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**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF SALES AS GLOBALIZATION INCREASED: A
STUDY ON GLOBAL ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT, STRATEGY AND DRIVERS**

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Title Strategic Management of Sales as Globalization Increased: A Study on Global Account Management, Strategy and Drivers			
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Abstract <p>Global Account Management (GAM) is a global strategic, relationship oriented and marketing management program. In today's highly competitive business scenario GAM has become one of the most significant strategic alliance by many companies with their customers to have the competitive advantage over their counter-part. It is a systematically approached program specifically in sales for managing strategically important customers globally. It is an ongoing process since many years now for all the global companies even though the rate of success is not so fast. Globalization has got an important role here for GAM analysis where the supplier firm engages it-self in standardizing marketing programs. It coordinates worldwide activities and integrates competitive moves across country markets. Hence Shi et al. (2010: 626) suggests firms can increase the use of GAM strategies when faced with increasing globalization.</p> <p>This report reviews the scientific literature and empirical studies of many past researchers on GAM analysis, its drivers and strategy and concludes the importance of GAM for all global companies. The objective of the study was to understand how global account management and strategy helps in managing global customers.</p> <p>It is a case study. The research problem was approached with a careful research design, which consists of a theoretical part and an empirical part. The theoretical part of the study defines and clarifies the GAM analysis where an integrative theoretical model is drawn to describe GAM relationship between a global account customer and a focal supplier. The empirical part will explore along with literature reviews and provide a quantitative analysis to the research study.</p> <p>Through extensive literature reviews, case study and empirical interviews, the current study developed answers to the research question, "As globalization increasing, how global account management helps companies to manage customers globally?"</p>			
Keywords Global Account Management, Strategy and Drivers			
Additional information			

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Topic

Farrington (2009) says, more often account management is seen as management by chance or management by formula. In the case of management by chance, no one knows in a company how they won the business prospect and how long the success will continue. And in the case of management by formula, there is no room for flexibility and common-sense or differences. Hence in reality both the cases are certain to fail. Therefore, managing account needs a way that is effective, consistent and flexible (Farrington 2009). Farrington describes account management is an art that needs discipline, practice and creativity. Discipline and practice helps in self-controlled, thinking and planning properly whereas creativity helps you thinking differently to find new solutions to grab new opportunities. Byrnes (2004) says, account management is both art and science. And the science of account management has four key elements i.e. profitability management, account relationship selection, product migration paths and account planning. Any company follows all these process definitely produce great results. Hence high performing companies combines both science of sales process and artful selling to produce effective results (Byrnes, 2004). For instance, Wal-Mart been able to persistently selling their product's even in bad times because of the reasons discussed above. Consider the cases of Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola, which are globally standardized products and sold everywhere. These products have been successfully welcomed across everywhere of national, regional, and ethnics. However due market receptiveness global companies are facing huge demand for product and services in different markets world-wide. To fulfil the demand of the customer the supplier companies facing lot of challenges and relying on global account management (GAM). So in today's challenging business environment and due globalization, it has become progressively important to have proper strategies, sales process and account management to attain and retain new customers, be it local or global. This study is mostly based on global account management and hence the report covers most of GAM elements in to the discussion.

Current world market is highly homogenized, and consumers demand high-quality products at low prices. So what do we expect from the global companies? Shi et al. (2010) suggests, global corporations should achieve a global scale of economy and provide consistent customer service. Failing with this concept, organization falls. That is the reason why some firms succeed where as some fails. Hence any companies entering in to global market needs to analyze GAM elements before they decide to do so. This study will discuss more on these elements and its importance in the subsequent chapters. However it is important to enter in to global market first to serve global customers and once you decided for that then you need proper account management and strategies to be successful on the GAM program. Ultimately you need a strategic sales force to manage global account to attain and retain international opportunities for the specific global customers. Ingram et al., (2002: 560) says, when a sales organization is successful in its strategic activities, it directs sales organization's interactions with the customers. Then it has a major impact on the management of the sales organization.

In this paper, in-depth understanding on the concept of account management, global account management, its drivers and strategy is analyzed by taking example of one leading multinational software company as the case company. As per the 'non-disclose agreement' with the case company, confidential business related information along with company name has not been mentioned in the report.

1.2 Research Purpose, Objectives and Research Questions

The key purpose and goal of this paper is to study and analyze global account management, its drivers and strategies basing on scientific material, academic literature books and empirical data provided by the case company. Research and implementation on global account management is not so old. It's only ten to fifteen years past when globalization happened and market became open to everybody. Then companies tried to keep one integrated account called 'global account' to manage customers globally. But then Yip and Blink (2007) research suggests that only 33% suppliers who have adapted GAM are happy. Then the question arises what about other 67% suppliers? Why GAM is not so successful to them? It seems the companies who are not successful after adapting GAM either they are not very sure whether GAM is really required for their businesses or there is a gap in proper practices after implementing GAM. This research objective is to analyze these gaps discussed above by the help of a case study and the literature reviews. At the same time this study gives major importance in understanding GAM, its drivers, strategy, managerial implications and other factors that are important before and after implementation of GAM. For instance, in 1993 Hewlett-Packard (HP) had only 26 global accounts. In 1996, the global accounts count extended to 250 and then it cut down to 95 when HP realized the investment is not giving profit returns. By 2007, there were more than 20,000 corporate clients and more than 200 global accounts for HP and are highly profitable (Yip and Blink, 2007). Today HP's account and sales management team focusing on products and organized on geographic line that supported more than 1000 accounts globally (Floyd, 2013). So the reason is simple, on the process starting from 1993, HP has mastered the global account management, the science and art of selecting and structuring global accounts. Hence GAM has become so successful for HP.

Though the concept of GAM is very widely discussed and researched in the academic point of view since long time now but it lacks its practical implementation in different organizations due to constant change in business scenarios. However it is such a wide and complex area nevertheless any research in this area could provide sufficient, valuable and all required information's. Also as per Baldauf and Lee (2011), "international selling and sales management topics should be of interest to

academics and practitioners, recognizing that acquiring a deep knowledge base may be less challenging for managers than for academics.” Hence the central goal of the study is to understand the specifics of international sales, global account management, processes and strategy and how it is implemented in the case company. The study will also give an idea for the companies who are not yet adapted GAM in to the practice but they want to adapt the same in the future and for the companies who have not yet succeeded after the GAM implementation. Given the above discussed research purpose and objectives, the main research question of the study is:

How global account management is implemented or shall be implemented in companies to manage customers globally?

The above research question can be more simplified as: *How global account management helps companies to manage customers globally?*

In this report above questions are studied thoroughly with the focus on global account management and its importance in today’s challenging business environment. The report covers important analysis that affects GAM in general, its drivers and strategies that help solving global customer demand.

1.3 Structure of the Report

The report is structured by focusing on literature review, theory development and practices in the case company. An in-depth understanding of the concept of global account management is researched and developed systematically. The first chapter of the report is the introduction part that covers introductions to the topic followed by research purpose and objectives. As per the research purpose and objectives, research questions have been developed and presented. In addition to the research questions to be studied, both background of the work and structure of the report are presented in this chapter.

In the second chapter, related theories around the research question and the literature review on some of the key concepts of the study are discussed. Conceptual frameworks from the academic world have been used for the analysis. In this section first importance of relationships and relationship management are explained followed by importance of marketing in sales are discussed. Then concept of key account management in general is described and the second chapter is completed with in-depth literature reviews on global account management.

Third chapter covers research methodology where research design and method is described followed by case company's background descriptions.

In chapter four, most of the analysis is done in case of GAM and the case company in the study. This chapter primarily focused on formation of theoretical framework and empirical research design at qualitative level. This is the soul of the report which summarizes GAM drivers, strategies and its applications in the case company. Actual company analyses basing on the interviews are analyzed in this chapter.

Chapter five discusses mainly key findings and conclusions. The research key findings, new proposition developed from the theoretical analysis and managerial implications are discussed in this chapter. This section also covers the evaluation and limitations of the research work and keeps some open discussion for the future research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW ON KEY CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY

In this section literature reviews on different key concepts related to GAM is described. The literature review plays an important role, as it describes exactly the GAM operations and its components for the study to provide valuable results. The objective of the literature review is to provide accurate and relevant information that will act as a basis for the empirical analysis. First the importance of relation and relationship management is discussed here in this chapter followed by importance of marketing in sales. Then the concept of key account management (KAM) and global account management (GAM) is described to cover the complete literature reviews.

2.1 Relation and Relationship Management in Sales

Weitz and Bradford (1999) say, building of sustainable relationships is an important issue on daily life of people and social interactions. Business and firms are not an exception on this and thus GAM. Organizations focus most of their attention on building sustainable and competitive advantage by developing close and cooperative relationships with their customers. Through these relationships it creates value by differentiating their offerings (Weitz and Bradford 1999) and if required it creates value by lowering the costs. But establishing and forming the foundation of the relationship is the key. Moncrief et al. (2005) says when you made strong foundation of the relationship then it enables relationship selling. However Moncrief et al. (2005) also says the focus should be on building the foundation of the relationship with the prospect that develops to relationship selling.

Building of relationship can take place in several different levels, for example organizational level (locally and globally) and individual level. Zupancic (2008: 326) says, on individual level, sales person has an important role in forming a long-term buyer-seller relationship. This in turn helps the organization. “There are considerable influences on buyer’s perception of the seller’s reliability, value of its services and buyers interest in continuing the relationship” (Weitz and Bradford, 1999). Hence relationship management is an important role that needs to be taken care while dealing with sales in regular basis. When it comes to handle global account

management, relationship management becomes more complex because of several aspects like different culture, ethnicity, language and other factors.

2.1.1 Attitude towards Relationship Management

Depending on the nature of the business, salespersons have several different roles in their daily activities like sales work, roles of production, partnering and marketing. Weitz and Bradford (1999) suggest, sales people's role is to stimulate rather than satisfying the demand for the products. Hence salesperson needs to be both proactive and persuasive in its nature. They should be ready to act as a problem solver for caring customer in their problems. All these above discussions points towards the attitude meaning how sales persons behave while dealing with customer relationships. Hence one of the most important discussions in relationship management is attitude. In an organization, every individual rate their approaches differently towards relationship management. According to Davis et al. (2010) there are three types of attitudinal clusters.

Self-Directed: In this cluster every individual's prefer to have lower levels of contacts with the customer. They are mostly self-directed individuals, don't like to planning, developing or implementing strategies. They lack interest working with team and less inclined collecting customer information to plan their accounts because of less contact with others. Most convenient ways for them to collect information is use of informal communication channels. They prefer working in a flexibility working mode to avoid responsibility and avoid structured work patterns. Davis et al. (2010) says, this cluster individual cannot be trusted for high level relationship management role but they might be the best group for transactional and price oriented customers.

Team-Leaders: These cluster individuals are generally more inclined to relationship management. Davis et al. (2010) say, usually team leaders take initiative on planning, making strategic decisions and executing it unlike self-directed cluster. They get well connected with their own delivery team or organization and take full responsibility before and after the sales process. But the negative part of this cluster is they are dependent on few individuals within the customer for their knowledge of the customer's culture and strategy. They are the group most influenced by the

revenue oriented customers rather than strategic value oriented customers. People in this cluster like to work in a planned structured way and preferred formalized methods of interacting with others. But due to lack of core attitude they fail to create long term customer partnerships.

Strategic Sales: They are the preferred cluster for any company because of their depth of contacts and depth of knowledge within their customers (Davis et al. 2010). In this cluster, every individual build strong networks and use multiple point of references while taking decisions. Attitudinally strategic sales people are perfect to relationship management role.

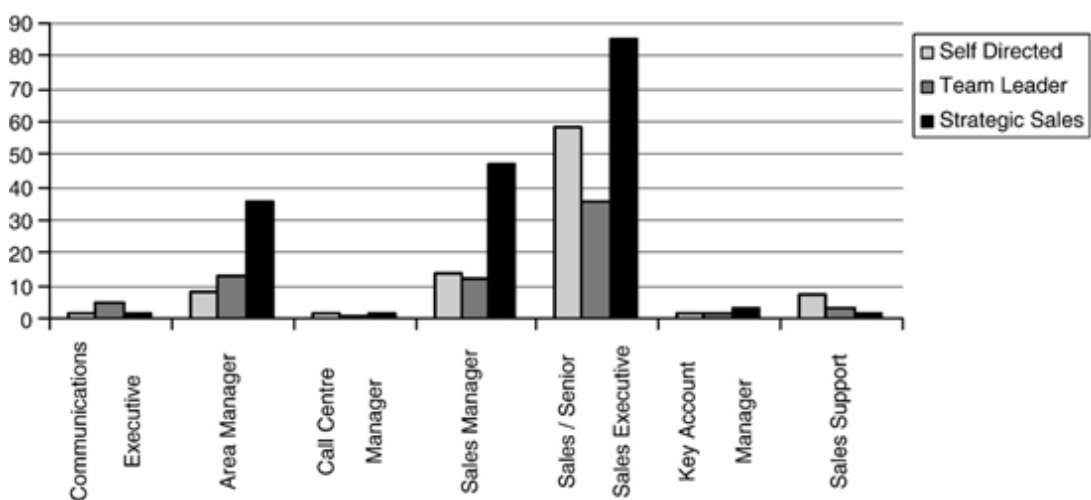


Figure1. Distribution of attitudinal groups (adapted from Davies et al., 2010)

In the above Figure1, Davies et al. (2010) describes about different attitudes to relationship management for a case company. The graph shows different attitudes towards team working, market sensitivity, planning and strategic orientation about self-directed, team leader and strategic sales cluster which discussed earlier.

Hence negative thoughts and negative mind leads you to wrong direction where as a positive attitude lead to a positive ambience at the work place, in turn, brings effective planning on sales and sales management.

2.1.2 Relationship Management in a Multi-Cultural Team

Diversity and conflicts have become major issues in the organizations currently. Multicultural has become popular and it has become important to integrate inter cultural communication to develop international business communication in a professional environment. In current business scenario, due to globalization sales persons or account managers often face different customers from different ethnicity, language and cultures. Even within the sales team they face different culture people doing things differently. So it is very important to manage these differences within the team members, customers and other stake holders for a strong and continued relationship. This is not an exception with GAM or global account management team; in fact it is more important aspect of global account management and then only team can deliver superior customer value. To analyze this relationship management in a multi-cultural team, the MBI (Map, Bridge and Integrate) model by DiStefano and Ekelund (2001) is taken in to use (see below Figure2).

MBI model is a three component model i.e. Mapping, Bridging and Integrating used to bridge the differences between multi-cultural team members to have a better relationship management.

Mapping: First try to understand the differences among the team members from multi-cultures and map those characteristics that create the differences. When you understand the characteristics that affect each members approach to the team then it becomes easier to map those.

Bridging: An important component in MBI model to communicate across the differences is bridging. The main objective of bridging is to prevent miscommunication. That can be done by motivating people to communicate effectively and confidently. If required change your own behavior, stop being difficult and try to accommodate the culture of the people you are working with. Finally try to have a good understanding on the differences and agreeing upon shared norms for interaction.

Integrating: This is the third component in MBI model which is used to manage the differences. DiStefano and Ekelund (2001) suggest, use the differences for strategic advantages and come up with good decisions. It is “where understanding from

mapping and communicating from bridging get converted into productive results”.
Hence integration needs good mapping and bridging.

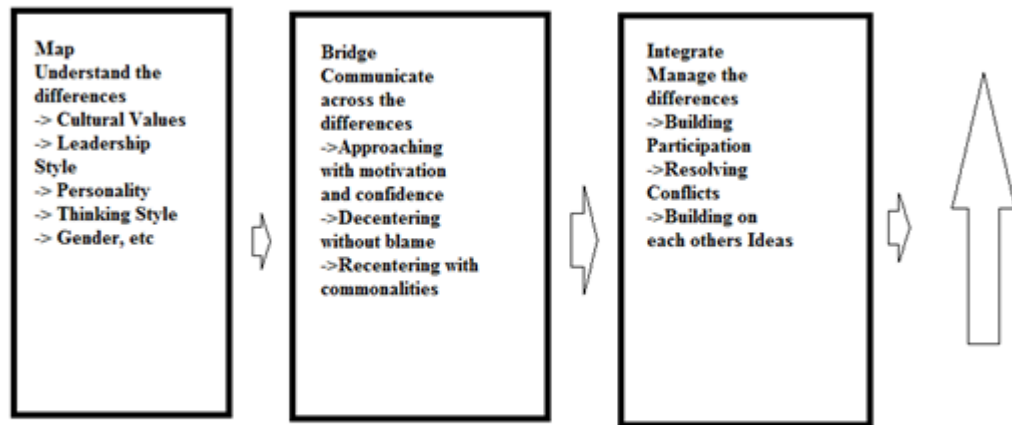


Figure2. MBI model for managing differences in a multi-cultural team (adapted from DStefano and Ekelund, 2001)

As shown in the above figure mapping helps to provide early detection of potential areas of conflict, while bridging helps in avoiding personal conflicts and integration builds ideas.

2.2 Importance of Marketing in Sales

Moncrief et al., (2005) suggests, before making the sale when you listen and communicate with the prospect, you discover the true needs. As a result the likelihood of closing the deals increase. There are many components to marketing which in-turn benefit sales. Marketing and sales shares a close bond with each other. An effective marketing strategy is needed for sales to succeed. Zoltners et al., (2008) says, marketing and sales strategy defines who the market to sell to, what should be the customer offerings for different segments and how should be the selling process. Kotler (2000) suggests all the successful companies to pay attention on three major developments in today's market scenario i.e. globalization, technology advances and deregulations. As globalization continues to affect your business and personal life, there technology continues to advance constantly and deregulation continues to open-up the economic sector. Then marketing plays a bigger role to tackle these issues because it deals with identifying and meeting humans and social needs. Kotler (2000) defines marketing as “meeting needs profitably”. In other words marketing is defined as a drive that turns a private or social need in to a profitable business opportunity and in a managerial word it is described as ‘the art of selling products’.

Currently the sales function “is in the midst of a renaissance- a genuine rebirth and revival” (Ingram et al., 2002). Organizations are under heavy competition related to price cut on the products, cost cutting, customer satisfactions and more over change in buying processes. Hence effective sales process is vital and organizations are changing their selling strategy accordingly as per the customers buying patterns (Kaario et al., 2003: 17-18). It is very difficult to satisfy everyone in a market; hence Kotler (2000) defines market segmentation where it identifies the group of buyers and examines the demographic, psychographic and behavioral differences among them. Then the organization can decide which segmentations have the greater opportunity and accordingly it develops market offerings as per the chosen target market.

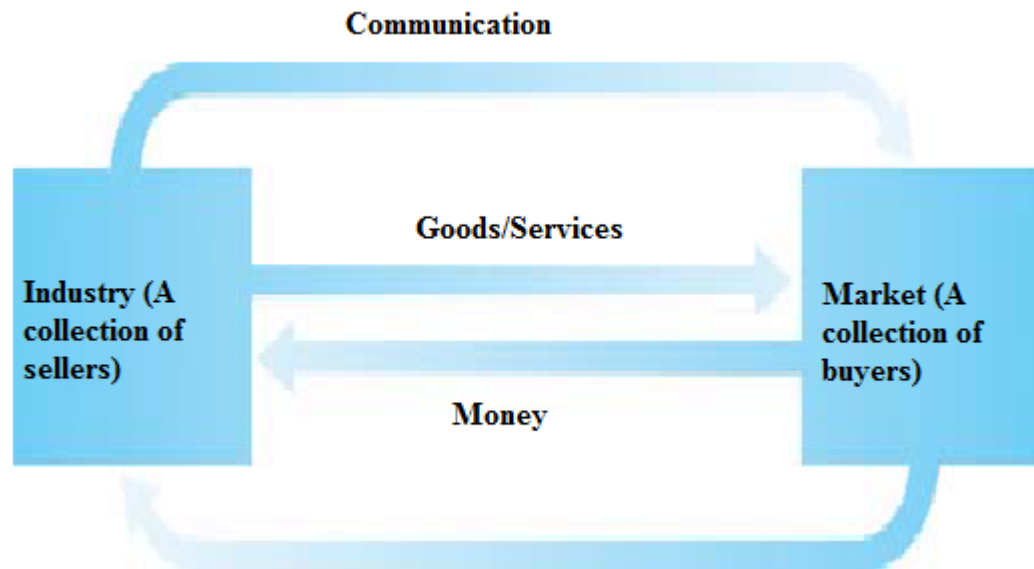


Figure3. A simple marketing system (adapted from Kotler, 2001)

Above Figure3 shows a simple marketing system where the buyers and sellers are gathered to exchange their goods. Here the marketer sees the sellers as the industry and Market as the buyer. Seller sells goods, services and communications like ads, direct mail, e-mail messages to the buyers and in return it gets money and information such as attitudes, sales data's.

In the global industry international companies needs to study their competitor's strategic positions for selling products or services to the globalized markets. According to Kotler (2000), most firms aim is to sell what they make rather than to make what customer wants. Today's market situation is dominated by buyers, hence public often identifies marketing with hard selling and advertising which in turn carries high risks of disappointment among customers in case they don't like the products or services. Another critical factor in marketing management is competition where your offerings like products, services and prices play an important role as compared to your rival's offerings. According to Blessington (1992: 32) "the objective for each company should be to choose and develop a sales approach that best meets its customer needs and is consistent with its marketing plan".

Hence marketing is an important aspect in sales. It includes numerous strategies to communicate different products or services that company offers to the customers or end users. Kotler (1977) differentiates marketing and sales in terms of the difference between seeding a field and harvesting the crops. Good marketing work is to plant seeds and generate crops for the future. Then a good sales work is harvesting the crops. In the short run, the harvest may be good and sales will take the credit. But if there is no reseeding by marketing, heavy sales effort will be for nothing.

2.3 Key Account Management

Ryals L (2012) says, key account management is one of the major changes in selling today to manage their relationships with strategically important customers. Ojasalo (2001: 199) defines key-account management as a relationship-oriented marketing management approach. It focuses on dealing with major customers in the business-to-business markets. Zupancic (2008: 323-327) says business key accounts play a central role when considering customer base of companies and discusses in his study about key account management (KAM). He distinguishes both corporate and operational levels of phenomenon as shown in the below Figure4.

As we can see from the figure that, corporate KAM refers to organizational level of KAM consisting of aspects of integration and alignment, covering whole KAM program for all strategic accounts. Operational KAM refers on grass-root level of KAM including aspects of analyzing issues such as customer needs, resources, existing solutions, and actual realization of strategies and plans.

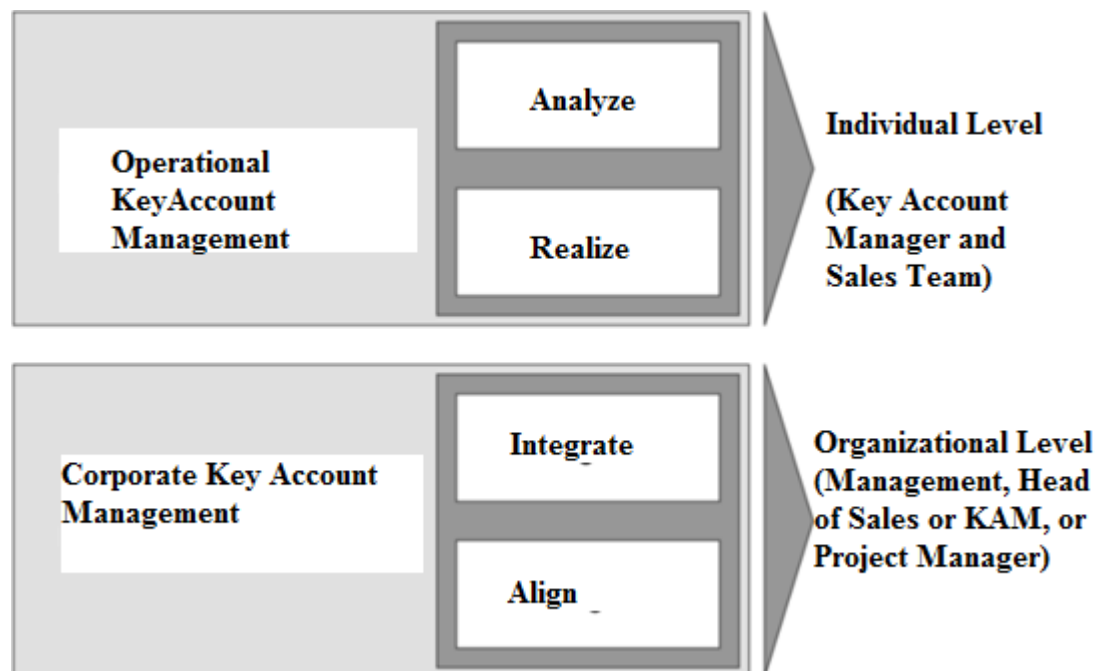


Figure4. KAM framework (adapted from Zupancic, 2008)

In addition, Zupancic (2008) lists strategy, solutions, people, management and screening as dimensions affecting on companies KAM approach.

- i) **Strategy:** Serving the key account customers better is an important aspect of this dimension. Sales team and account managers of the company must be fully aware of its key accounts. Also they should know about other competitors who are serving the same key account.
- ii) **Solutions:** In this dimension company should analyze its products and services to the key account customers. Accordingly it should customize them to add value for its key account customers. Realizing and implementing innovations is another aspect in this dimension.
- iii) **People:** Value the competencies that provide the right solutions to the key account customers. This dimension suggests forming a key account management team by selecting right competencies.
- iv) **Management:** Management is an important dimension in this category. Company should analyze the process, leadership and the people involved in serving key account customers. Realize and implement necessary operation to satisfy the key account.
- v) **Screening:** In this dimension, company measures and analyzes the existing approaches like usage of current tools for the benefit of KAM process.

To develop key account management programs, Shapiro and Moriarty (1982) suggests to approach national contracts and master purchasing agreements which creates more intimacy and cooperation between buyer and seller relationships. In this method customer show more interest in buying relationships with vendors than buying products or services. The key account management program assigns account managers and its team to understand customer's requirement, and assigns company resources for customer benefits. Yip and Madsen (1996) says, account management program needs huge resource allocations and jointly planning with the customers. Researchers such as Anderson & Narus (1991) and Shapiro (1988) argues this account management program leads to develop strategic partnering relationship programs in relationship marketing. Below Table 1 shows the determinants of key account management importance and effectiveness by various researchers.

Table 1. Determinants of KAM effectiveness by previous researchers (adapted from Fei et al., 2015)

<i>Authors</i>	<i>KAM Effectiveness Dimension</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>Significant Findings</i>	<i>Contributions</i>	<i>Limitations</i>
Stevenson (1981)	Increased profit and share, increased communications internally and with buyer	23 firms, personal interview	KAM program leads to increase profits, share of purchases and communication	To address question of what leads to KAM program success	Small sample size
Platzer (1984)	No specific measure, asks for rating of 23 items for program success	Survey response from 122 members of the NAMA	No statistical tests done	Provides percentage importance of 23 aspects of a program for program success	No statistical tests, bias in data
Shapiro and Moriarty (1993)	Support systems, top management involvement and direction	Interviews with 19 U.S firms	No statistical tests done	Explain the importance of support systems, in support of NAM	No statistical tests, small sample size in U.S.

<i>Authors</i>	<i>KAM Effectiveness Dimension</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>Significant Findings</i>	<i>Contributions</i>	<i>Limitations</i>
Wotruba and Castleberry (1993)	Single 9-item scales: individual level	Survey response from 107 member NAMA	Performance is better for firm with key account manager	Performance of KAM is affected by length of tenure age of program and time devoted to KA	Bivariate analysis single item perceptual Performance, small sample size.
Sengupta, Krapfel and Pusateri (1997)	Work Load , compensation, utilization of information tech, number of KAs	Survey responses from 176 members of NAMA	High KAM work load leads to lower performance, customer-based incentives versus sales-profit Incentives lead to better performance.	Use a multi-item measure of program success. Consider the effect of workload and types of incentives on outcomes.	Simple bivariate testing, performance for a single account.
Montgomery, Yip, and Villalong (1998)	4 2-item scale: Manager/team, customer involvement, Performance evaluation, personnel evaluation	Survey responses from 191 firms with global customers (U.S, Europe, East Asia, Africa, Oceania)	First KAM study to use SEM.	KEM positively affects performance	Only a single determinant of performance, convenience , sample. SEM is not appropriate for <3 item scales.

<i>Authors</i>	<i>KAM Effectiveness Dimension</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>Significant Findings</i>	<i>Contributions</i>	<i>Limitations</i>
Birkinshaw, Toulan, and Arnold (2001)	5 multi-item formative scales: scope of account, communication, support system, relative centralization of activities, customer dependence	106 survey responses from 16 multinational firms (Sweden/US/UK)	Strongest effects from customer dependence, communication and scope of account	6 models tested, all variables significant	Assuming KAM in a given firm are independent from each other
Workman, Homburg and Jensen (2003)	Activity intensity and proactiveness, top mgmt. involvement, use of teams, morale in a group, control over sales resources and KAM approach formalization	264 and 121 survey responses from German firms and U.S. firms respectively	Identify intra-organizational determinants of KAM effectiveness	Used quantitative data analysis to determine intra-organizational determinants of KAM effectiveness	Unmeasured factor may affect both IV and DV.
Davies and Ryals (2014)	22 KAM practices from previous studies	209 companies with formal KAM prog.	Proposed non-financial and financial measures affect KAM effectiveness	Identify nine criteria for KAM effectiveness	Single item measures of effectiveness

The key elements in this table are KAM effectiveness dimension, samples taken through personal interview or survey with different firms, major findings during the survey, contributions and the limitations. Analysing the above table, we can conclude that actively managing key accounts leads to significantly better performance. Yip and Madsen (1996) describes, the key account programs implemented for multi-location domestic customers takes the form of national account management program which in turn takes the form of global account management program while considering global sales activities. Hence global account management program is conceptually an extension of national or key account management. Therefore it is very important to strengthen your key account management program to achieve a bigger prospective of global account management.

2.4 Global Account Management

Global account management is “an organizational form and process in a multinational supplying company by which the worldwide activities serving a given multinational customer are coordinated centrally by one person or team within the supplying company” (Shi et al., 2010). GAM is an extension of local account management strategies beyond the country borders. It is stated earlier in the introduction section that multinational companies are trying to become global by integrating their worldwide operations. To achieve this Yip and Madsen (1996) suggests for going global account management programs where they can seek cooperative and collaborative solutions for global operations. Depending on the context one may discuss about KAM (Ojasalo 2001, Zupancic 2008) or GAM (Arnold et al. 2001). GAM and domestic account management are differentiated with respect to their contextual complexity. Also they can be distinguished in the context of coordination demanded at multiple organizational levels.

GAM is more complex than KAM contextually as GAM requires inter-country coordination at functional level and it also needs inter-country coordination at country subsidiary levels across national borders. As compared to GAM, KAM or a domestic account management needs coordination and communication across functions, but within one country (Shi et al. 2008). Ahokangas (2011:114) says that implementation of GAM in organizations depends on differing organizational structures, such as structures, product, divisional, geographical or matrix. Global Account Management is occurring when sales function is globalized (Arnold et al. 2001) in a way that named person or team is responsible for managing designated customer globally (Shi et al. 2010:620). Typically both the customer and supplier request standardized contracts i.e. product specification, price and service standards (Arnold et al. 2001).

The below Table2 shows the study of GAM summary by different researchers. They contain key concepts and measures which is important for the research analysis and discussions about GAM.

Table2. Study of GAM summary by different researchers

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Empirical Data</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Key Statements</i>
Yip and Bink (2007)	A study of 165 major suppliers from the authors' consulting work	GAM program adoption criteria	Suggests when and how suppliers should offer GAM program to customers.
Ivens and Pardo (2007)	91 key account relationships and 206 ordinary supplier-buyer dyads	Supplier's relational behavior	Suggests that KAM suppliers' increased value-creating activities lead to increased commitment. However, customers are neither more satisfied, nor do they trust their suppliers more when they receive key account status.
Shi et al. (2005)	A discovery-oriented approach that integrates 20 executive interviews and 35 case studies	GAM capability	Explores three key dynamic processes: intelligence acquisition, coordination, and reconfiguration.
Shi et al. (2004)	Drawing on executive interviews and literature review	GAM capability	GAM performance is positively influenced by three dyadic GAM capabilities: organizational culture to support GAM, strategic fit between supplier and customer, and proper GAM program design.
Toulan, Birkinshaw, and Arnold (2002)	A survey of 106 global account managers in 16 multinationals	Inter-organizational fit	Greater fit between vendor and customer on a variety of strategies as well as structural aspects will result in higher performance of the relationship.
Homburg, Workman, and Jensen (2002)	A sample of 385 firms	Activities, teams and managers, cross-functional support of KAM	Empirically classify designs of KAM programs, including activities, actors, resources, and formalization. Failure in access or commitment to cross-functional teams seems to play a critical role for the success of KAM program.

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Empirical Data</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Key Statements</i>
Birkinshaw, Toulan, and Arnold (2001)	A total 106 global account managers from 16 companies	Bargaining power of supplier	GAM structure allows the multinational enterprise to increase its information-processing capacity as well as its bargaining power to the global account customer. The effectiveness of structures for increasing information processing is conditional upon the presence of high customer dependence
Montgomery, Yip, and Villalonga (1999)	A sample of 191 senior executives from 165 multinational companies	Globalization drivers, customers' GAM demand, and suppliers' use of GAM	Industry globalization drivers affect customer's potential as a global account. The tests showed a very strong relationship between customers' demand for GAM and suppliers' use of it.
McDonald, Millman, and Rogers (1997)	A judgmental sample of 12 dyads representing a range of product/service contexts and stages of development	Development process of key account management relationship	The typical progression of a relationship between supplier and customer through five stages: pre-KAM, early KAM, mid KAM, partnership KAM, and synergistic KAM.
Yip and Madsen (1996)	Five case studies about GAM in advertising industry, IBM, Xerox, HP, and Citibank	Globalization drivers, GAM strategies	Industry globalization drivers affect the opportunity to use GAM. Global strategy response to the demand of global customers includes building global market participation, global standard products and services, providing value-adding activities across countries, and making competitive moves on a global basis.

Entering in to global account management is a strategic decision for any company. It needs activities such as creation of systematic process and organizing of people (Zupancic 2008: 324), as well as selection of customer relation method (Arnold et al. 2001). Also the global key accounts should be identified. Customer groups for potential global accounts should be recognized and prioritized in relation with potential importance to the firm (Ingram et al. 2002). The goal for global account management is to create long-term partnerships where both customer and supplier have benefits. New product development in closer relationships in management level gives efficiency in operations. When the internationalization level of both companies is on the same level, global account relationship can be very beneficial for both supplier and customer. Arnold et al. (2011) says customers are seen as strategic partners for suppliers.

2.4.1 GAM Drivers

Company's global strategy consists of several different elements and those elements define Global account management (Shi et al. 2010: 624). When a company wants to go for GAM, company's needs to check whether GAM is really required for them in their business structure before adapting the GAM. Shi et al. (2010) argues, before bringing global account management in to the implementation, companies' needs to understand what are the motivation factor or drivers to the GAM strategies and accordingly they can serve the global customers demand. There are two major forces that drive global strategies and serves global customer demand. Those drivers are global strategic priority and globalization (Shi et al., 2010) as shown in the below figure.



Figure5. GAM Forces Drives GAM Strategies

Above Figure5 shows a simplified theoretical model that defines different elements of GAM drivers or GAM forces that drives GAM strategies. In this model Global Strategic Priority and Globalization has been shown as two drivers to GAM strategies.

- i) **Global strategic priority:** Global strategic priority is an internal driver of GAM strategies. In this strategy the focal supplier firm gives most preferences or values to its global account customer. Preferentially the supplier firm addresses global customers concerns through different resources and provides globally standardized solutions. Hence the supplier can retain its most important customers in hand and foster

relationship continuity. Therefore it is an important role for the global account team of the supplier firm to understand global account customer's explicit and latent needs. Then supplier firm will be empowered to engage in the strategies needed to provide superior customer value (Shi et al. 2010: 625-626). Supplier organizations must know about their customer properly so that it can provide required strategies and meaningful solutions to the customer for the better customer relationships. Open communication culture and openly sharing customer's needs are the basic theme here which global accounts management team should be very much aware of.

- ii) *Globalization:*** To have the opportunity for new sales, growth and profit, you need to expand your business beyond the local market or national market, meaning company needs to expand its business to international markets. Many organizations keep the overseas branches to take the advantage of low cost, new technology, availability of raw materials and getting tax incentives etc. To be competitive in the global marketplace requires a solid sales strategy, structured into a global, multinational or international approach, to ensure your promotional and sales activities are coordinated across markets. Shi et al. (2010) define globalization as an external driver of GAM strategies in which the supplier firm engages itself in standardizing marketing programs, coordinating worldwide activities and integrating competitive moves across country markets. Increasing globalization acts as a driving force for companies for increasing the use of GAM strategies. (Shi et al. 2010: 626). Hence firms can increase the use of GAM strategies when faced with increasing globalization (Shi et al. 2010: 626).

2.4.2 GAM Strategies

Shi et al., (2010) says, the extent to which a supplier can serve its global account customer can be determined through GAM strategies. To have a global account management strategy, Leonard and Charles (1999) suggest, company must understand first customer's size, success, their future vision, culture and their requirement. To develop that foundation company needs to understand supplier's competitive position too with their products in the global market. With all these knowledge, develop a strategic plan to achieve the objectives of the customer. Once the strategic plan is in place, and then comes action and execution plan. Leonard and Charles (1999) says, first understand customer's organizational structure and then develop a power chart to define the decision making flow accordingly. Then it becomes easier to assign and monitor the plan to develop individual tactics for the customer.



Figure6. GAM Strategies Drives GAM Performance

With GAM strategies we mean, the extent to which a supplier standardizes its marketing-mix activities through internal and external coordination and by integrating competitive moves across country markets to retain and grow business with the global account customer (Shi et al. 2010: 625). Shi et al. (2010) defines GAM strategies in to four different parts, those are inter-county coordination, inter-organizational coordination, marketing activities and global integration.

- i) *Inter-county coordination*: This is an internal coordination within the supplier firms. An extent in which supplier firms coordinate its world-wide activities that includes marketing-mix and supply chain management activities across the nations is called inter-country coordination. The coordination happens through meetings, training, business presentations, periodicals and newsletters, reports and measurements etc. within the supplier organizations. Here the global supplier coordinates with its marketing-mix and supply chain management activities across nations within the organizational boundary to serve a global account customer. Global account manager mostly takes the lead to coordinate resources in order to satisfy the needs of the global account customer (Shi et al. 2010: 625-626).
- ii) *Inter-organizational coordination*: This is an external coordination between the supplier firm and its global account. Here the global supplier purposefully organizes joint activities at each level. The senior executive, global account manager, local account manager, and operational-level employees along with global account customer involves in these activities. A strong inter-organizational coordination allows the supplier to manage its selling activities at each level of the organization. The idea is to serve the global customer in best possible way. As a result, the global account customer will be more willing to continue relationship with the supplier firm and Global account management strategies reward the supplier by increasing its business with the supplier (Shi et al. 2010: 626-627).
- iii) *Marketing activities standardization*: It is defined as the extent to which a global supplier standardizes its marketing activities (including marketing-mix and supply chain activities) across nations to serve a global account customer. Canegrati (2009) says, standardization act themselves as a catalyst and driving economy of scales in design, production and distribution. As we know the world market is largely homogenized and the consumers demand high quality products at lower costs. Hence the standardization of marketing activities is an important strategy for a

supplier firm to achieve a low-cost position and offer consistent services to the global account customer (Shi et al. 2010: 627). Therefore the higher the degree of marketing activities standardization, the greater the GAM performance.

- iv) *Global integration:* The degree to which a supplier follows a global account customer into various countries and integrates its competitive moves in different countries to serve the needs of the global account customer is known as global integration. To serve the needs of a global account customer on a worldwide basis, a multinational supplier must follow the global account customer into various countries, be able to cross-subsidize its operations in some markets with resources generated in others, and respond to competitive attacks in one market by counter-attacking in others. Since global competition is intense, global integration can help a supplier focus on its global interests, and link all organizational units to accomplish GAM tasks collectively so as to win battles in global competition (Shi et al. 2010: 627). Hence greater the global integration, the greater the GAM performance.

In the above definitions, both inter-country and inter-organizational coordination's are the key elements of GAM strategies. The aim is to increase openness in communication and fosters utilization of individual knowledge to achieve objectives. Thus the greater the inter-country and inter-organizational coordination, the more likely it is that the supplier can detect and accommodate the needs of the global account customer faster than its rivals (Shi et al. 2010: 625).

2.4.3 Global Customer Demand

With the rise of globalization customer preferences, expectations and demand have grown increasingly important and hence suppliers are working hard to offer the best customer experience possible. As we see from the above analysis of GAM drivers and strategies, we can conclude that GAM program is basically based on customers' demands. Generally global customers demand includes offering uniformity in prices, trade, standardizing products and services. Customer always needs better service

quality and improved performance. Hence it is very important coordinating resources for serving customers, providing a single point of contact, and servicing even those accounts in markets where the supplier firm has no other operations. It is the responsibility of the focal supplier to act on global account customer's demand with GAM initiatives. An increased fit between GAM strategies and global account demand will result in an increased performance of a GAM program. Hence global customer demand positively moderates the effects of GAM strategies of (a) inter-country coordination, (b) inter-organizational coordination, (c) marketing activities standardization, and (d) global integration) on GAM performance (Shi et al. 2010: 628). So Shi et al. (2010) suggests global customer demand acts like a moderator for the four GAM strategies.

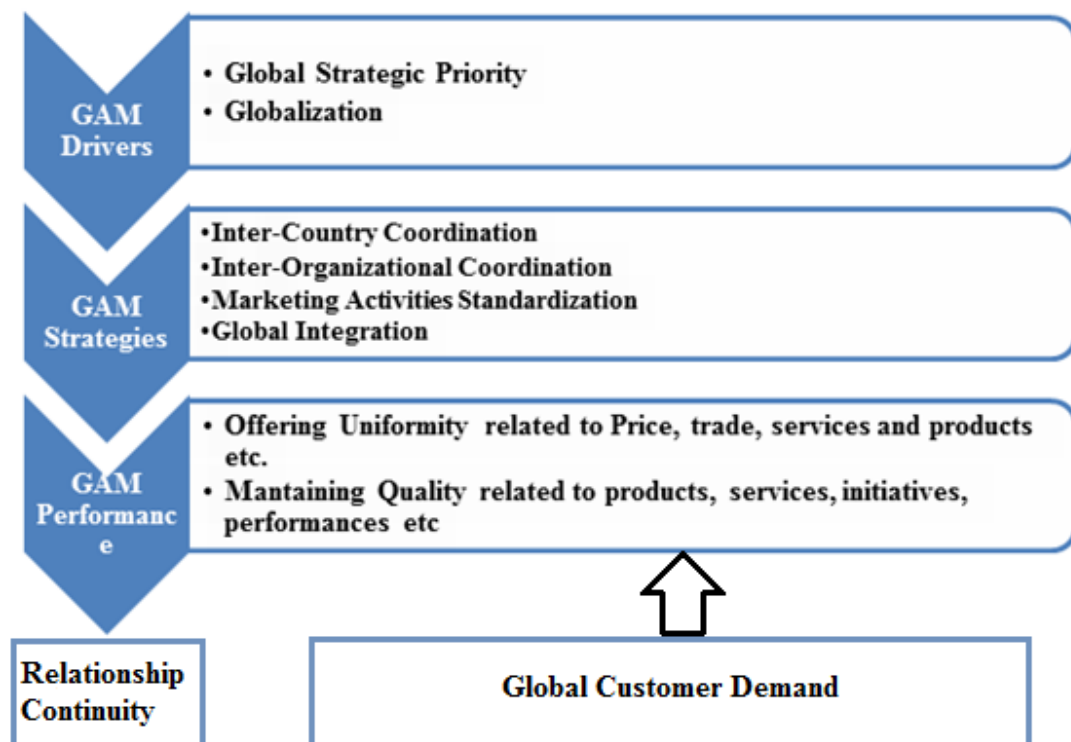


Figure7. Global Customer Demand's GAM Performance

Relationship Continuity:

An important outcome of global customer demand is relationship continuity. In the above figure relationship continuity is one of the major outcomes of global customer demand. Biong and Selnes (1996) suggest salespeople have a significant and substantial effect on relationship continuity. As we see global strategic priority, an internal driver of GAM strategies in which the focal supplier firm gives most preferences or values to its global account customer by addressing their concerns through different resources and providing globally standardized solutions. Hence the supplier can retain its most important customers in hand and foster relationship continuity. Relationship continuity is an important aspect for the global account team of the firm to understand global account customers explicit and latent needs so that it will be empowered to engage in the strategies needed to provide superior customer value (Shi et al. 2010: 625-626). It is most important for any organization to maintain and foster its relationship with its key customers to succeed. Effective sales people develop personal relationship with the customers, resolve conflicts with the customer and alleviate the exchange of information's among the buyer and the supplier. That's the key attribute of an effective sales person (Biong and Selnes 1996). Performance is the key indicator in relationship continuity. Shi et al. (2010) defines relationship continuity as the focal supplier's belief that the relationship with the global account customer will continue for a long time. There is a direct relationship between GAM performance and Relationship continuity. Greater the GAM performance, greater the relationship continuity. (Shi et al. 2010).

2.4.4 GAM for Vendors

While many authors suggest international companies' strategy to globalize their sales function, Arnold et al. (2001) warns vendor companies to be careful while deciding to globalize their sales. They suggest if a vendor company wants to go global account, they should first try to find the right customer to access the balance of power while negotiating. For example, if the customer is more globally coordinated than the vendor then customer negotiates more to decrease the price. In contrary if the vendor is more globally coordinated than the customer then the global account relationship becomes more attractive. Arnold et al. (2001) suggest when both vendors and customers are equally internationalized, global account relationship works very well. At the same time they suggest vendor companies to value their customers as a strategic partner not just as a sales account.

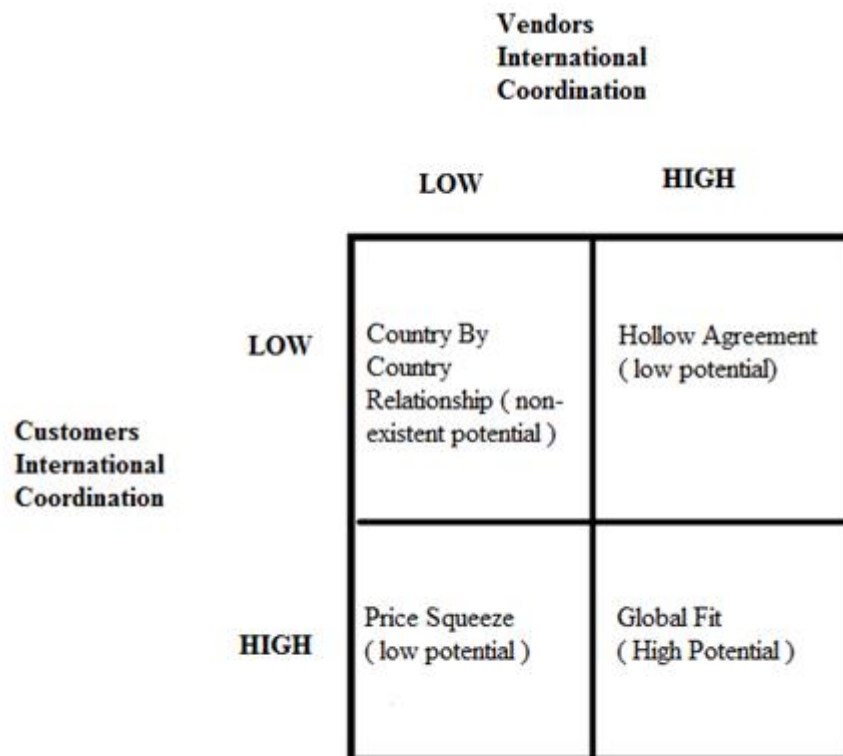


Figure8. Vendor and Customer Relation (adapted from Arnold et al., 2001.)

Above figure shows prospects for an effective global account relationship between vendor and customer as described by Arnold et.al (2001). But the above scenario has an issue when the customer has more international coordination. Arnold et al. (2001) says, sometimes it becomes difficult for the vendor to provide service to the customer location where the vendor doesn't have its presence in that particular country or location. Hence at the end it becomes expensive for the vendor to provide solution to the customer. Though it doesn't always risks vendor on the price squeeze from the customer end but balance of power between two parties is very important.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section research methodology and the analysis of the case company is presented. First research design and method is analyzed widely followed by case company description; its service offerings and value chain are presented. Then how sales teams are organized in the case company, their management and responsibilities are discussed along with data analysis. The last chapter in this section describes about the case company analysis towards global account management prospective.

3.1 Research Design and Method

This is a case study which is evaluated in to two parts; first part is theoretical development and second part empirical analysis. In the theory development part, a comprehensive framework regarding the global account management is developed through an extensive review of the existing literatures, scientific publications, materials provided during class courses and other related theories taken from the internet. In this part the focal subject of the study is approached by analyzing the key elements of global account management theories as the basic foundation of the study. At the same time, the literatures regarding account management process, drivers and strategy given by different researchers are analyzed and as per the above formulated research question, a theoretical framework is presented in the paper. The aim is to understand, describe and then explain each concept and phenomenon clearly. For this Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005: 109-110) suggests for the qualitative method of analysis.

In the second part of the evaluation process, the theoretical framework is analyzed through the empirical data provided by the case company. As Miles and Huberman (1984) suggests, in order to find empirical data's, you need to have a qualitative research study. Global account management and strategy is a coordination compound business scenario and a complex structure to analyze. Hence a case study is an important qualitative methodology to analyze any complex business system (Salo et al., 2008). Today all the customers wants consistent support and service across geographical regions. They want their vendors to be a strategic partner and vendors see their own success when they see customer's success. But knowing customers all requirements and satisfying them from every angle is a complex thing in real-life

context where no one has full control over it 'how to know all of their requirements and what's going on in customers mind?' From sales or account management prospective it's again more challenging to analyze that and communicate effectively in real-life context. Hence Stake (2000: 435-454) suggests qualitative study is more appropriate method to analyze this kind research questions.

For the qualitative study, different interview sessions had been arranged with the sales personals of the case company from where the main data's has been collected. Interviewed persons are working as assistant sales manager, account manager, business development manager and senior sales manager in the case company. The first informal interview session was held during September 2014 face-to-face followed by some e-mail communication with then account manager of the case company , and a set of questions related to the sales in the case company was being discussed. There after some exchange of e-mail communications happened related to the subject under discussion with the sales head and the assistant manager of sales of whole Europe during November 2014. After that another interview session was held with the same above sales manager who is serving as an assistant manager of sales for whole Europe region for the case company during December 2014. That interview session was recorded by using a mobile recorder with the interviewed person's permission's.

During the interview, the interviewer (author of this paper) presented some already prepared questions to which interviewed person explained thoroughly instead of just answering simple yes-and-no answers. Before starting the interview, interviewer clearly presented the structure and topics of the interview session. With mutual-understanding, interviewee was given choice to refuse to answer the questions if needed. Because of the case company's confidentiality issues, interviewee also avoided answering few questions.

Then another face-to-face discussion followed by e-mail communications happened related to the subject under discussion with the senior sales manager of the case company in their Tampere, Finland branch office during August, 2016. The last interview session was arranged in the month September 2016, and the questions for that interview were prepared basing on the data analysis and results of the earlier interview sessions. During this interview session, some complementary questions

were presented and the discussions were the mixing of formal and informal questions covering account management and sales strategy. Also interviewer had prepared few survey items based on sales to which interviewee had given answer in the scale of 1-5 ranges. Case company has provided some material for company presentation for the report, and case company's home page is also taken in to consideration to study about the company details and its know-how. Since the study is based on global account management where the key members of this family are sales account managers (both global and local), business development managers, project managers and also the customer relationships of a company, hence these members are also widely discussed in the paper. Then, the information's gathered from the case company is evaluated basing on discussed theories.

3.2 Background Description of the Case Company

The case company (name of the company has been hidden for confidentiality purpose) of this study is a multinational organization that provides engineering R&D and productized IT services to global tier 1 customers. The major product and services belongs to communications and devices, retail, insurance and independent software space. It has several subsidiaries all over the world. Established in 1989, case company employs 2000+ people world-wide, operating from Bangalore, Pune, Chennai and Hyderabad (India), Kaustinen and Tampere (Finland), and Beijing (China). It also has a presence across Germany, Japan, UAE, UK, and USA. Case company has been listed in the National Stock Exchange and Bombay Stock Exchange (India) since its initial public offering in 2005 and its turnover was approximately 65 million Euros in 2016. Case company is a global organization with development centers in India, US, Finland and China. Over 50% of its projects are multisite and involves interaction between multiple cultures, languages, and time zones. (Data taken from case company home page, 2016 and home page link is hidden because of confidentiality purpose)

In this study, the researcher has utilized major discussions by taking case company's Finland based subsidy but case company's global operations has been used as the base of the study as GAM basically triggers from headquarters. In Finland, case company has hardware department located in Kaustinen region and software department located in Tampere region. Its software department is basically a service provider for companies wishing to generate winning products and services in the rapidly growing wireless technology area. It's hardware department involves with all aspects of development; including software (along with software team), hardware, mechanical design, antenna design, system integration, testing, as well as manufacturing support. This kind of engagement always needs continuous effort in the relationship with the customers, successful partnership, proper sales strategy and management. But there is no sales-management in Finland sites, sales managers rather works independently and organize their work on need basis inside sales team. Hence to get a perfect idea on how the overall sales process works, author has also considered case company as a whole unit including its all subsidiaries in to account. It

seems the overall sales team of the case company works together when it comes to manage sales account activities globally.

The case company's Finland site has sales team consists of three sales persons managing software (SW) sales, hardware (HW) sales and new customer acquisition or business development. Software sales, as the name suggests, it is taking care of existing software customers and finding new opportunities. Similarly hardware sales team takes care of existing hardware customers and finding new opportunities constantly. But in real life roles get mixed-up sometimes as per the requirement; hence both hardware and software are selling total offerings when opportunity is seen. New customer acquisition or business development— like the title says helps in finding new customers and making first agreements for both hardware and software customers. After the first projects are done it handover customerships for hardware and software sales. Software sales reports to head of software, hardware sales to head of hardware and new customer acquisition sales person reports to CEO who is also head of hardware team. But in practice they all are the part of the same team. R&D project managers from software department reports to head of the software and are thus in the same team, participating same weekly meetings, sales discussions and future business developments. Same applies to hardware project managers.

4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter theories from the literature study are analyzed with respect to the empirical data's collected from the case company. Also some of the key findings of the study are discussed.

4.1 Theoretical and Empirical Data Analysis

We all know today's business world is increasingly becoming global not only due to globalization but due to technological innovations, increased competition and shortened product life cycles etc. Baldauf and Lee (2011) suggests, organizations that intend to defend their home market positions from global competitors needs to be globalized even though they do not engage in international activities. The United States (US) itself exports around 850 billion dollar every year and it is facing more competition from foreign investors within US market (Mansour and House, 2001). The statistics from United States Census Bureau says in 2015, total U.S. trade with foreign countries was \$4.99 trillion in which \$2.23 trillion in exports and \$2.76 trillion in imports of both goods and services. As per the statistics United States of America is in third position in terms of trading after China and European Union. Hence it can be imagined to what extend the world has been globalized. Because of globalization and market-openness, many companies have been able to access global markets very easily. Hence there is enormous need for product and services in various country markets. As a result, there is increasing pressure on suppliers to serve these customers beyond their home markets. Shi et.al (2010) suggests, companies needs to follow strategically the global account management to respond these growing opportunities and challenges. Case company in the study is a multi-national company and it has several branches world-wide to serve global customers. Its worldwide activities are coordinated by the global account team. However the question arises 'should every global customer be a global account customer'? The answer is 'No'. Yip and Bink (2007) says having more global accounts will never help a company to perform better. Rather select global accounts more effectively and identify those accounts where GAM relationships can add a significant value. As per Leonard and Charles (1999), global account management is a strategic selling tool which makes easier for the development of an effective, long-term customer

relationship and strategic partnership. Hence it is important that global managers considers the geography, organization, revenue potential, strategic importance, strategic-cultural-geographical fit and partnership opportunities carefully while choosing global accounts (Yip and Bink, 2007). Many global manufacturers and service providers puts specialized global account management teams for selling and servicing exclusively throughout the world. In many cases high-level executives lead those accounts to make sure they get huge response from their suppliers. And for that reason those multinational companies invest huge amount of money with their suppliers to be in a position to virtually demand such response (Leonard and Charles, 1999). Canegrati (2009) suggests, corporates that focuses on global opportunities should reconsider their customer approach while setting up of the sales force, planning and strategy while transforming from national based to international managed sales organization. As it is mentioned in the theoretical study Shi et al. (2010: 625) defines few major elements for global account management strategies that magnify a company's ability to serve in the global market where coordination has been the key element within the supplier and its global customers. At the same time it's also discussed standardization of marketing activities and global integration have been the key strategies for serving better to the global customers.

Considering GAM drivers, "globalization and global strategic priority" has been the major factor to drive the case company globally. As we have seen in theoretical study for global strategic priority company gives most preferences to its global customers concern from various resource's and tries to solve it by proving globalized solutions. Case company in the study always tries to have better relationships with its customer to know them better and engages in the strategies how they can serve better. Case company has global sales team located in different locations world-wide. Sales team work together when it comes to managing sales globally, hence GAM is very necessary to support its global business. Global account management team is responsible for its key customer's globally where key account managers are the important part of the team. Depending on the customer size and importance, account managers are posted to manage the customer. Account managers are the voice of both company and customer. It is account managers responsibility to know customers demand and expectations. They represent the company while bidding for

the project and act as customer's voice until the project is handed over to the customer successfully.

As per the interviewed person, strategy is very necessary when you operate globally. Company needs to put special attention on organizing activities and maintaining coordination's across the organizations. As we see in case of Inter-country coordination, activities are coordinated between organizations functions and subsidiaries across country markets. Activities are comprised of product related where companies adapt new product or develops new product, service related (e.g., training, advice, troubleshooting, guarantees), price related (e.g., special pricing terms, pricing policy, financing), supply chain activities (e.g., inventory management, transportation, order proc) and promotional activities like joint advertising and promo programs to final customers are coordinated. Case company in practice has quarterly business review meeting where case company's higher management from sales and other related responsibility divisions meet customers and discussed about the outcomes. The important discussions includes accomplishments in the past, current activities which are ongoing and future projects and the direction to which company is heading with respect to customer satisfaction. In these meetings higher management gets information of how company is managing and receives information for their strategy creation for the future. Also there is customer satisfaction survey done by the case company where company gets the direct feedback from the customer and gets important information how it can provide better services to the customer further. Customer relations are always targeted for long-term relationships. In addition to keeping up the customer relationship, account managers are constantly seeking new business with the customers. Old business is now saturated and demand of new products and services attracts customers globally. Hence company manages to emphasis on customized products and services to satisfy their global customers. To one of the sales and marketing strategy questions the interviewed person was explaining,

"...Sales and marketing strategy is to win the customer case. It is then sell to the leading Original Equipment Manufacturers which needs an understanding of the entire wireless communications value chain. To be able to provide this value to the customers, case company is organized so as to best gain expertise and knowledge

from the semiconductor customers and translating that knowledge as value to the handset customers in a seamless fashion”.

In the theoretical study discussed earlier, it was emphasizing on the relation and relationship management in sales which is the basic need for any company. Like in our daily life it is important to build a good relationship with others, same goes with business customers. Therefore all the companies try to manage customer relationship properly during sales and marketing. According to Berling et al. (1993) firms mainly focuses their attention on building sustainable and competitive advantage by developing close relationships with the suppliers, customers and channel members. Every company tries to support and enhance the relationships with the customer. Through these relationships it creates value by differentiating their offerings (Berling et al., 1993). Case company in this study is basically a Telecom centric organization. They derive substantial amount of revenue from the sales of semiconductor solutions. Hence its majority customers are handset original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and semiconductor chipset manufacturers. One of the important criteria has been discussed in the report in relationship management is attitude, how attitude been a key factor for maintaining and fostering the relationship with the customer. Sales persons in the case company seem very positive and proactive towards relationship which has been the base for the customer relationship-management. There is a saying "attitude not aptitude determines your longitude". Hence it is your 'approach' that defines your relationship with the customer. The case company in the study gives most important to the customer relationships. While questioning on the personal and professional level relationship with the customer, the interviewer said it's very important to develop personal relationship which works really well for maintaining long term relation with the customer. Personal contact and personal relationship helps significantly in selling. "The greater the need for personal contact, the more important it becomes to employ competent sales force, and thus, engage in sales force competence management" (Asiegbu, Ogbuji and Ubani 2012: 131). Davies et al. (2010) says, sales persons need to have different contact points within the customers to build a strong network and that helps while taking decisions.

Case company in the study uses customer relationship management system to help achieving customer intimacy and managing relationships with selling partners.

Company has large business and many customers globally. There are too many ways customers interact with the company and hence it is important to have a single enterprise view of customers to analyze customer data and consolidate. These data's distributes to various systems and customer touch points across the enterprise.

Companies Finland site is a medium sized company, number of sales personals also less and mostly they are self-directed. In theory self-directed cluster lacks planning and implementing strategies but case company's Finland site differ in this regard. Though sales persons work in flexibility mode but they take their own responsibility very seriously. The communication happens mostly in a straight forward way. Sales people's roles and responsibilities play a great role while defining production, sales, marketing and partnering. In case of case company, account managers are working very independently having no direct subordinates. Sales management is in close relationship with research and development organization where designated project managers in place to support each customer accounts. In same customer relationship there can be account manager and project manager. As per the interviewed persons comment,

"...case company's Finland site is a mid-sized company, hence sales needs to be an integral part of the team to understand clearly resourcing and available skills. Most of the cases sales team operates locally but they support global sales team when needed. GAM is triggered from headquarters. Also sometime they get help from the global sales team for the new opportunities discussions in different locations than Finland".

Attitudinally they follow strategic sales where every individual try building strong networks and use multiple point of references while taking decisions. To one of the interview question the sales manager replied that,

"...sales managers should always be proactive and persuasive in its nature to solve problems of the customer. Since case company have the presence in many different countries with diversified customers, it has developed effective multisite delivery models to provide maximum benefit to the customer. Onsite sales managers help gaining customer confidence. Sales team in multi-locations helps the customer engagement without having the deal with regional issues of deployment in a new country".

Due to globalization it is obvious to see many differences in people from different countries, from different cultural back grounds, ethnic groups, different languages, sex, age, skin color and different mental and physical abilities etc. This is what we say diversity. Managing diversity is managing these differences. As Moran et.al (2007) suggests diversity can be referred to both similarities and differences. Diversity if managed well, it can be more innovative, flexible, effective and more efficient for the organizations which in turn helps GAM program. Diversity relates mostly to cultural differences. Our basic needs', understanding, believes, perceptions, communications, even our consumptions are highly influenced by our culture which differs from other cultures. It is not necessary to adopt others culture but to respect and more over recognizing the equality which is the part of GAM strategies and global customer demand. It doesn't matter if a person belongs to any majority or minority group but it is critical for an organization to manage diversity in a way that it is utilizing the maximum potential of that person to solve global customer's problem. Case company is a multi-cultural company and sales positions are scattered around the world to work for global accounts. It would be difficult to manage without mutual cooperation, team work and valuing every individual's ideas. GAM coordination teaches coming together and serving better to the global customer around the similarities still be different.

Finding new business model, taking it in to use during business process is an important criteria and in turn that helps GAM. Case company in the study uses MBI (Map, Bridge and Integrate) model (DiStefano, J. J. 2003) to have the high team performance, and utilizes the differences positively. Account manager of the case company explains,

"...To provide cost efficiency to the customer, company takes the advantage of multi-site project execution method. Meaning some part of the team sits in low cost locations and some works from onsite. When there is a multisite project involvement and sales managers from different sites have never worked together in the past, they arrange global sales persons along with project manager or project coordinator to visit all the sites to Map and understand the cultural values, personalities and thinking styles. After the team introduction through video conference or face-to-face meeting, the discussions happen about how the information shall flow within the team and individual tasks are allocated to handle customers".

That helps in Bridging a possible gaps in the delivery. After commencement of the project, the team syncs up on the progress of individual tasks to ensure that the team is integrated and there are no issues.

While considering marketing and marketing strategy, case company creates and captures value through customer intimacy. Marketing is a pure advertising and awareness program. As per Vidyarthi (2012) statistics, most of the people spend most of their time in social media. Looking at this infographic looks at the demographics and some key statistics, more than 901 million users use popular social networking sites (Vidyarthi N., 2012). To this case company's account manager explains,

"...Marketing strategy is divided in to four major areas i.e. products, pricing, placement and promotions. Pricing offers are designed as per the products and its services. There are categorized premium and standard products. Premium product with new and robust technology is designed to new market segments whereas standard product is designed for Tier 1 and Tier 2 customers along with existing product depending on quality desired by the end customer. Global marketing campaign is done aggressively through conferences, events and social media like Facebook and Twitter etc. The same platforms are also used for placement and promotions. With the help of effective and competitive processes the company attains new customers globally".

Adding value to the customer is much more important than anything else by having focused on customer experience and with business having to be customer centric. It is very important to know or understand what value means to the customer and how customer sees as valuable to them. To this the interviewed sales manager explained,

"Understanding customer and their demand is the key important. Being flexible in their requirement is another key factor and adding value to the delivery adds customer confidence. Project team is modular in nature to add value; meaning of modular here is built with standardized units or dimensions allowing flexibility and variety in use. Sails strategies are provided by a dedicated and experienced sales team. They provide sailing strategy. Dedicated architect who does technical analysis to help in the sales process and preparing technical documents. Taking all inputs from various team members, sales team drafts the framework for the customer. In

this way they add value to their products and services. Strategically sales teams are located nearer to the customer bases in Asia, Europe and in the US. In all these locations sales persons have specific local market expertise and it takes the local advantages to have relatively low cost and tax incentives”.

GAM result mostly depends on the role and responsibilities of sales managers or account managers. Ryals (2012) recognizes that key account management is an organizational change, not a sales technique. Building and maintaining profitable business relationships are the vital role of any sales people. Basically sales person's duty includes customer communication, assistance, product demonstration and assessing their needs. For effective assistance to the customer salesperson need excellent communication skill. Details knowledge of the product or service helps sales person demonstrating the product and helps promoting the value of the product. Weitz & Bradford (1999) argues, role of sales person has changed over time depending on the business area or industry where sales person is working. Barton and Kevin (1999) describes in the below table how the role and responsibilities of sales persons should be.

<i>Role</i>	<i>Production</i>	<i>Sales</i>	<i>Marketing</i>	<i>Partnering</i>
Sales force objective	Making sales	Making sales	Satisfying customer needs	Building relationships
Sales force orientation	Short-term seller needs	Short-term seller needs	Short-term customer and buyer needs	Long term customer and seller needs
Critical tasks of sales people	Taking orders and delivering goods	Convince buyers to buy products	Matching available offerings to buyer needs	Creating new alternatives by matching buyer needs with seller capabilities
Activities of sales people	Making sells calls and informing customers about firms offerings	Influence customers using a hard-sell approach	Influence customers practicing adaptive selling	Maintain customer relation, Manage Conflict

<i>Role</i>	<i>Production</i>	<i>Sales</i>	<i>Marketing</i>	<i>Partnering</i>
Role of sales person	Provider	Persuader	Problem solver	Value creator
Focus of sales management	Individual Sales people	Individual sales people	Individual sales people	Sales teams and leader of sales teams

Table3. Sales person's roles (adapted from Barton and Kevin, 1999)

The above table suggests objective and orientation of sales force that must be defined and explained clearly to the sales management teams. Focus of the sales management team is to emphasis on efficient resource allocation and motivating sales people to work harder. Provide proper training to improve ability and motivating sales people to work smarter. Emphasis must be given to develop leadership and conflict management skills in account managers while dealing with global account management. That's how you can satisfy the global customer and their demand. Case company in the study does this very well using its multisite project delivery model. It uses global coordination in different locations to use their resources for satisfying global customer along with standardization in services. To this the interviewed sales manager explained,

"...from multi-locations we have onsite sales manager and experts. There are project managers and project leads that coordinate with the customer that help gaining customer confidence. At the same time use of multi-site model provides low cost effectiveness. This resulted in to maximum benefit to the customer demand."

Further in the theory study it is seen that, global customers demand extends to global standardization of product and services and request for global standardization in marketing approaches that includes product or services promotions, pricings and distributions. If you look at this carefully, it all depends on supplier's coordination and strategy to meet the above global customers demand and expectations. That's where GAM performance comes in to the picture through which organization establishes global account relationship by growing sales to the global account customer worldwide. GAM performance increases responsiveness to the customer's specific needs and develops new business with global customers. Ultimately it increases profit to the organization from the business with the global account customer and opens doors for additional product and services to the global account customer.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This is the final chapter where the paper presents the major findings and discusses both theoretical and managerial implications. The key question set for the report is answered in this section along with conclusion. In addition, this chapter reviews the reliability, validity and limitations of the research study and suggests for the future research on GAM.

5.1 Major Findings and Implications

Answer to the research questions

The research question for this study was: *How global account management is implemented or shall be implemented in companies to manage customers globally? OR how GAM helps companies to manage customers globally?*

We saw earlier in our study that GAM is the natural extension of domestic account management. Multinational companies have been the driving force for the spreading of GAM (Yip and Blink, 2007). When considering the drivers for the GAM, both global strategic priority and effect of globalization are recognized in the study and when considering GAM strategies, all four strategies presented by Shi et al. (2010) are recognized in the analysis. As discussed in the literature review and in the data analysis part, globalization has been one of the major factor for which companies have adapted GAM.

Below figure7 explains the major findings in GAM. From the research study it can be suggested that GAM strategic priority helps companies placing high priority on business activities to support global customers and treats global customers preferentially. At the same time it suggests sharing information about the global account customer within the organization for a better GAM performance. Because of increased globalization, worldwide activities have been increased and access to international market has become easier. GAM helps its organization to face the market openness and its strategical activities helps serving the global customers.

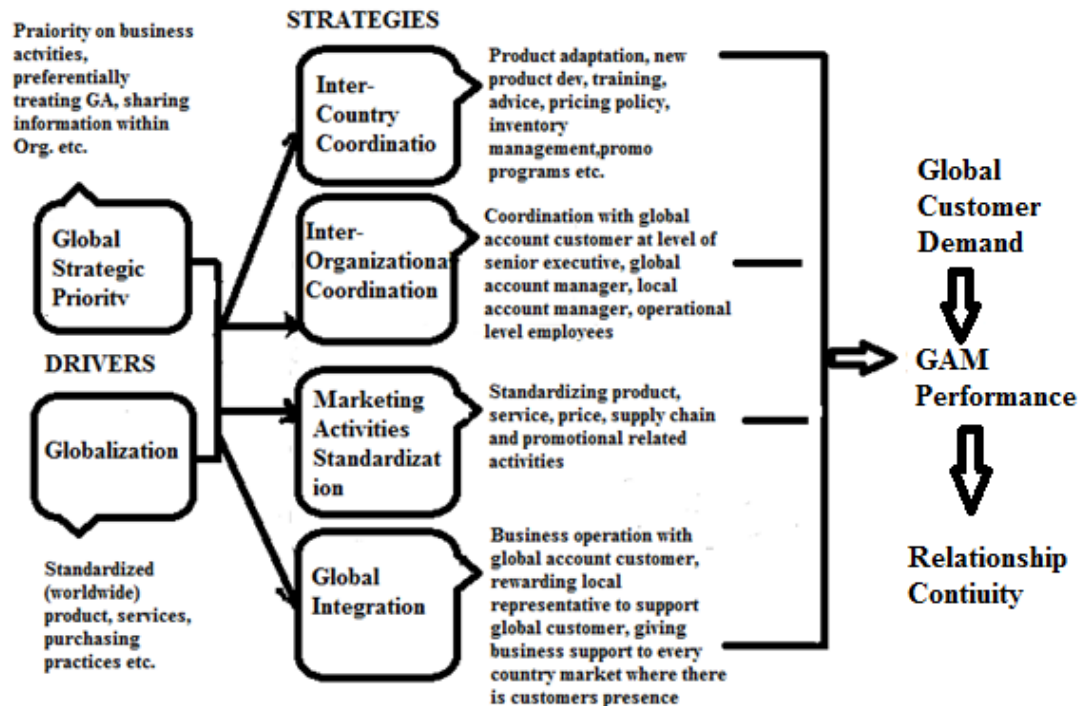


Figure9. Major Findings in GAM (adapted from Shi et al., 2008:625)

Hence first define a proper organizational form and process to control the worldwide activities which is the basic aim of GAM. When the organizations have multinational customers, the worldwide sales activities shall be coordinated centrally within the organization for better GAM results. As we see in the case company while considering globalization, standardization of products or services plays an important role because customer needs standardized products and services worldwide. Coordination at multiple organization levels is the key factor, be it inter-organizational coordination or inter-country coordination. As we see from the study in terms of inter-country coordination in GAM strategies, major activities shall be coordinated between the organizations functions and its subsidiaries across the country markets. Major activities are related to product, services, price, supply chain activities and other promotional activities to the end customers. In domestic account management also we need coordination but in case of GAM you need inter-country coordination in terms of both functional and country subsidiary levels. Companies need to put dedicated resources to handle environmental uncertainties like cultural diversity, legal constraints and political instabilities. Standardization, coordination and integration are the sophisticated strategies that need to be implemented to satisfy

global account customers' needs in the global market. Consumers demand high quality products at low prices, hence standardizing the products are very important strategy to achieve low cost positions. Successful GAM needs successful relationship management. Also top management involvement is very necessary from both sides for a successful GAM relationship. Global account manager's role is important to coordinate resources to increase openness in communication and utilizes individual knowledge to achieve objectives. Considering global integration, research study finds some critical points. Company's presence in major markets is very important where global account does business operations. To support the global customers, company can utilize local representatives to take advantage of local culture, language and other benefits and country subsidiaries. Subsidize competitor's campaigns in a country using resources generated from other countries to service global customers. It seems case company lacking in this area. Linking all the globalized operations across all the subsidies to serve global customers helps accomplishing GAM tasks.

As Jobber and Lancaster (2009: 166) suggests selling in international market is completely different than selling in home market and companies must understand this very clearly before entering in to international market. One of the important things can become hurdle for the business here is cultural factor. May be economic factors in international market can be understood by following the market condition but understanding cultural factors are quite complex. Companies cannot just export their current business model to be followed around the globes. As Prahalad and Lieberthal (1998) argue, that assumption has to change and company should invest in understanding destination countries cultural requirements. We should be aware of the fact that, mostly cultural factors decide the consumption patterns. That certainly that affects the selling process. Hofstede (1983) says, culture is a collective mental program. Culture influences consumption of specific products that is suitable and acceptable for their culture (Jobber and Lancaster, 2009: 167). Hence if you do not change your sales management as per the foreign countries cultural prospective then you may end up with inefficient and ineffective performance (DeCarlo, Rody, and DeCarlo, 1999). In turn that affects the GAM. The best idea to handle the cultural factors is to have sales branch in the specific country with their own person handling the major accounts who understands the countries cultural factors, or the sales force must be trained to understand the specific countries cultural factors to improve

business performance (DeCarlo et al. 2009, Jobber & Lancaster, 2009: 167). And at the same time global companies follows the specific countries cultural requirements and consumptions. Jobber and Lancaster (2009: 167-168) say, to achieve competitive advantage over cultural factors, organizations and its employees must fully integrate with the society and “Think global and act local”. Case company in the study has very good mapping system tool used that has explained in the analysis i.e. MBI model, mapping, bridging and integrating. It is always difficult to manage multicultural set up, and to this the interviewed sales manager explains,

“...it is very sensitive while dealing with multi-cultural team and usually its project manager’s responsibility to manage this carefully. The model is designed in a way that each other interact and learn from others with globalized mind-set”. Hence the culture should be performance and engineering driven.

From the case study and literature analysis it is understood that in order to grow in the business, company needs more investment in sales and marketing. When there is growth in the business, managing the growth becomes another important criteria to take the advantage of market opportunities. Failing in managing the growth fails in responding competitive pressures and as a result company fails maintaining product or service quality and satisfying customer requirements globally. Hence that affects GAM performance negatively. Also diversifying business in to different areas is another aspect to sustain in the market otherwise with rapidly evolving market, selling of products or services becomes difficult with limited operating areas. For instance case company is a telecomm centric organization and telecomm sector is evolving much faster than any other sectors. If company fails to update itself, it would lose customers which would make it difficult to gain and maintain the profitability. The issue with most of the company’s marketing and sales strategy is to address other segments of the market than concentrating mostly on a specific area.

As discussed in the data analysis part, branding and advertising are important concepts in today’s business. GAM could be helpful by developing and showcasing company’s brand value in the market to achieve new customers. Advertise the company through social media presence, marketing events and arranging conferences globally to improve the company visibility in the market.

In terms of relationship management, the study is very clear. Each and every individual in GAM team are responsible for enhancing customer relationships. As Zupanic (2008) says, relationships can take place on several different levels such as organizational level but also on individual levels. Hence maintain and foster relationships with customer. Sales manager in the case company emphasizes building individual relationship with the customer even though your daily work does not relate to sales work. This way you can enhance the customer relationships. A long term customer relationship means long term purchase commitments from the customer.

Another important finding has been made during case analysis is ‘management’. In case of case company’s Finland site, there is no management in sales. But having sales management is always advisable rather than working independently. Today, a company’s ability to compete and survival depends on how well its resources are utilized and Asiegbu, Ogbuji and Ubani (2012: 129) say, companies can create competitive advantage through proper management of their internal resources. Bauer et al. (2016) suggests management helps in identifying and developing the skills to better manage career, relationships, and the behavior of others in organizations. Managing salespersons with their roles and responsibilities is an important criterion. It needs a well-structured process to follow-up. In many companies, most salespeople are quite capable of outstanding performance if they are managed well and work within a well-structured process. In the other hand, high-performing salespeople can lose significant effectiveness if they work in a company with a poorly structured and poorly managed sales process (Byrnes, 2004). Hence effectively managing sales people competence, knowledge, skills and behavior, organizations can occupy better competitive advantage. (Asiegbu, Ogbuji and Ubani 2012: 130)

Some positive implication which has been seen in the case company i.e. existing customers are being taken-care by project managers (PM) and sales team keeps on searching for new prospects. This is a good approach while the project team is small where PMs can find time involving themselves with the existing customers and maintain good relationship with the customer for continuation of the project for long-term and account managers put their effort finding new business prospects for the company. To this the sales manager responded,

GAM performance and relationship continuity are the major expectations from global customer point of view. GAM performance depends on both the effectiveness of implemented GAM strategies and global customer demand in case of offering uniformity related to price, trade, services and quality. As an output of this, company gains long-term customer relations with its key customers.

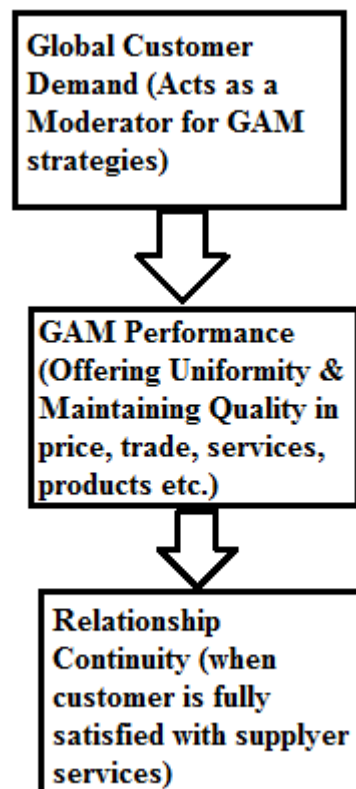


Figure10. Global Account Customer Demand

Above figure shows the expectations of global customer i.e. global customer demand which is the moderator of GAM strategies. As discussed earlier relationship continuity a major aspect of global customer demands. To this the sales manager of the case company responded,

“...it is extremely important to make customer feel that you are really interested in them and wants to take the business relationship further. It is mandatory to put

yourself to that extend. Most of the time formularized method is used to convince the customer during initial stage discussions, but then knowing the customer in personal level, knowing their hobbies etc., creating friendly environment, understanding their requirement and likeness etc. helps a lot to take the business to the next level. Do not follow only your agenda but carefully listen customers need and follow their interest. When customer is not feeling interested (which is quite often the case), we follow their interest and ask more things what they need. This way helps bringing a friendly environment and becomes easier fostering relationship in both sides”.

The response is quite convincing to follow to maintain and foster relationship continuity which satisfies customer demand. Most of the time it is seen that sales plan changes very easily as per customer demand and expectations. Hence company must be ready to accept the changes positively. Of course there are certain cases where it is difficult to make changes to RnD plans if it is agreed earlier in a specific way, hence those situations should be handled carefully and during agreement level already. In this way company can avoid any bad happenings with the customer and as per the agreement they can go with new proposal or make new agreement all together in a nicely manner.

Another important thing while dealing with global customer is that managing risk. Anything can go wrong during the business dealing or sales dealing as Murphy's law says "if anything can go wrong it will". Hence anticipate what all could go wrong from the planning and be ready to provide alternate plans so as to have minimum impact on the originally anticipated outcome. Same applies in the GAM program. It is seen mostly unidentified risks are more dangerous than identified risks. Hence early identification of risks enables the choice of the least risky option for supplier firms and hence improves GAM performance. In turn it helps relationship continuity with the global customer and hence a successful GAM program. Considering GAM performance, it is said that always try to figure out ways to offer superior value to the most profitable segments to the customer. In case of the case company it can be assumed that streamlining of offering, product standardization and constant process improvement improves the GAM performance. Recognition, Incentives and award motivates sales personals performing better. Recognizing the ability of every individuals and complementing each other motivates to find the solutions in each and every stage of the business. One of the factors that affect GAM performance is

incentives. Otherwise they would aim to only sales volume rather than profits by targeting to achieve the current sales quota commitments for good sales bonuses and lose their sense of responsibility. It affects GAM performance and hence customer satisfaction in the long run. As per the interviewed person,

“...Based on seniority, experience level and performances in the organization, there should be incentive and bonus plan for the sales persons. Case company’s global assistant sales manager opinion is to add a small percentage of company’s performance to individual key performance index (KPIs) as well. This could help motivate engineering and be more involved in the company’s performance. As you take more responsibilities and roles as per your gaining experience, the key performance index could increase. In this it will help every individual to take more responsibilities to perform better.”

It seems they have traditionally won repeat projects from customers based on delivery results and this step could help a positive motivational influence employee to a greater extent. This show how important is the incentive plan in case of GAM performance.

The above discussions suggests how GAM helps companies to manage its customers globally and how well it shall be implemented for a better GAM results using case company as the basis for the analysis along with literature reviews. Hence the study concludes that, GAM can be used as a tool for global opportunities and management. This is only possible by recognizing and understanding GAM concept. Internationalization is nothing but the extension of the business that increases international involvement. In this firm gains the knowledge of foreign markets & its operations and also firms adjusts itself to the new business environment. And Networking develops the relationships in the market. It reduces risks involved, stimulates proactive behavior, innovations, and uses external as well as internal resources internationally. The GAM strategy appears to have mostly a positive impact to business operations. However, the requirement, motives and goals to adapt GAM must be clear to draw the possible benefits and gain as much as possible. The level of success depends how well an organization utilizes GAM and its strategy. Supplier firm shall take the advantage of GAM by offering it to the right customer

and not getting confused by offering wrong form of GAM to the right customers (Yip and Blink, 2007)

But it is worthy to point out here that companies who are not sure if GAM is appropriate for them or not, Yip and Blink (2007) suggestions to examine four criteria i.e. i) check whether your products and services needs global coordination and your profit is justifying the same ii) check if global customers really wants GAM iii) check whether your global customers are really important for your businesses iv) check if you get any competitive advantage by implementing GAM, has the perfect relevance and companies should take those points carefully before adapting GAM. When all these above checks are important while deciding about GAM, it is also equally important to follow proper processes, strategy, managerial implications and other factors that is important before or after implementing GAM. In current business scenario, most of the successful global companies adopting GAM as one integrated account with coherent terms for pricing, product specifications, and services to satisfy their customers worldwide. Today multinational customers have realized the importance of GAM and they have become the driving force to spread the GAM worldwide (Yip and Bink, 2007). This report also concludes the importance of GAM to improve customer satisfaction and suggests the issues that should be taken-care while implementing the global account management strategies.

5.2 Evaluation of the Study

Reliability and Validity

All the research study quality is evaluated by its reliability and validity. To explain the meaning of reliability and validity, we need to explain different definitions of reliability and validity provided by different researchers from different prospective (Golafshani, 2003). In qualitative research, naturalistic approach is used to understand the phenomena in context-specific things as per Patton (2002: 39); here reliability measures the consistency of the study (Koskinen et al. 2005: 255). Consistency of the study meaning, when a topic is discussed and its conclusions are drawn by different researchers with the same research data; it provides the same results (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001: 186). As Campbell (1996) suggested, the consistency of data will be achieved when the steps of the research are verified through examination of raw data, data reduction products, and process notes.

In quantitative research, mostly charts, graphs and mathematical expressions are used to illustrate the outcomes of the research (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998: 4) where main emphasis is given on facts and causes of behavior (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Hence the research study can usually be replicated or repeated; meaning high reliability on the thesis report. Hence reliability concept is mostly used for quantitative analysis than qualitative research seeing the quality of the studies done in the former than later. Also Stenbacka (2001: 552) say “the concept of reliability is even misleading in qualitative research. If a qualitative study is discussed with reliability as a criterion, the consequence is rather that the study is no good.”

Validity is classified in two types, internal validity and external validity. Internal validity means the research method is measured with target phenomenon. According to Malhotra and Birks (2000: 247), internal validity is the minimum level of study without which the study is regarded as insufficient. External validity refers if the research study can be generalized on a larger scale. Some researchers have also pointed out that validity is not applicable to qualitative research but Golafshani (2003) suggests we need to have at least some kind of qualifying measure for any research study.

The methodology used in this study is extensive literature review and paradigms from academic and real world. The empirical data's are taken through qualitative interviews and the interview questions were prepared using as per the studies requirement. The interviewed persons represent sales managers or account managers or business development managers of the case company who has the best knowledge on the research study.

In short, the study has used qualitative research methodology where theoretical data's are collected from extensive literature reviews and empirical data's are collected through extensive interviews that represents case company's sales department. With this it can be ensured that data and analysis attain and sustain reliability and validity.

5.3 Study Limitations and Suggestions for the Future Research

Though the validity and reliability of the quality of the study has been described in the above report section 5.4 but there are certain limitations exist that in turn allows other researchers to analyze further on global account management in the future. The above report is prepared by taking literature and case company study as the main source of analysis which gives a valuable insight to GAM program as per the current business scenarios. However looking at the way business scenarios are changing so fast, the addressed issues may not be completely valid after some time. This paper combines many issues from sales, marketing, relationship management, account management and strategy to analyze GAM which in turn makes it a complex topic. The study of GAM is huge and extensive, hence it is very difficult to address all the issues around the research topic and at the same time you cannot ensure 100% on all the theories provided by any researchers including this report because of lack of agreement on the different elements of the literature study. As mentioned earlier as well that the concept of GAM is very widely discussed and researched in the academic point of view since long time now but it lacks its practical implementation in different organizations due to constant change in business scenario. The study has also not given much information on the GAM driver i.e. global strategic priority and GAM strategy i.e. global integration that influences GAM which can be analyzed further in future research. Another important factor in sales is rewarding and providing incentives. This topic has not been sufficiently analyzed in this study due to confidential reason of the case company. The empirical data in this study was collected by semi structured interviews from the case company and the data taken from all the sales managers does not give the final view point on account management or GAM. Finally this research study has taken only one case company as an example to collect empirical data's which is not sufficient to conclude about GAM analysis because empirical data's from other different companies might give something different insights to the analysis.

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APPENDICES

OUTLINE OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Organizing sales and account management in the case company

1. Organizing sales

- How is sales organized in case company?
- How separated sales and R&D are in case company?
- How sales teams are formulated in case company?
- What is the role and responsibilities of these?

2. Organizing sales teams / accounts

- Geographical division?
- Local vs. global?
- Product level division?
- Customer?
- Industry?

3. Sales management

- What is the role of sales management in the case company?
- Role of sales strategizing in case company?
- Role of sales coaching in case company?
- Role of communicating in related with sales organization?
- How are sales forces managed in case company?

4. Performance measuring

- How is this done in case company?

5. Role of account management

- What is the role of AM (Account Management) in case company?
- Is there KAM/GAM (Key Account Management/Global Account Management)?
- How many customers one AM has?
- How do AMs works together?
- Meeting and communication practices?
- How much of KAMs/AMs work is related with keeping up customer relationships?

- How tightly AMs are in connection with the customer?
- Are AMs sellers or problem solvers?
- How deep is the relationship with the customer?
- How much do you follow what customer is doing during the account?

6. Relationship Management , Plan and Strategy

- How do you plan your strategies and implement it?
- While formulating ideas, plans, research and decisions do you prefer a large group of trusted personal relationship or a smaller group of personal relationship?
- Is it an advantage or disadvantage combining personal relation and professional relation both to achieve new prospects? How important is that to balance both?
- Is there any formularized method communicating decisions and ideas?
- How do you tackle the cultural differences while dealing with national/international customers?
- To what extent are you comfortable managing customer in terms of price and long term relationships?
- Is there any risk analysis done with the sales prospects and how?

GAM questionnaires:

GAM strategic priority

How you place priority on business activities supporting the global account customer?

How you treat the global account customer preferentially?

Do you believe that it is important to share information about the global account customer within the organization?

Globalization

How customer needs are standardized worldwide?

How competitors market standardized products or services worldwide?

How purchasing practices are standardized for our products worldwide?

Inter-country coordination

How following activities are coordinated between your organization's functions and subsidiaries across country markets?

-Product-related activities (e.g., product adaptation, new product development):

-Service-related activities (e.g., training, advice, troubleshooting, and guarantees):

- Price-related activities (e.g., special pricing terms, pricing policy, financing):

-Supply chain activities (e.g., inventory management, transportation, order proc):

-Promotion activities to final customers (e.g., joint advertising and promo programs):

Inter-organizational coordination

How your organization is coordinated with the global account customer across country markets at the level of,

-Senior executive

-Global account manager

-Local account manager

-Operational-level employees, such as field sales, accountants, technicians

Marketing activities standardization

To what extent to which the following activities are standardized within your organization to serve the global account customer across country markets,

-Product-related activities (e.g., product adaptation, new product development)

- Service-related activities (e.g., training, advice, troubleshooting, and guarantees)

-Price-related activities (e.g., special pricing terms, pricing policy, financing)

-Supply chain activities (e.g., inventory management, transportation, order proc)

-Promotion activities to end customers (e.g., joint advertising and promo programs)

Global integration

Do you have business operations with the global account customer in all the major markets where global account does business?

Does local representatives and country subsidiaries are rewarded to support the global account customer?

Do you subsidize competitive campaigns in a country using resources generated from other countries to serve the global account customer?

How do you do business with your global account customer in whatever country the global account wants to do business?

Global customer demand

To what extent does the global account customer,

-Request global coordination of resources?

-Request global standardization in products and services?

-Request global standardization in marketing approaches (e.g., promotion, pricing, distributions)?

GAM performance

How successful has your organization been in achieving the following objectives since the establishment of your global account relationship,

-Growing sales to the global account customer worldwide

-Cross-selling additional products and services to the global account customer

-Developing new business with the global account customer

-Increasing profit from the business with the global account customer

-Increasing responsiveness to the global account's specific needs

Relationship continuity

Is your relationship with this global account customer is a long-term alliance? How?

Do you have a high degree of trust exists between both organizations? How?