is addressing the objectives of the **development and testing of new training materials** and the **design of training modules**, tailored for dealers and business studies students to meet the current and future challenges of the automotive industry.

## 2. **The set-up of the project website/web platform**

The set-up a web-based project platform, where the progress of the project can be continuously published and important documents are available for download, is complete. Public results and future deliverables are made accessible to a broader audience, i.e. automotive SMEs, HEI, training companies and the stakeholders (regional, national and EU associations). The web platform is also available after completion of the project and serves as means to up- and download documents, teaching materials and experiences shared whilst educating and training staff of automotive SMEs.

**Link:** <http://www.new-distribution-skills.eu>

### **3. Dissemination activities**

Dissemination (Posters and flyers) materials were developed jointly. The dissemination and exploitation strategy is characterised by raising awareness of the need for new skills in the distribution field. Methods are extensive exchange with automotive associations as strategic partners on EU and national level, raising awareness by spreading information in associations' networks, raising awareness by spreading information in universities' partner networks and involving enterprises. This should contribute to the sustainability of the project results.

Dissemination activities undertaken as follows:

- Development of the project website as a central marketing instrument, information platform and download centre
- Information articles for publication in all project partners languages (EN, PL, GE, IT) published by public (local) newspapers and on the web platform
- Project Presentations at conferences and seminars and presentations to experts
- Poster Presentations at conferences and seminars
- Publication of the results in the frame of a cross cultural conference in Austria
- Presentation of the project on a dealer conference where more than 500 European dealers (also from non-project countries) participated
- Press releases (resulting in numerous published articles in newspapers)
- Several on-going contacts to target groups and stakeholders (including dealer conferences)
- Newsletters (internal and external)

### **4. Meetings**

Several face-to-face meetings of the project consortium were arranged and communication was on a high level due to regular virtual meetings. Therefore, the partnership is stable and fruitful. The personal meetings contributed to a high extent to the work and progress of the achieved results. Moreover, the continuous quality management within the project ensured good progress and of course, quality.

### **5. Quality assurance**

The intention is to evaluate the whole project during the lifetime and after the lifetime, including its findings and the usability of the developed materials. All project member and selected stakeholders, as well as external evaluators from other HEIs are invited to give their feedback on the web platform. The quality management guarantees to check long-term and short-term objectives of the project, especially with a respect to exploitation and dissemination. The quality criteria were defined in the start-up workshop of the project and

agreed upon in the quality agreement by the project members. Minimum measurable quality criteria were defined for all work packages and deliverables (e.g. web platform, scientific reports, workshops, studies, best practices, case studies, self-assessment-tool, modules, curricula, teaching and training material, ...). The quality manager (one partner responsible) makes sure and controls the regularity and amount of feedback given. One deliverable has been composed with the minimum quality criteria for workpackages, deliverables and outputs.