MASTER'S THESIS

Strategic Analysis and Strategy Development for Automotive Retail

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AFFIDAVIT

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Abstract

Due to various circumstances, my father's company called Loitz GmbH needs to make decisions regarding the future organisation and location. One of the main reasons that makes a shift in position necessary, is the insufficient space provided by the present location. Another problem is the location itself, which is currently in the middle of a small town called Gallneukirchen in Upper Austria. A reclassification of the property has been made by the local authority that stipulates the location as a core area. The regional planning law defines, that there are only office buildings, administrative buildings, buildings for trading, buildings for service companies, event buildings and residential buildings allowed in a core area (RIS, 2017, para. 22). The result is, that a large-scale modification of the garage, the body shop and the paint shop is prohibited by law. This will affect the future competitiveness of the company if it remains in this location. The fact is, the company does not want to lose its position as a regional mobility supplier. A new location needs to be found, but the major question is what strategy should be pursued? The objective of this thesis is to carry out strategic analysis of the external environment and the company-internal situation. With the insight gained possible strategies for the automotive retail business will be developed by using the SWOT-Framework. The goal is to discover promising and practical strategy directions which can be investigated in more detail by Autohaus Loitz.

Zusammenfassung

Durch diverse Gegebenheiten steht mein elterliches Autohaus vor der Entscheidung, den Betrieb neu zu organisieren und einen neuen Standort zu errichten. Aufgrund der Lage mitten im Ortskern ergibt sich ein Problem des Platzmangels. Der Standort bietet wenig Stellplätze für neue Anschaffungen. Zudem kommt, dass wegen einer Umwidmung das Umbauen der Werkstätte verboten ist. Für mich als zukünftiger Unternehmer bedeutet dies, dass mein Unternehmen kaum konkurrenzfähig bleiben wird. Aus diesem Grund stellt sich für mich die Frage, in welche Richtung ich das Autohaus lenken werde, um auch in Zukunft eine entscheidende Rolle als regionaler Mobilitätsanbieter spielen zu können. Der Hauptteil dieser Arbeit ist die strategische Analyse der Umgebung der Firma und der Firma intern. Mit den aus der strategischen Analyse gewonnenen Daten wurden mögliche Strategien mit der Hilfe der SWOT-Analyse für das Autohaus Loitz entwickelt. Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es moderne und praktisch umsetzbare Strategien aufzuzeigen um gegenüber anderer Autohäuser nicht nur konkurrenzfähig, sondern vor allem auch richtungweisend zu sein.

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List of Abbreviations

AGW	Anthropogenic Global Warming
AI	Artificial Intelligence
B2B	Business to Business
B2C	Business to Customer
BEP	Break-Even Point
BER	Block Exemption Regulation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFP	Cashflow Point
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
DMS	Dealer Management System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GmbH	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (~Ltd = limited liability company)
ICCT	International Council of Clean Transportation
LOHAS	Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability
LPG	Liquified Petroleum Gas
NEDC	New European Driving Cycle
NOVA	Standard Fuel Consumption Duty (In German: Normverbrauchsabgabe)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
OICA	International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers
PESTEL	Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technological, Ecological and Legal
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
SAE	International Society of Automotive Engineers
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
TOWS	Threats Opportunities Weaknesses Strengths
VDA	German Association of the Automotive Industry
VR	Virtual Reality
VRIO	Valuable, Rare, Imitability and Organised
VW	Volkswagen
WIFO	Austrian Institute of Economic Research
ZEV	Zero-Emission Vehicle

1 Introduction

"The beginning is the most important part of the work."
-Plato

The main reason for carrying out this master's thesis is the fact that the automotive industry, and therefore also automotive retail, is facing a drastic change (Parment, 2016, p. 52). Social trends play a substantial role regarding those changes. Climate Change, Urbanisation, Digitalisation, Share Economy (e.g. Car Sharing) and Branded Society are some examples of relevant trends, which are the key topics of many discussions regarding the future of the automotive industry and retail (Winterhoff *et al.*, 2009; VDA, 2015, p. 7; Parment, 2016, p. 14 ff). Those topics have a major impact on how people will lead and guide their automotive related companies in near future. This thesis shows how to develop a possible strategy for automotive retail companies to increase their potential success in the future.

My personal motivation for this thesis is to follow in my father's footsteps and play a major role as a mobility supplier in the region around Gallneukirchen in the State of Upper Austria. Working in an up-to-date environment with employees who live the corporate policy and do their best to realise customer satisfaction is something that can be achieved by a solid strategy formulation. (Vorbach, 2015, p. 225 f)

1.1 Climate Change

For many years the topic of climate change has been omnipresent in the media landscape of Europe. John Cook *et al* summarised studies in an environmental research letter that quantify expert views and examine common flaws in criticism of consensus estimates (Cook *et al.*, 2013, p. 1 f). This research letter shows that the scientific consensus on anthropogenic global warming (AGW) is robust, with a range of 90 %-100 % dependent on the question, timing and sampling methodology. "From a broader perspective, it doesn't matter if the consensus is 90 % or 100 %. The level of scientific agreement on AGW is overwhelmingly high because the supporting evidence is overwhelmingly strong." (Cook *et al.*, 2016, p. 6)

One of the services we use in our daily life is mobility. This unambiguously leads to motor vehicles in all its variants. The next logical step is to reduce its emissions to get a cleaner environment. There is a major change in the car-landscape happening right now. (Winterhoff *et al.*, 2009)

1.2 Cars over the Course of Time

At the end of the 19th century, the development of the automobile became a breakthrough invention that has changed the lives of millions of people to this day. In those early days people were very critical and sceptical about the newly invented cars in Austria. Cars were considered a prestige object and the drivers themselves considered it as sporty, freedom-giving and an individual means of transport with many advantages. At those times the car was only affordable for very rich people. (Czabaun, 2008, p. 102 ff)

Through Henry Ford's development of assembly lines in 1913, cars became affordable for a large percentage of people. In 1924 Opel was the first German manufacturer who produced their cars in assembly lines (Opel Automobile GmbH, 2014). From this time on passenger car sales have been rising constantly. This chapter tries to give an insight into how car sales have developed over time. The location of Autohaus Loitz is in Upper Austria, therefore the figures shown are specified for that geographic region. Figure 1.1 shows the number of registered passenger cars and the inhabitants of Upper Austria from 1952 to 2016. The number of registered passenger cars in Upper Austria has been rising since 1952. In the year 1952 approximately 0.9 % of Upper Austrian inhabitants owned a registered car. Sixty-four years later in the year 2016 the percentage of all Upper Austrian inhabitants owning a car is at approximately 62 %. The number of children in the population must be considered. This leads to a very high percentage of motorisation per inhabitant in Upper Austria. (Statistik Austria, 2017c, 2017b)

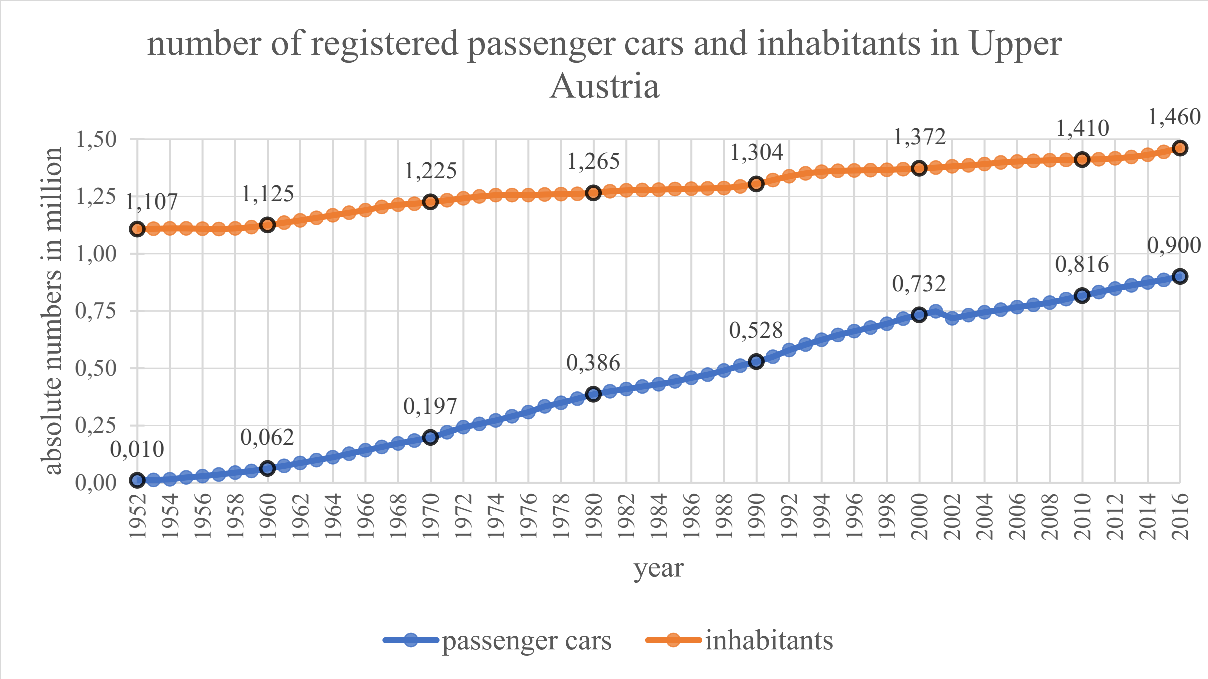

Figure 1.1: The Upper Austrian passenger car stock from 1952 to 2016 and the numbers of Upper Austrian inhabitants according to official population censuses (Statistik Austria, 2017c, 2017b).

The fact that more people than ever can afford mobility in the form of cars lead to problems which were not considered in the early days of mobilisation. Various circumstances such as climate change, the rise in the world population, scandals in the automotive industry concerning emissions and many more have led to a change in the mindset of customers. This development can be observed looking at the rise in new alternative powered vehicle sales shown in figure 1.2.

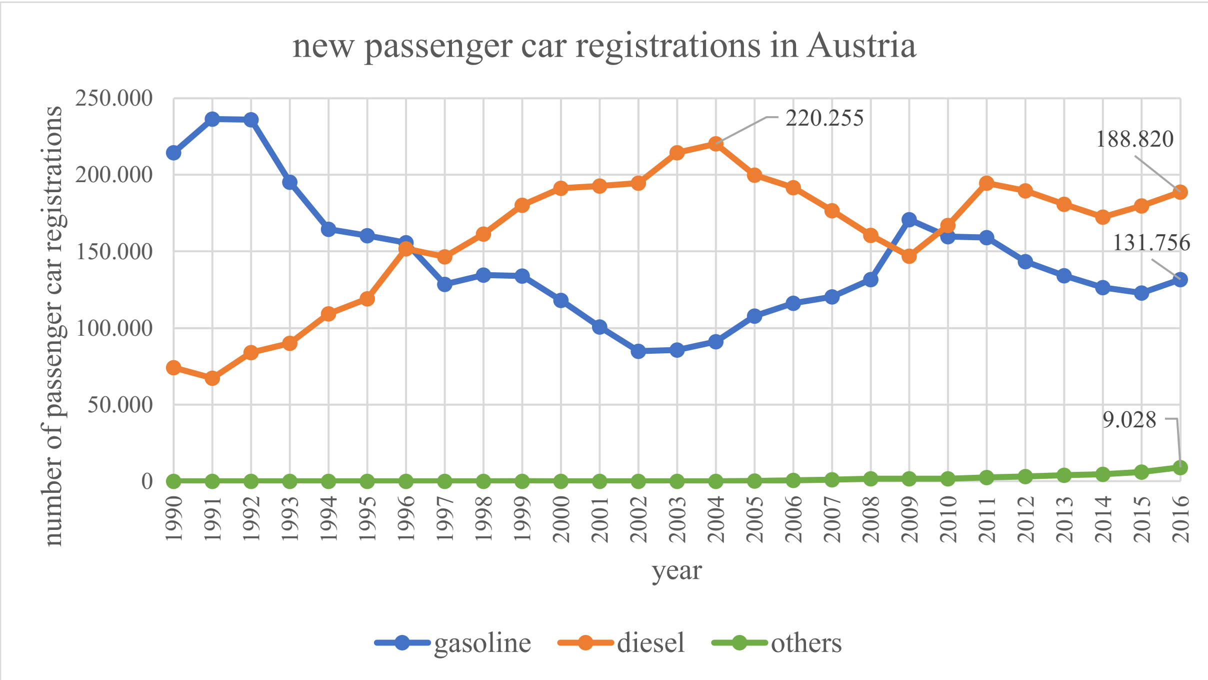

Figure 1.2: The number of new passenger car registrations in Austria from the year 1990 to 2016. They are grouped in gasoline, diesel and others. (Statistik Austria, 2017e)

The amount of new passenger car registrations in Austria is shown above in figure 1.2. In this graph the passenger car registrations are grouped in gasoline, diesel and others. Since 1997 (except for 2009) new cars powered by diesel-engines have been very popular and, in some years, more than double the number of new cars powered with diesel compared to gasoline were sold. Very interesting is the rising number of alternative powered vehicles. In this statistic alternative powered vehicles are electro, gas, bivalent operation (either Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) or Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and gas), combined operation (Hybrid) und hydrogen (fuel cell). The share of those alternative powered vehicles in 2016 was 2.7 % rising from 1.9 % in 2015. This was a growth of approximately 142 % in just one year. (Statistik Austria, 2017e) This shows that customers start to want different, more sustainable forms of mobility. However, the total number of alternative powered vehicle registrations is still small compared to diesel or gasoline.

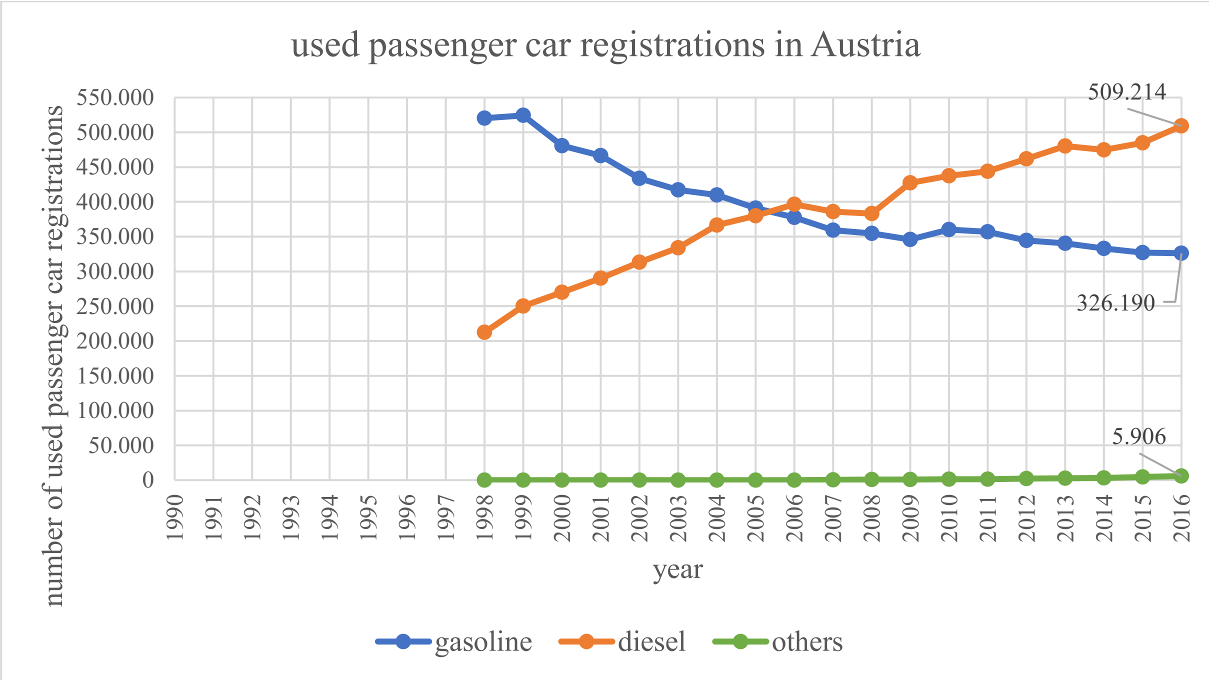

Figure 1.3: The number of used passenger car registrations in Austria from the year 1998 to 2016. They are grouped in gasoline, diesel and others. (Statistik Austria, 2017d)

It is important to look at the used passenger car registrations in Austria as well. The registrations from 1998 to 2016 are shown in figure 1.3. In figure 1.3 the timespan from 1990 to 1997 is displayed as of the better comparability to figure 1.2 above. There is no data available for the years before 1998. The trend is favouring used cars with diesel engines over petrol engines. In 2016 60.5 % of used car registrations in Austria were powered by diesel engines as only 38.8 % were powered by gas and 0.7 % were alternative powered. The definition for alternative powered is the same as described before. (Statistik Austria, 2017d)

1.3 History of Automotive Retail

From the early years of the automotive industry in early 1920 until now most cars have been distributed by car dealers. The separation of production and retail thus has a long tradition and relatively little has changed since the early days. After the second world war the one brand distribution gained popularity and the number of dealers rose. One brand distribution means that a company only distributes and represents one manufacturer. Since early 1970 the system of authorised dealers is protected by the first Block Exemption Regulation (BER) included in the EG-policies. The dominance of the producer on the distribution system was as strong as never before. The liabilities of the dealers towards the producer was rising in financial aspects as well for marketing, buildings and product presentation. There are many factors why the separation of production and retail in automotive business persists. One of them is that the high complexity of the product requires a dense network of skilled workshops and retailers. Another factor is the trade-in that dealers do, where they give the customers a fair market value for their currently used car when buying a new one. Nevertheless, the profitability of the dealers is rather low. It goes without saying that the conditions described are changing. (Parment, 2016, p. 80 f)

1.4 Thesis Outline

To be able to get a quick overview of this master's thesis an outline was created. Figure 1.4 shows the thesis outline. The thesis can be divided into three parts, the strategic analysis, the strategic guideposts, and the strategy formulation.

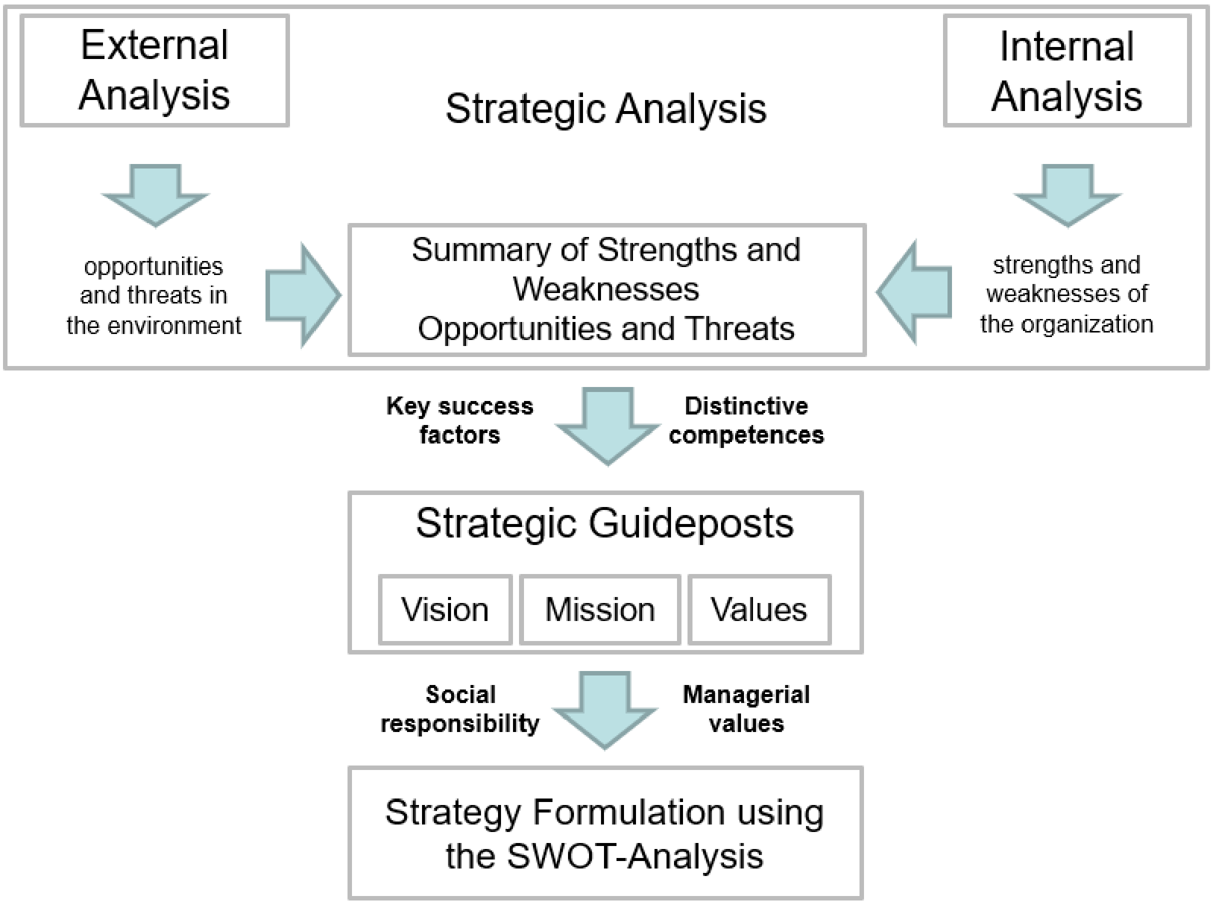

Figure 1.4: Thesis outline.

The first and main part of this thesis is the strategic analysis. In this part external and internal factors influencing the company were analysed.

The environmental analysis investigated external factors influencing the company containing macroenvironment, industry and competitive arena. The macroenvironment was analysed with the help of the PESTEL-framework. The name of this framework is a combination of the initial letters of six factors: political, economic, sociocultural, technological, ecological and legal. Those factors were investigated, and the most important ones were combined into a specific PESTEL-framework. The industry analysis contains the definition of the relevant market of the company which was done by qualitative research with employees and leadership, an industry profitability analysis was done with Porter's five forces model, the industry life-cycle was analysed and a study about retail formats in automotive business was analysed. The competitive arena contains a competitor analysis and a customer analysis. The competitor analysis was done via internet research and contains the main competitors of the company. An online customer survey was built and used to analyse the customers of the company.

The company analysis examined relevant internal factors like resources, capabilities and competencies of the company. Those factors were analysed with the help of an employee survey and qualitative meetings with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and employees. Core-competencies were analysed with the help of the VRIO-scheme. The name of the scheme consists of the initial letters of the words: valuable, rare, imitability, organised to capture value. The last chapter of the company analysis is a financial analysis where a company internal success comparison and an industry comparison with benchmark companies is shown.

At the end of the first part strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are summarised.

The second part of this thesis is the development of the strategic guideposts. Strategic guideposts identify the company's fundamental strategic intent and identity. An imaginative future picture of what the company wants to accomplish in the long run is the company vision which is the first step of this part. The mission which is the second step in this part articulates the purpose or reason of the company's existence. Finally, the organisational values which are the essential and enduring standards and norms of social behaviour that are collectively held by members inside the company are developed.

The third part of this thesis is called strategy formulation. It uses the data of the first chapter strategic analysis to conduct a SWOT-Analysis. The SWOT-based strategic analysis summary enables the development of strategies focusing on benefiting the strengths and opportunities and avoiding or minimising threats and weaknesses. The outcome of the SWOT-Framework are possible strategies the company can choose to investigate in more detail.

At the end of the thesis a conclusion is made, and an outlook is given.

2 Strategic Analysis

"I think a lot about the future because that's where I'm going to spend the rest of my life." -Woody Allen

To deal with the future is a critical task in every strategic management process. The tools in this chapter support this difficult task of analysing how the present is and taking a guess how the future could be. The process of developing a strategy starts with an analysis of the initial strategic situation covering both the firm's external environment and internal set-up (Wunder, 2016, p. 71). There are different layers of investigation for the strategic analysis, which are illustrated in figure 2.1. Those layers cover the external environment of a company through macroenvironment, industry and competitive arena and the internal configuration, the company itself (Wunder, 2016, p. 76 f).

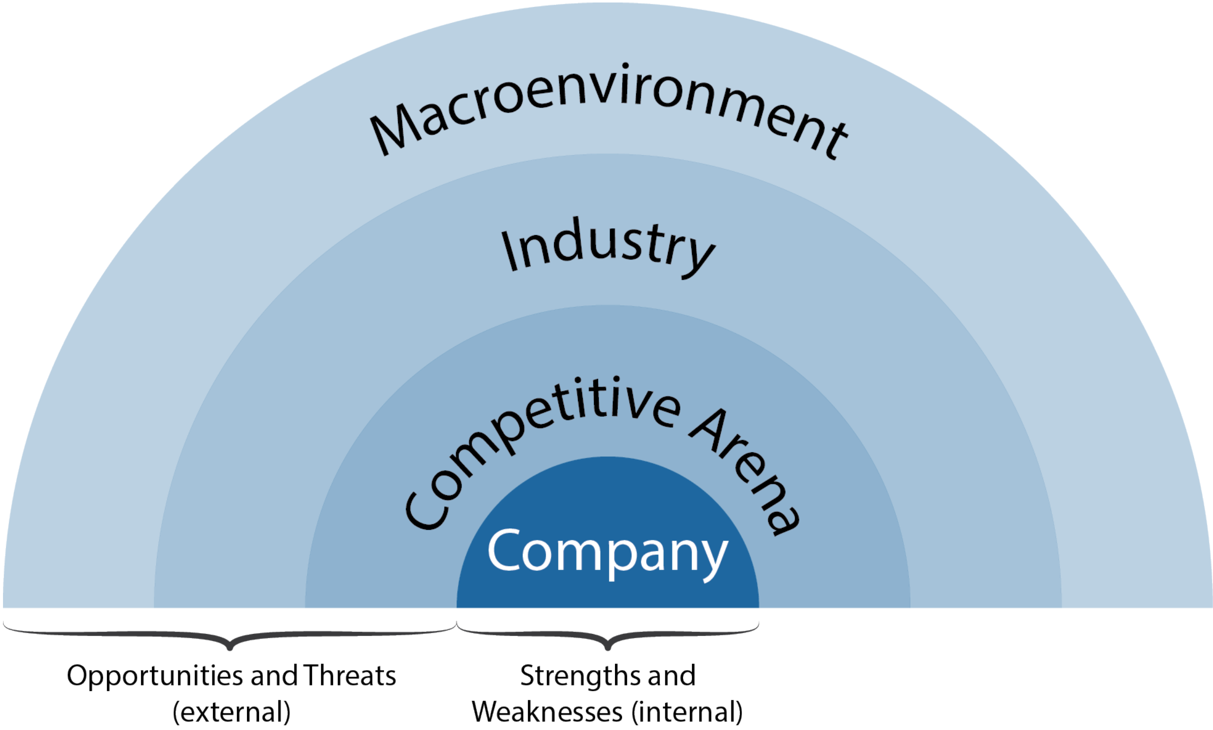

Figure 2.1: Layers of strategic analysis (Wunder, 2016, p. 77; adapted)

The goal is to develop an understanding of where the firm tactically stands today, anticipate how the environment might change in the future and how the company is situated to take advantage of those fluctuations. Relevant external and internal factors that affect competitive advantage need to be discovered. The summary of opportunities and threats (chapter 2.1.4 on page 73)and the summary of strengths and weaknesses (chapter 2.2.4 on page 92) close this chapter. The insight gained is the foundation of the strategy formulation with the SWOT-Framework which is done in chapter 4 on page 99.

2.1 Environmental Analysis

Deep insight of the company's environment is the starting point for strategy development. The strategic environmental analysis is supposed to help discover opportunities and threats to make better and more reliable strategic choices for the future. It is important to select the relevant information about the existing trends in the global macroenvironment and analyse the dynamic of the relevant industry. Furthermore, the identification of the characteristic structures and information about strengths and weaknesses of competitors is part of the environmental analysis. The competitive arena also consists of the company's customers. The customers are analysed with the help of an online survey. Figure 2.1 shows those layers, used for the strategic environmental analysis. This information is intended to determine the opportunities and risks for the company. (Vorbach, 2015, p. 149 f)

2.1.1 Macroenvironment

The macroenvironmental analysis tries to identify broad environmental factors and developments that are not directly controllable by the specific company but have an impact on the company's performance. Due to those factors our society is deeply influenced, which leads to a change in the economic and commercial landscape companies are operating in. Those factors need to be addressed in the company's strategy. (Wunder, 2016, p. 78 ff)

The PESTEL framework provides a general structure for examining the various areas of a macroenvironmental analysis. In the PESTEL framework political, economic, sociocultural, technological, ecological and legal factors in a company's general environment are systematically investigated. They are shown in figure 2.2. Those factors can lead to threats or opportunities. Furthermore, those factors usually do not affect a firm abruptly, nevertheless there is a tremendous effect over time. (Wunder, 2016, p. 80 ff)

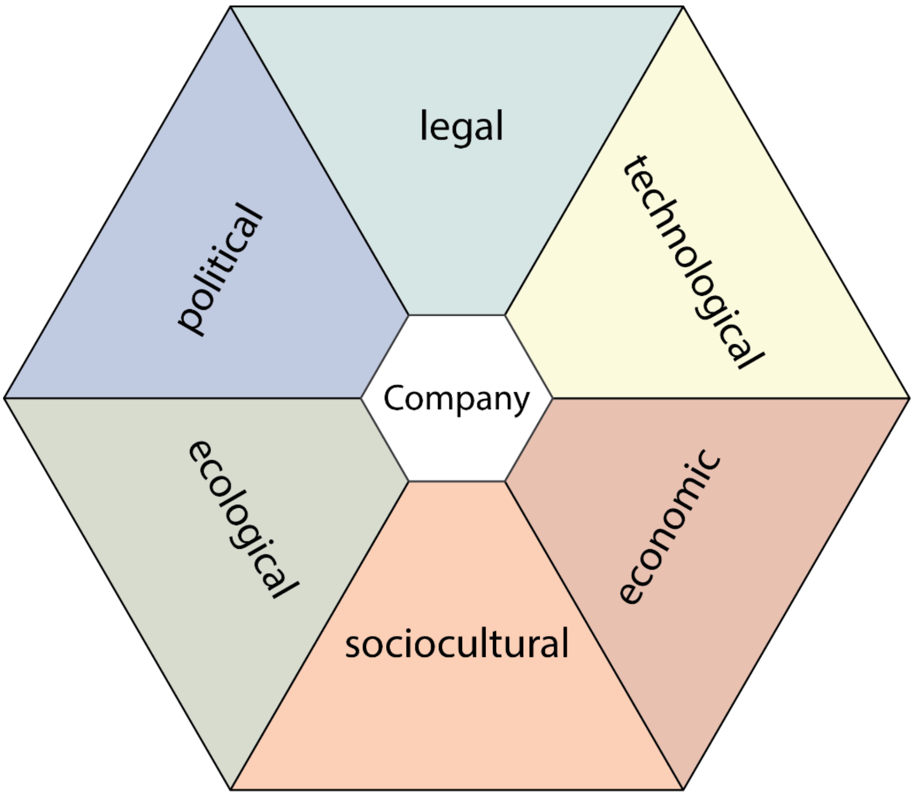

Figure 2.2: General structure of the PESTEL-framework.

The borders of this analysis need to be defined. The scope in term of technological factors refer to developments on a global level. Austria will be the scope in terms of the geographic region and market, until a narrower scope makes sense. If a smaller sector is chosen it will be explained at the specific section.

There will not be a focus on a specific industry. If the analysis would be bound to a specific industry sector, it would probably miss important trends and vital strategic adjustments. This type of analysis may reveal completely new strategic business fields a firm may want to investigate.

The PESTEL-framework provides an image of the current situation. It is important for companies is to discover factors which are likely to change in the future and the influence they have on the company. (Vorbach, 2015, p. 150 f)

The timespan for the prognosis needs to be determined, which, to a certain degree, depends on the industry dynamics. Twenty-two years is the chosen timespan, which sets the year 2040 as upper time limit for prognosis. (Wunder, 2016, p. 82)

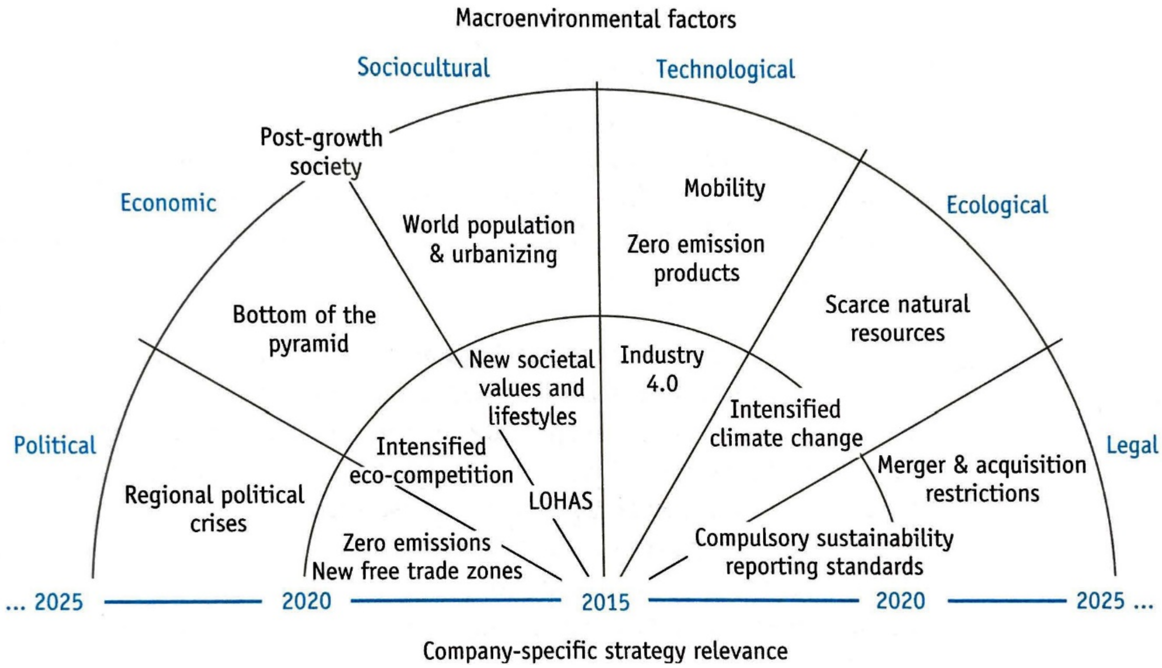

Figure 2.3: Macroenvironmental factor radar with strategy relevance timeline (Wunder, 2016, p. 83).

According to Thomas Wunder (Wunder, 2016) it is essential for the effectiveness of a PESTEL analysis to identify key drivers for change in the broad environment of a specific company based on all factors identified. Additionally, the time those key drivers need to be addressed in a company’s strategy need to be determined. A firm may decide to implement specific factors in the current strategy whereas other factors might be addressed later in time. The macroenvironmental factor radar as seen in figure 2.3 gives an overview on the relevant factors of a PESTEL-framework ordered to fit the company-specific strategy relevancy. (Wunder, 2016, p. 82 f)

The Goal of this chapter is to obtain two figures which describe the important factors of the macroenvironment. The PESTEL-Analysis and the macroenvironmental factor radar specified for Autohaus Loitz. Additionally, macroenvironmental opportunities and threats are identified and listed at the end of this chapter.

2.1.1.1 Political factors

Political factors are related to developments caused by political institutions. Those factors are stability of governments, foreign trade regulations and free trade zones, special incentives and subsidies for companies, health care policies, dominance of political parties and philosophies, energy policies, and fuel prices. (Wunder, 2016, p. 80)

The scope in terms of political factors is the State of Upper Austria. If too little useful information is available, Austria is considered as scope. Some of the political factors overlap with legal factors. It is a matter of opinion and depends on the argumentation if a factor is considered as legal or political.

A big political factor in the region is mobility and infrastructure. There are plans for a "Regio Tram", which will be a tram from Linz to Pregarten. It is planned, that it will pass through the middle of Gallneukirchen, directly alongside the company location. This project is strongly dependent on local politics. (Fohler, 2016)

2.1.1.1.1 Heart of Europe

The State of Upper Austria is in the north-west of Austria which is a stable, democratic country in the heart of Europe. Austria's central location in Europe makes it an attractive business location for qualified personnel and companies. Upper Austria has an advanced transport infrastructure featuring a sophisticated combination of road, rail and waterways. Upper Austria has borders with Germany and the Czech Republic. (ABA, 2017)

2.1.1.1.2 Regional Politics Close to Economy

Mag. Thomas Stelzer has been governor of Upper Austria since April 2017 and member of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), one of the traditional large parties in Austria. It represents the bourgeois, conservative spectrum and is traditionally considered close to the economy, the farmers and the Roman Catholic Church. (Österreichische Volkspartei, 2018)

2.1.1.1.3 Special Incentives and Subsidies

There are special incentives and subsidies for companies in Upper Austria, firms can make use of. Austria promotes the development of innovative processes, methods and products to increase energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy (Land Oberösterreich, 2017a). There is a founding and successor bonus available for businesses (Land Oberösterreich, 2017b). The one-time costs for the installation of broadband fibre-optic internet connections will be funded up to 50 percent (Land Oberösterreich, 2017c). With this funding Upper Austria tries to get companies which require a fast internet connection to stay in Upper Austria. Automotive retailers require fast internet access.

2.1.1.1.4 Healthy Renewable Energy Politics

In Austria there has been a continuous decline in electricity production from coal and an increase in electricity production out of combustible waste. The share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption increased by 0.5 percentage points to 33.5 % in 2016 compared to 33 % in 2015. According to the EU calculation rule, the share of renewable electricity generation (hydropower, biomass, wind power, photovoltaic and geothermal energy) increased in 2016 by 2.4 percentage points compared to 2015 to a total of 71.7 %. (Statistik Austria, 2018b)

In terms of energy politics, Austria is on the way to reach a high percentage of renewable energy. With expansion of renewable power generation Austrian's politics aims to generate 85 % electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030. (Schnitter and Schmidt, 2017)

In 2016, the share of compliant biofuels in transport accounted for 8.7 %.(Statistik Austria, 2018b)

A transport-expert of the Austrian People's Party calls for synthetic fuels instead of just forcing electric cars. The argument of this expert is that synthetic fuels are CO2-neutral and at the same time it is not necessary to convert the entire transport network for electric cars. (Schmidt, 2017)

2.1.1.2 Legal factors

Legal factors cover the impact of legislation and court decisions on companies and entire industries. Those factors have gained increased attention after the economic crisis of the last decade. The high volatility of financial markets additionally increases the importance of those factors. Important factors are antitrust regulations, labour laws as well as unionisation, tax laws, environmental protection laws and global warming legislation, international law, liability regulations, or immigration policies. (Wunder, 2016, p. 82)

2.1.1.2.1 Strict EU emission laws

Legislators are putting pressure on the automotive industry in various ways. The best known example is, that the legislators have issued numerous emission limits in the past (EU-Kommission, 2017b). Those emission limits are good governmental tools to keep the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) improving their drive systems in terms of emissions.

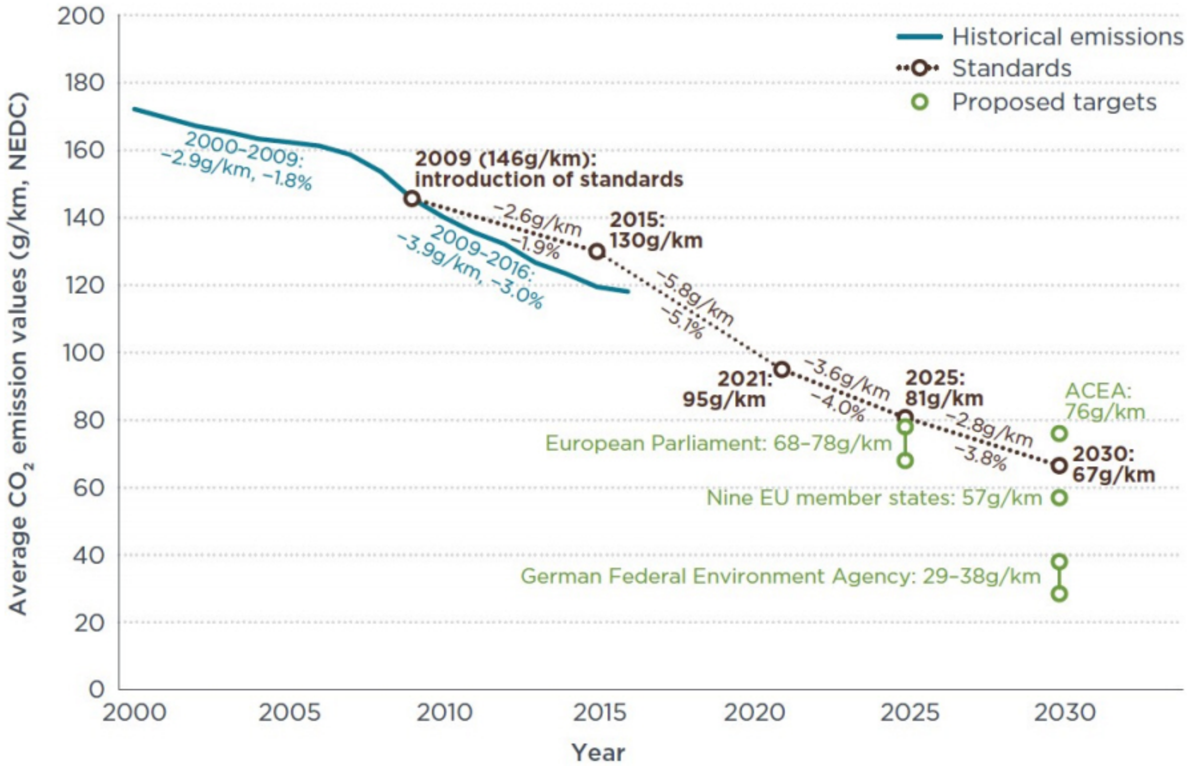

Figure 2.4: Historical average CO_2-emission values, standards, and proposed targets for European passenger cars, all in NEDC. Rates in g/km and percent refer to annual rates. (Müller-Görnert, 2018, p. 3)

There are plans of the European Union (EU) to drastically reduce the emissions of combustion engines by 2030. Figure 2.4 shows the historical average CO_2-emission values, standards, and proposed targets for European passenger cars. The EU is using a CO_2 limit value of 95g/km for new passenger cars valid from 2021, measured in the New European Driving Cycle (NEDC). The new EU-law covers the period until 2030. Unlike previous laws there is no absolute CO_2-target defined. New cars are expected to reduce their CO_2-emissions by 30 percent on average by 2030 compared to the year 2021. (Müller-Görnert, 2018, p. 1)

Because only the average CO_2 emission of a pool as a whole is regulated, car manufacturers can pool together the average emissions of several brands to meet prescribed CO_2 standards. The International

Council of Clean Transportation (ICCT) followed a definition of manufacturer groups that is intended to mirror the actual vehicle market as closely as possible. (Tietge, 2018, p. 3)

The Manufacturer groups were defined as (Tietge, 2018, p. 3):

- BMW (BMW, Mini); Daimler (Mercedes-Benz, Smart)
- FCA (Alfa Romeo, Chrysler, Dodge, Fiat, Jeep, Lancia, Maserati)
- Ford (Ford, Lincoln)
- Hyundai Motor Company (Hyundai, Genesis, Kia)
- PSA (Citroën, DS Automobiles, Opel, Peugeot, Vauxhall)
- Renault-Nissan (Dacia, Infiniti, Lada, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Renault)
- Toyota (Daihatsu, Lexus, Toyota)
- Volkswagen (Audi, Bentley, Bugatti, Lamborghini, Porsche, SEAT, Škoda, Volkswagen)

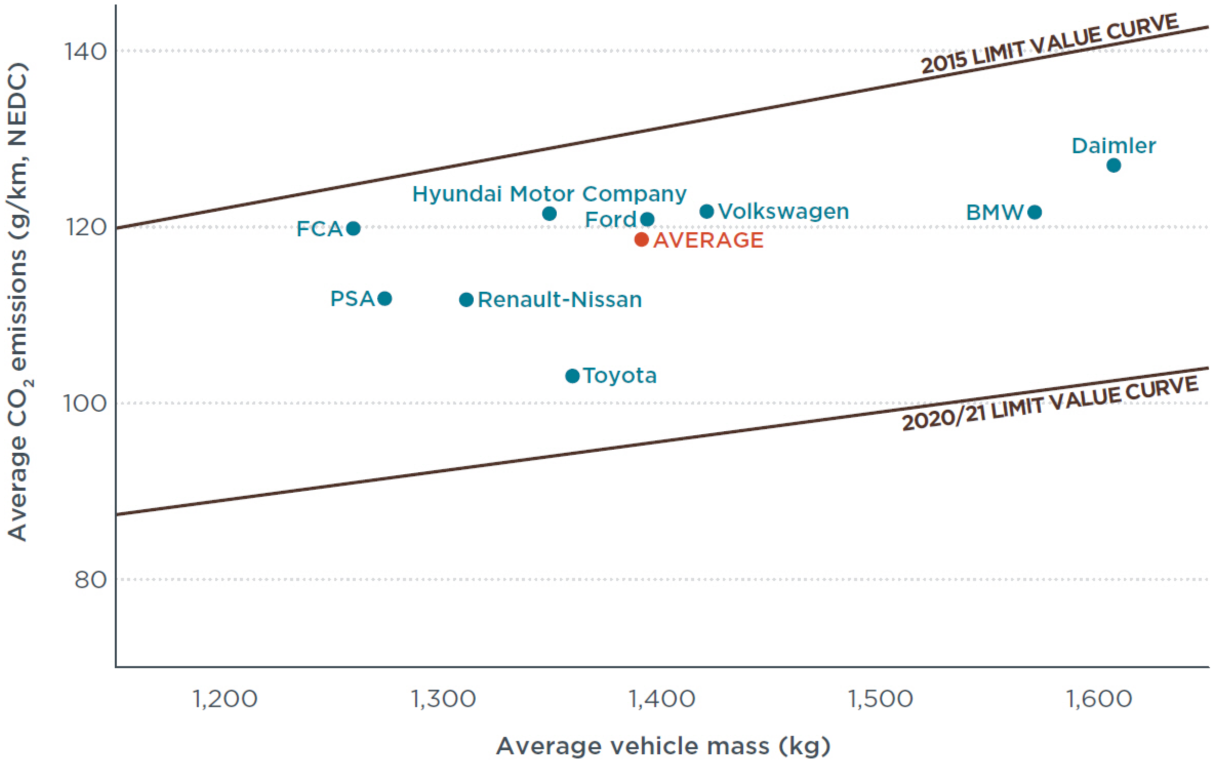

Figure 2.5: Performance of top-selling EU passenger car manufacturer groups in 2017, with 2015 and 2020 (effectively 2021) target lines (Tietge, 2018, p. 3).

Figure 2.5 and table 2.1 show data for nine major manufacturer groups representing approximately 92 % of all EU new passenger car sales in 2017. Figure 2.5 plots each manufacturer group's average emissions relative to its 2015 and 2020/21 targets. The targets are adjusted for the vehicle mass using so-called limit value curves, which are displayed in the figure. The data in table 2.1 is the same as in figure 2.5 but adds information on each manufacturer's market share in 2017 and emission reductions since 2016. (Tietge, 2018, p. 3)

Overall, fleet-average CO_2-emissions increased by 1g/km from 2016 to 2017. Toyota had the lowest CO_2-emissions out of all manufacturer groups in 2017 and was able to reduce average CO_2-emissions by 2g/km from the previous year. Only the Hyundai Motor Company achieved a greater reduction of 3g/km. Out of the European manufacturer groups only BMW achieved emission reductions from 2016 to 2017. The average emission values of all other European manufacturer groups either remained stable or increased by up to 2g/km from 2016 to 2017. With 9g/km (9 %) remaining, Toyota was the closest to its 2020/21 target in 2017. Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) was in the worst position to meet its

2020/21 target, with a 29 g/km (24 %) reduction left to go. Fleet-average CO_2-emissions will have to decline by 24 g/km (20 %) to be compliant with 2020/21 targets. (Tietge, 2018, p. 3)

Manufacturer group	EU market share	Average mass (kg)	CO_2 values (g/km, NEDC)			
			2017 average	Change 2016-2017	2020/21 target	Distance to target
Toyota	5%	1,359	103	-2	94	9
PSA	16%	1,273	112	2	91	21
Renault-Nissan	15%	1,310	112	1	93	19
Average	—	1,390	119	1	95	24
FCA	6%	1,259	120	0	91	29
Ford	7%	1,393	121	1	95	26
BMW	7%	1,570	122	-1	101	21
Hyundai Motor Company	6%	1,348	122	-3	94	28
Volkswagen	23%	1,420	122	2	96	26
Daimler	6%	1,607	127	2	103	24

Table 2.1: Manufacturer group market shares, average vehicle mass, CO2 emissions, and CO2 emission targets for 2020 (effectively 2021). Rows are sorted by average CO2 emissions in 2017 (Tietge, 2018, p. 4).

2.1.1.2.2 NOVA

When first registering a motor vehicle in Austria a standard consumption tax called NOVA (standard fuel consumption duty/Normverbrauchsabgabe) must be paid. The calculation is based on the CO_2 emission value in grams CO_2 per km. The way of calculating the NOVA changes from year to year. Those changes are mostly minor adjustments. The dealer must calculate the NOVA and has to include it in the sales price of new vehicles. The maximum tax rate for cars is 32 % of the net purchase price. (Bundesministerium für Finanzen, 2017)

2.1.1.2.3 Tax Incentives

In Austria there are tax incentives for electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids. Pure electric vehicles are exempted from both the NOVA and motor-related insurance tax. Vehicles with electric motors and internal combustion engines, so-called plug-in hybrids, are subject to tax on motor-related insurance tax only for the proportion of their internal combustion engine. For private use of purely electric company vehicles, the payment in kind (from 1.5 to 2 percent, depending on the vehicle) falls to zero. Purely electric cars are pre-tax deductible if they are purchased as a company vehicle. (Günsberg and Fucik, 2018)

2.1.1.2.4 Governmental Funding

In 2017 and 2018, the purchase of electric cars, electric mopeds and electric motorcycles for private use has been supported by the government. The purchase of an electric car with pure electric drive or a fuel cell is funded with € 4,000. Plug-in hybrids and range extenders with a fully electric range of at least 40 km will receive a subsidy of € 1,500. (Günsberg and Fucik, 2018)

2.1.1.2.5 Block Exemption Regulation

On 27 May 2010, the European Commission adopted their competition rules in the form of a Block Exemption Regulation 461/2010 for agreements between car manufacturers and their authorized dealers, workshops and spare parts suppliers. This makes the access to necessary repair information and the use of alternative replacement parts easier. Nevertheless, motor vehicle manufacturers remain free to demand that repairs covered by the warranty, for which they must pay themselves, are only made by authorized dealers. (EU-Kommission, 2010b)

2.1.1.3 Technological factors

Early detection of technological factors with disruptive impact on society and further businesses is mandatory for observant business owners (Vorbach, 2015, p. 151). There are dozens of technological factors which could potentially have major impacts on mobility businesses.

Nearly every part of the earth is connected, which changes everyday life. An important technological factor is digitalisation, which is to be understood as a long-term developing process rather than a short-term disturbance. Big Data, Smart Devices, Internet of Things (IoT), Cloud Computing and social media are just some examples of digitalisation which have an impact on mobility. (Parment, 2016, p. 15 f)

2.1.1.3.1 Big Data and Predictive Analytics

There are innovative ways to get information about customers with big data and predictive analytics. Some problems which data analysts are working on, is to find an easy way to get value out of the collected data. Global companies such as Apple and Google have been working on this topic for years and have stored massive data. Big Data makes the communication between cars and third-party companies possible, that is why car manufacturers started to adapt those data-collecting philosophies of the big players (Google, Apple, Amazon) in their connected cars. When buying a new car, the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) asks the customer to sign a contract which states that the manufacturer can store and make use of all the collected data from the car. If the customers are not willing to accept those terms, they cannot use the latest technology the car is offering. The OEMs use this data to generate detailed customer- and product profiles. The combination of the data collected in the workshops combined with the data from the car leads to precise customer support, better workshop utilisation and optimized technical product development. Connected cars are in direct contact with the driver of the car, which also makes personalised marketing possible. Connectivity will increase the possibilities for “infotainment” innovations, novel traffic services and new business models and services as cars get connected to each other, to the wider infrastructure and to the people (Beiker *et al.*, 2016, p. 2). However, there is also a suspicion that manufacturers are taking advantage of big data for marketing purposes beyond relevant customer communications. Destinations and travel patterns could be tracked and used at the expense of the customers. (Parment, 2016, p. 19 f)

2.1.1.3.2 Connectivity

The growing importance of comfort, security, information and entertainment functions in automobiles also increases the quantity of electronic and software components used. For modern premium cars, Robert Leibinger of the Finnish IT specialist Elektrobit Automotive estimated the number of installed control units at around 100. According to Leibinger the electronics can have a total weight of 250 kilograms per car (Pester, 2015). Electronic products such as smartphones or tablets are developing much faster than cars. For example, there are big updates in smartphone technology every year. This technology is used in cars as well, but the average person cannot afford to buy a new car every one or two years. That leads to the situation that a new car is out-dated two years after buying it. Car manufacturers are reacting to that by using software created by the smartphone industry which can be updated. Therefore, smartphone companies such as Samsung, Google and Apple are beginning to play an important role in the car business. (Kempf, 2017)

2.1.1.3.3 Electrification

Electrification is an important trend. A vehicle is called a zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) if it does not emit exhaust gas from the onboard source of power (Gable and Gable, 2017). ZEVs are hyped by society due to different factors. Some of them are the increase in ecological awareness, global warming, politics and scandals of automotive companies. Using electric cars make people think they are doing something positive for the society and the environment they are living in. Drivetrains will shift toward hybrid-electric, electric, and fuel-cell technologies as they develop and become cheaper (Beiker et al., 2016, p. 1).

2.1.1.3.4 Car-Sharing

The foundation of mobility is changing due to improved utilisation of Internet technology and the World Wide Web. As the sharing economy expands and consumer preferences change, the standard model will continue to evolve from outright purchase or lease to rentals and car sharing (Beiker *et al.*, 2016, p. 2). An advantage of car-sharing is that there is more space for parking, which is very important for growing cities. France Autopartage is a French, umbrella organization for 15 local operators of car-sharing systems that use conventional vehicles. A co-manager of that organization called Yvon Roche, says that each vehicle in a car-sharing operation replaces eight privately owned cars and eliminates the need for nine parking places. (Diem, 2013)

2.1.1.3.5 Diverse Mobility

There are so-called "Diverse Mobility" plans for future scenarios. The term diverse mobility means the combination of social-, economic- and environmental impact on movement patterns. A user of a diverse mobility platform (e.g. via a smartphone-app) can decide what option of mobility they want to use for the day. For example, if you want to profit from the health benefits of mobility you could tell the app to give you the healthy option, which means you will have a 10 min walk after turning in your e-bike before using your shared car. Diverse mobility will allow people to choose how to travel. In this case mobility is seen as a sequence of managed events. (Beiker *et al.*, 2016, p. 2)

2.1.1.3.6 Autonomous Driving

Autonomous driving is under development right now. Figure 2.6 shows the six levels of driving automation, starting from zero to five which have been defined in the SAE International Standard J3016 (SAE International, 2016). The German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA) also defines six steps of driving automation, which have the same meaning as the ones defined by SAE (VDA, 2015, p. 15). The technical classifications shown in Figure 2.6 describe both the tasks performed by the system itself and the tasks/requirements placed on the driver. Full Automation (stage 5) for example, means driverless operation from start to end location with no restriction to any type of road or environmental condition. (VDA, 2015, p. 14)

According to a study carried out by Fraunhofer IAO on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy in Germany, conditional automation will reach technical maturity by 2020. Conditional automation would be stage three, where the driver must potentially be able to take over. Stage five driverless vehicles, on the other hand, can only be expected far beyond 2020 on public roads. One of the major challenges of highly automated driving is the creation of the legal framework, which will be the determining factor regarding the breakthrough of the technology (Cacilo, 2015). The operation of automated cars will change from advanced driver-assistance systems to completely autonomous driving as the technology develops (Beiker *et al.*, 2016, p. 1).

SAE level	Name	Narrative Definition	Execution of Steering and Acceleration/ Deceleration	*Monitoring* of Driving Environment	Fallback Performance of *Dynamic Driving Task*	System Capability *(Driving Modes)*
***Human driver* monitors the driving environment**						
0	**No Automation**	the full-time performance by the *human driver* of all aspects of the *dynamic driving task*, even when enhanced by warning or intervention systems	Human driver	Human driver	Human driver	n/a
1	**Driver Assistance**	the *driving mode*-specific execution by a driver assistance system of either steering or acceleration/deceleration using information about the driving environment and with the expectation that the *human driver* perform all remaining aspects of the *dynamic driving task*	Human driver and system	Human driver	Human driver	Some driving modes
2	**Partial Automation**	the *driving mode*-specific execution by one or more driver assistance systems of both steering and acceleration/ deceleration using information about the driving environment and with the expectation that the *human driver* perform all remaining aspects of the *dynamic driving task*	**System**	Human driver	Human driver	Some driving modes
***Automated driving system* ("system") monitors the driving environment**						
3	**Conditional Automation**	the *driving mode*-specific performance by an *automated driving system* of all aspects of the dynamic driving task with the expectation that the *human driver* will respond appropriately to a *request to intervene*	System	**System**	Human driver	Some driving modes
4	**High Automation**	the *driving mode*-specific performance by an automated driving system of all aspects of the *dynamic driving task*, even if a *human driver* does not respond appropriately to a *request to intervene*	System	System	**System**	Some driving modes
5	**Full Automation**	the full-time performance by an *automated driving system* of all aspects of the *dynamic driving task* under all roadway and environmental conditions that can be managed by a *human driver*	System	System	System	**All driving modes**

Figure 2.6: The levels of driving automation (SAE International, 2016, p. 17)

2.1.1.3.7 Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a branch of computer science that deals with the automation of intelligent behaviour and machine learning. There is a more elegant definition of AI from Elaine Rich mentioned in the book Introduction to Artificial Intelligence. *"Artificial Intelligence is the study of how to make computers do things at which, at the moment, people are better."* (Ertel, 2011, p. 2) One example of AI in use are self-driving cars mentioned above. Self-driving car-technology is based on AI algorithms.

2.1.1.3.8 Virtual and Augmented Reality

Companies such as Oculus or HTC are working on the next generation of Virtual Reality (VR) headsets. Once the technology is capable of photorealistic visualisation, it is very likely most of the OEMs will adapt this technology for different purposes. There are multiple ways this technology could be used in automotive retail. If a new car is bought in Austria, it is typical that the customer selects a special interior and exterior design which he likes. Sadly, very often, the real colour of the car does not match the imagination of customers, when they were shown the colour on a two-dimensional monitor or a small paint sample. Virtual Reality gives the customers the ability to see the vehicle they want, as close to reality as possible. Audi was the first OEM who introduced a fully functional VR technology for customer consultation in selected showrooms in late 2017. With "Audi VR experience" Audi gives customers the ability to sit in the car they configured and change configurations. (Audi AG, 2017).

2.1.1.4 Economic factors

Economic factors in the broad environment relate to economy-wide developments and have an obvious impact on business activities. They include gross domestic product trends, price stability (inflation and deflation rates), unemployment levels, work conditions. (Wunder, 2016, p. 81)

In 2017 Upper Austria had a population of 1.460.276 inhabitants as an annual average value (Statistik Austria, 2017b).

2.1.1.4.1 Country's Most Dynamic Business Region

The State of Upper Austria is the country's most dynamic business region and the leading federal province in terms of exports, industries and competitiveness. Around one quarter of Austria's industrial production and exports are from Upper Austria. (ABA, 2017)

2.1.1.4.2 High Degree of Motorisation

The number of registered passenger cars in Upper Austria can be seen in figure 1.1. In 2016 a number of approximately 900.000 cars had been registered in Upper Austria (Statistik Austria, 2017c). The degree of motorisation in Upper Austria was 620 cars per 1000 inhabitants in 2016.

2.1.1.4.3 Strong International and National Economy

Figure 2.7: Real GDP forecast for Austria (OECD, 2018)

An important economic factor of Austria is the real gross domestic product (GDP). The GDP change from the previous year in percent was +1.4 percent in 2016 and +3.0 percent in 2017. Figure 2.7 shows the real GDP forecast for Austria done in December 2017 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The forecast is based on an assessment of the economic climate in Austria and the world economy, using a combination of model-based analyses and expert judgement. This indicator is measured in growth rates compared to the previous year. The forecast for 2018 and 2019 is not as good as in 2017, but it is still a big growth compared to the period between 2012 and 2016. (OECD, 2018)

Due to a prognosis for 2019 of the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO) done in December 2017 the Austrian manufacturing industry benefits from the strong international economy. Private consumption is supporting the economy, even though it gives it only a little extra boost in the late phase of the upturn, as income development remains unresponsive. (Ederer, 2017)

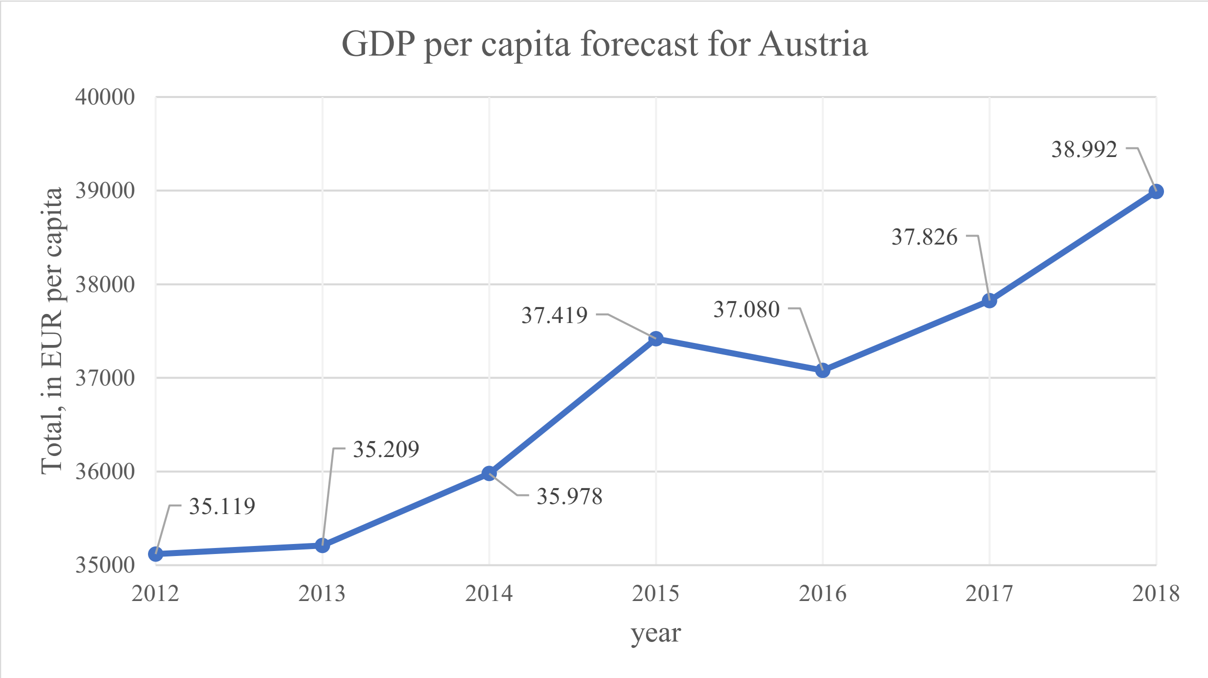

Figure 2.8: GDP per capita forecast for Austria (EU-Kommission, 2017a)

Due to the forecast shown in figure 2.8, the GDP per capita in EUR will grow from 37.080 in 2016 to 37.826 in 2017. The values for 2017 and 2018 were forecast or provisional figures published in November 2017 by the OECD. If the forecast values for 2018 are considered, Austria has the 4th highest GDP per capita in the EU, placed after Luxembourg, Ireland and the Netherlands. (EU-Kommission, 2017a)

The inflation rate, based on the national Consumer Price Index (CPI), was 0.9 % in 2016 and 2.1 % in 2017. The value for 2017 is a forecast from December 2017. (WKO, 2017a)

2.1.1.4.4 Globalisation

The system of international division of labour, the emergence of new growth markets, and the linkage of media and people has led the world to becoming a "global village". Brands and products are just as global as information and data. This globalisation leads to global oriented branding and global car concepts. (Diez, 2018, p. 46)

2.1.1.4.5 Shortage of Skilled Workers

Upper Austria has a highly educated workforce and a shortage of skilled blue-collar workers. Manpower Group International did a worldwide study on the shortage of skilled workers in 2016. In Austria they interviewed 751 human resource managers about the topic. 34 % of those 751 interviewed employers in Austria had trouble finding new employees. For the 5th time in a row skilled workers and craftsmen are the most difficult positions to fill in Austria. The second hardest employees to find are salesmen followed by office staff in third position. Car dealerships are dependent of those three types of employees. Insufficient expertise (33 %) and too few or no applicants (31 %) are the main reasons why Austrian employers cannot fill their vacancies. (ManpowerGroup, 2016)

It is becoming increasingly difficult for Autohaus Loitz to meet their needs for apprentices and thus for future professionals. According to the professional opinion of the CEO it is very difficult to find qualified apprentices. In addition, the number of applications is decreasing.

In contrast to the shortage of skilled workers the unemployment rate dropped from 6 % in 2016 to 5.9 % in 2017 and will remain steady for 2018. The values for 2017 and 2018 are forecast from May 2017. (WKO, 2017b)

2.1.1.4.6 Share Economy

Sharing has created new business models. About 80 % of our products are disposable and we use 80 % of our possessions less than once a month. A typical example of this is the lawn mower, which is used only for a few hours a year. The total useful life of a drill is on average only eleven minutes and special tools are needed only once or twice at all. About 99 % of everything that is produced will be waste after 6 months (Boeing and Lubbadeh, 2013). Trend watchers predict a shift from ownership to access, the rise of the Share Economy. (Parment, 2016, p. 32)

The circumstance that sharing increases the use of products can lead to a reduction of waste. For example, if cars are shared and not only used by one person or a family the number of cars for a fixed amount of people could be decreased. For this concept to work new ideas and concepts which simplify the sharing process need to be developed.

2.1.1.4.7 Cryptocurrency

A cryptocurrency is digital asset designed to work as a medium of exchange that uses strong cryptography to secure financial transactions, control the creation of additional units, and verify the transfer of assets (Chohan, 2017). This is a definition of cryptocurrency which can also be found on Wikipedia. There are different cryptocurrencies on the market. The original cryptocurrency is called Bitcoin but there are more than 4000 other coins on the market now. Those other coins are called alt-coins (Yang, 2018). Cryptocurrencies are being accepted by more companies all over the world. There is a company called “GausTrade” who is trying to sell factory-new cars direct from the OEMs to the customer. GausTrade claims that they can sell those cars about 30 % cheaper than the average automotive retailer. Mercedes Benz is cooperating with this platform (Gaus Trade, 2018). This development can be interpreted as critical for the existing automotive retail companies. The reason for the critical interpretation is that Gaustrade is in direct contact with some OEMs which makes classic automotive retailers obsolete. However, cryptocurrencies as they are today are only a niche product.

2.1.1.5 Sociocultural factors

Those factors have a big impact for most companies as they affect the majority of current potential customers. Attitudes, values, norms and lifestyle changes in society as well as demographic trends related to population size and composition are some of those factors. (Wunder, 2016, p. 81)

2.1.1.5.1 Change in Values of Employees

Values and claims of employees are changing compared to previous years. More people want personal development, recognition and flexibility in their jobs. Especially young employees want to keep work and private life in a healthy balance. Nature, health and family are the most important things for Germans according to a German value index made in the end of 2017 by KANTAR TNS and Trendbüro, companies based in Hamburg (see figure 2.9). They analysed about five million postings of the most popular German websites, communities, blogs and Instagram. Austria and Germany share a similar culture and language, that is why the results of the value index are seen as relevant information for Austrian-based companies. Security got a higher position in that ranking compared to previous years. Success and freedom lost ranking positions. Technological developments such as robotics and artificial intelligence lead to critical challenges when it comes to one's own values such as safety, freedom and fairness. (Krüger and Wippermann, 2017)

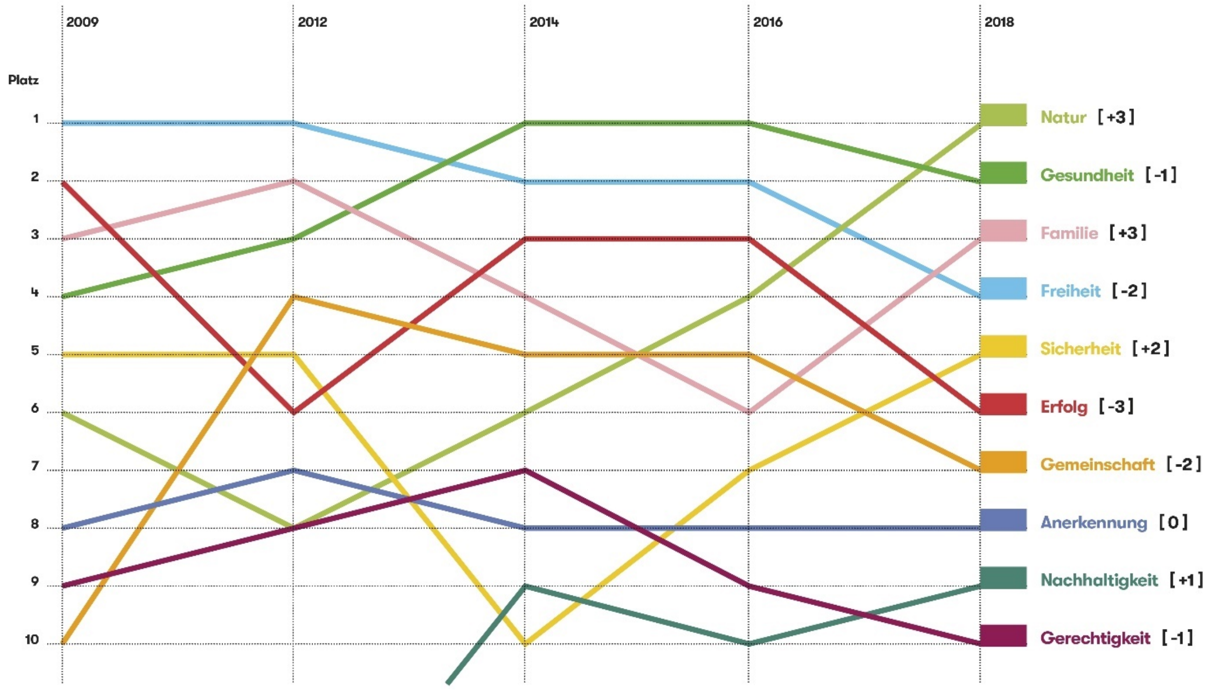

Figure 2.9: German value index results from 2009, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2017 (Krüger and Wippermann, 2017).

The Digital Work Environment is something companies must adapt for. Working conditions will change by moving away from rigid, hierarchical structures to a culture that is also attractive to digital natives. Companies who guarantee attractive working conditions will get better employees. (Parment, 2009, p. 64 ff)

2.1.1.5.2 Driving Permissions

Figure 2.10 shows the amount of driving permissions acquired by 17-year olds in Upper Austria. The reason for choosing 17-year old children as reference for the attractiveness of driving licences in Austria is because youth follows trends first. Young people are our future customers. The amount of driving permissions had its peak in 2014 with 4999 acquired permissions. Important to consider is, that the population of 17-year olds in Upper Austria is declining. This leads to a percental rise in driving licences acquired at the age of 17 based on the population at that specific age. This statistic may be true for Upper Austria but shows a different trend for Vienna. One reason is the professional public transport which is more developed in cities. The costs involved when driving and owning a passenger car in a city are very high. Insurance, parking, maintenance and inspection are only some costs mentioned (Parment, 2016, p. 8). Another reason is the changing mindset of the youth. Shifts in values and urbanization mean that the driver's license is no longer considered a ticket to adulthood (Parment, 2016, p. 8). Young people want a car, but it competes with many other potential consumer categories. Shopping, traveling, fashionable clothing or renting a big flat can all be classified as more necessary than driving a car (Parment, 2016, p. 8 f). Since 2006 the population of children aged seventeen and the amount of driving permissions in Vienna has been steady as figure 2.11 shows. For example, 29.4 % of the 17-year olds who lived in Upper Austria in 2016 acquired their driving licence at the age of 17. In Vienna only 7.3 % of the 17-year olds did their driving license in 2016 at that age. (Statistik Austria, 2017a, 2018a)

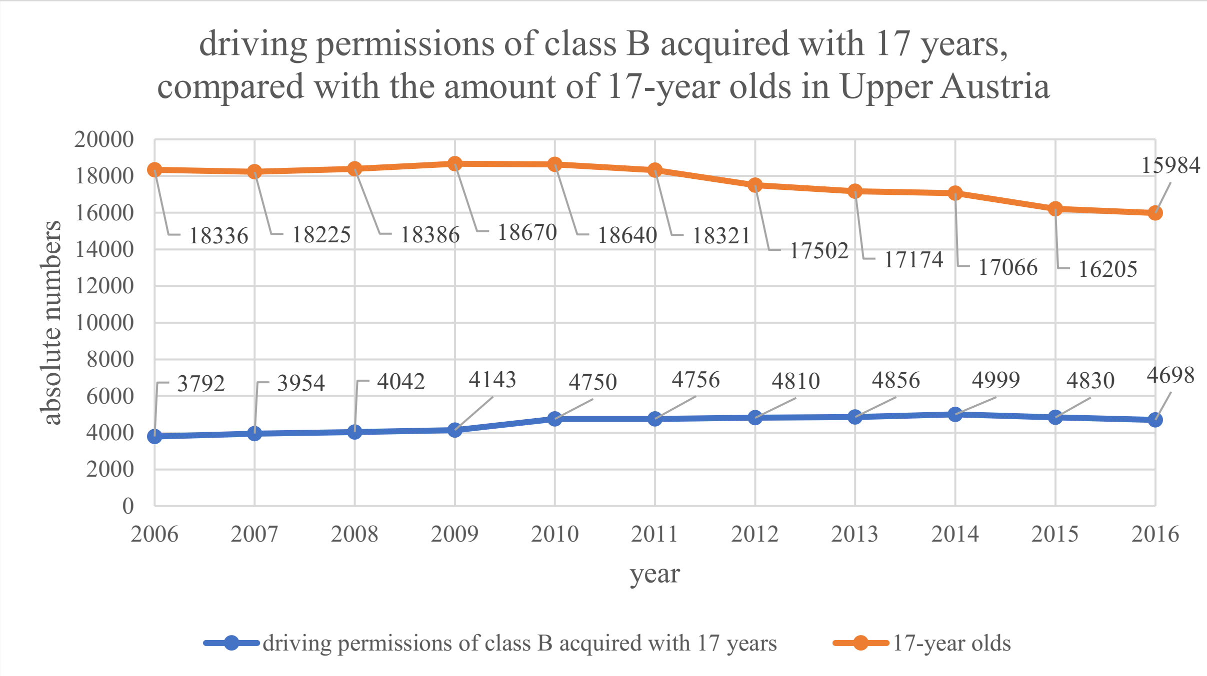

Figure 2.10: Amount of driving permissions of class B Vehicles acquired by 17 year olds in Upper Austria, compared with the amount of 17-year olds living in Upper Austria (Statistik Austria, 2017a, 2018a).

Those statistics (figure 2.10 and figure 2.11) show that there is a stronger wish for obtaining a driving license at an earlier age in rural areas like Upper Austria, than in cities like Vienna. There is no evidence of declining interest in obtaining a driving license of the class B in the last 12 years.

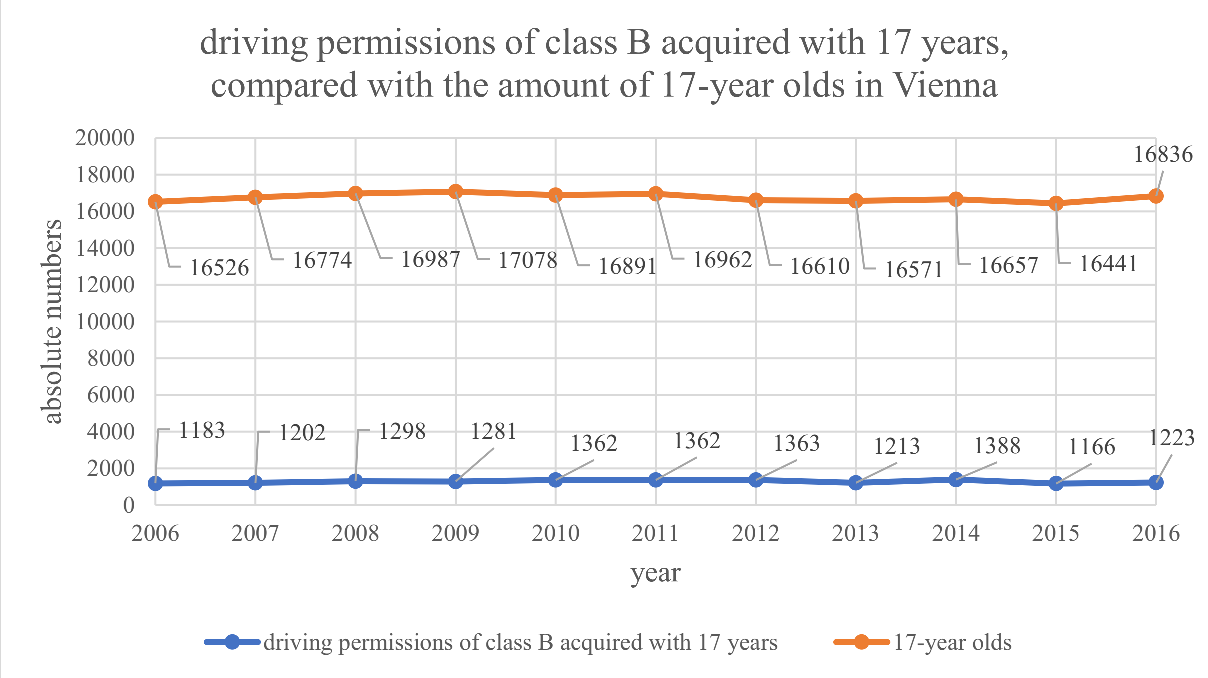

Figure 2.11: Amount of driving permissions of class B Vehicles acquired by 17 year olds in Vienna, compared with the amount of 17-year olds living in Vienna (Statistik Austria, 2017a, 2018a).

2.1.1.5.3 Urbanisation

The location of Loitz GmbH is in the middle of the town of Gallneukirchen. Gallneukirchen is only 13.3 km away from Linz which is Austria's third biggest city. The population of Linz is supposed to rise due to urbanisation. Engerwitzdorf, which is between Linz and Gallneukirchen, is one of the fastest growing local communities in Upper Austria. (Gartner and Hametner, 2017)

Urbanisation leads to a rise in potential customers in this region. At the same time, the impact of big cities on rural areas is increasing. Important to mention is that the change also takes place in the minds of people who do not live in the city. Urbanisation has big impacts on the automotive industry. In that respect, an increasing demand for efficient and sustainable city-transport solutions is required by the urban population. There is also a demand for city-specific car concepts. (Diez, 2018, p. 45 f)

2.1.1.5.4 Demographic Change

The term "demographic change" basically means the changing age-structure of a country's population. The world population is rising rapidly. Two hundred years ago there were less than one billion humans living on earth (Kremer, 1993). There are nearly 7.6 billion humans living on earth right now, an UN calculation shows (UN DESA Population Division, 2017, p. 1). Recent estimates suggest that today's population size is roughly equivalent to 6.5 % of the total number of people ever born on earth (Haub, 1995).

In Austria, there is currently a trend towards an aging society. The life expectancy when born in 2015 in Austria is 81.3 years (EUROSTAT, 2015). Globally, population aged 60 or over is growing faster than all younger age groups. As life expectancy rises, the proportion of the population above a certain age rises as well. This phenomenon, known as population ageing or demographic change, is occurring throughout the world. In Europe, 25 percent of the population is already aged 60 years or over and that proportion is projected to reach 35 per cent in 2050 and 36 percent in 2100. This generates new potential customers in the higher age range (Diez, 2018, p. 46). (UN DESA Population Division, 2017, p. 11 ff)

2.1.1.5.5 Social Disparities

Not only globally, but also within states, there is a growing disparity between "rich" and "poor". The distribution of social and cultural capital in societies reflects economic inequality. Precarious living conditions are spreading as well as prosperous oases. (Diez, 2018, p. 46)

2.1.1.5.6 Change in Buying Behaviour

Tesla was the first car manufacturer which successfully sold cars solely via their online portal. They were not collaborating with a large dealer network. Other car manufacturers did not believe that this would work. The fact is their brand and product is very popular and therefore they did not necessarily need local dealers for selling their product. (Parment, 2016, p. 177 f)

Additionally, the traditional role behaviour between women and men is changing. Women are increasingly seeking active participation in working life and are breaking away from family ties. This creates new relationship patterns and domestic life constellations. This leads to a higher number of women as decision-makers in buying situations. (Diez, 2018, p. 45)

2.1.1.5.7 Greater Transparency

Customers want greater transparency in every aspect. The time of marketing people fooling customers is over. One reason making this trend possible is the massive amount of data the internet offers. Customers who are willing to invest some of their time researching the internet can gain a massive amount of information about products and services. (Blake, 2015)

2.1.1.5.8 Retro

Nostalgia is a sentimentality for the past, typically with happy personal associations. Retro is in fashion these days, it does not matter in which branch. Some examples are computer games, TV, clothes, refrigerators, music and cars. (Parment, 2009, p. 155 f)

2.1.1.5.9 Aesthetics

Aesthetics is a central part of life that shapes our experience. Marketing makes good use out of people’s search for aesthetics to connect to customers. Employer Banding is a way of using aesthetics in business. For example, Land Rover employees in the USA wear clothes with distinct British style, which leads to a concise corporate branding (Harquail, 2005). The percentage of people for which aesthetics is very important is rising. Today, aesthetics is seen as crucial to competitiveness and this is also important for every car dealer. For the development of a business model, things like branding, marketing and the appearance of employees must be consistent. (Parment, 2016, p. 22 ff)

2.1.1.6 Ecological factors

Ecological factors are related to broad environmental issues such as global warming, scarcity of natural resources or sustainable development in certain regions. Elements such as eco-competition and energy consumption controls can also be included. The increasing ecological and social problems of our society highlight the importance of sustainability. (Wunder, 2016, p. 82)

2.1.1.6.1 Global Warming

The consensus that humans are causing recent global warming is shared by 90 %-100 % (depending on the exact question, timing and sampling methodology) of publishing climate scientists according to six independent studies. Low estimates of consensus arise from samples that include non-experts such as scientists (or non-scientists) who are not actively publishing climate research, while samples of experts are consistent in showing overwhelming consensus. (Cook *et al.*, 2016, p. 6)

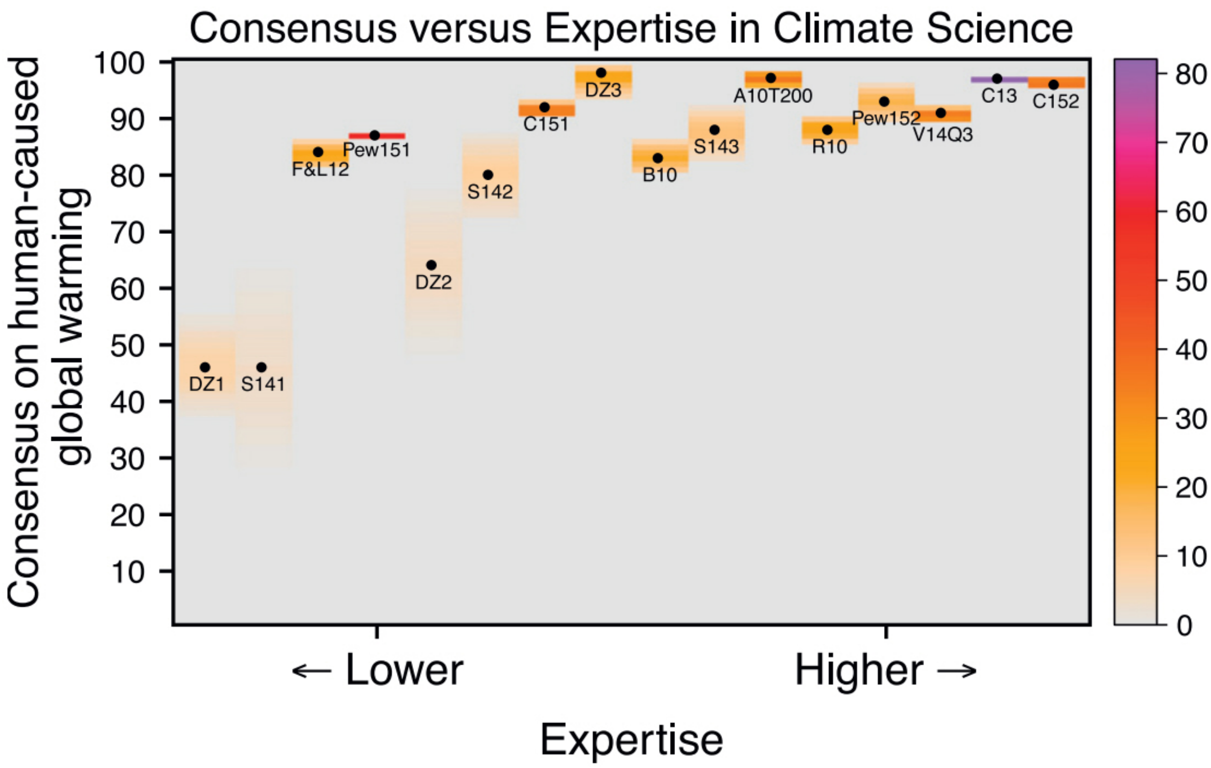

Figure 2.12: Level of consensus on AGW versus expertise across different studies. Right colour bar indicates posterior density of Bayesian 99 % credible intervals. Only consensus estimates obtained over the last 10 years are included (see (Cook *et al.*, 2016, p. 6) for further details and tabulation of acronyms).

Figure 2.12 shows the level of consensus on AGW versus expertise across different studies (Cook *et al.*, 2016, p. 6). From a broader perspective, it does not matter if the consensus number is 90 % or 100 %. The level of scientific agreement on AGW is overwhelmingly high because the supporting evidence is overwhelmingly strong (Cook *et al.*, 2016, p. 6). Even if there would not be any sign of human influence, the fact is that humanity must find innovative ways to keep it under control.

2.1.1.6.2 Renewable Energy

Renewable energies make a valuable contribution to electric power generation in Austria. With a share of 72 percent renewable energy of the total electrical power generation in 2016, Austria belongs to the European leaders (Statistik Austria, 2018b). Companies should aim for the goal of using 100 percent renewable energy, minimizing their own environmental footprints. Sustainability in every single product and service is highly valued by customers (CONE, 2015).

2.1.1.6.3 Renewable Materials

The eco-awareness of the public along with legislative actions force the manufacturing industry to make use of renewable materials, recycling-friendly design and 'green' production and processing technologies. Minimalizing the usage of traditional petroleum-based materials in engineering applications is seen as very important. Natural/bio-fibre composites (also called bio-composites) are emerging as a viable alternative to glass-fibre reinforced composites, especially in automotive applications where lightweight construction is imperative to reduce the fuel consumption and related environmental pollution. Research and development work are in progress to use bamboo, kenaf, flax and wheat straw, as reinforcements for bio-based and biodegradable resins such as polybutylene succinate and polylactic acid with the target applications of interior components in cars. (Siengchin, 2017)

Steel producers are trying their best to keep their market share by innovations and improvements in alloying technologies and processes to offer lighter materials and structure options. At the same time new materials such as alternative metals and composites are at the heart of research and innovation. Those materials pave the way for lighter and more environmentally friendly future vehicles. (Ghassemieh, 2011, p. 390)

The use of renewable materials is a big step towards sustainability.

2.1.1.6.4 Corporate Sustainability

Corporate sustainability is important for all companies. In a paper of *Sukitsch, Engert, and Baumgartner* (Sukitsch, Engert and Baumgartner, 2015) sustainability reports of 14 manufacturers in the European automotive industry were analysed with respect to issues of corporate sustainability implementation. Some examples of corporate sustainability topics are energy consumption, education, emissions, waste, as well as freedom of association and biodiversity. Those topics are mentioned by most of the sustainability reports. The paper also revealed that the implementation of corporate sustainability is slowly moving beyond specific measures relating solely to the core business. Overall, there is a tendency to increased and intensive product sustainability. The involvement of stakeholders can provide benefits to companies. The most commonly measured aspects amongst all OEMs are "energy and water use", "emissions", "waste", and "material consumption". There are companies who have initiated systematic analysis of sustainability factors to investigate the impact of corporate sustainability on corporate success. Because of the prevailing competitive pressures OEMs are receiving by their competition it is of major importance to work on issues of corporate sustainability. These issues of corporate sustainability and related issues of improved technologies go beyond company borders. It goes without saying that this is just as important for society in general. (Sukitsch, Engert and Baumgartner, 2015, p. 11517 fff)

Retail must work on social responsibility as well as manufacturing to stay competitive.

2.1.1.6.5 Increased Social and Ecological Awareness

The increase of ecological and social awareness which is a change in lifestyle of Austrians is happening. More people want to contribute to a green and responsible use of the natural ecosystem we are living in. A high social awareness is anchored in Austrian history due to it being a true welfare state. (Winterhoff *et al.*, 2009, p. 11)

Health is becoming more and more important not only among older people but also among younger people. Diseases are not considered to be destined for fate but to be individually influenced. Food, leisure and habits are based on a lifestyle that is considered healthy. Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) is the new consumption paradigm. (Winterhoff *et al.*, 2009, p. 11; Diez, 2018, p. 45 f)

2.1.1.7 Specific PESTEL-Framework

For better visualisation it was necessary to create an illustration which contains the most important factors at a glance. Figure 2.13 shows the most important factors of the PESTEL-framework. Those factors are not sorted by their importance. All the factors are described in full detail on the previous pages.

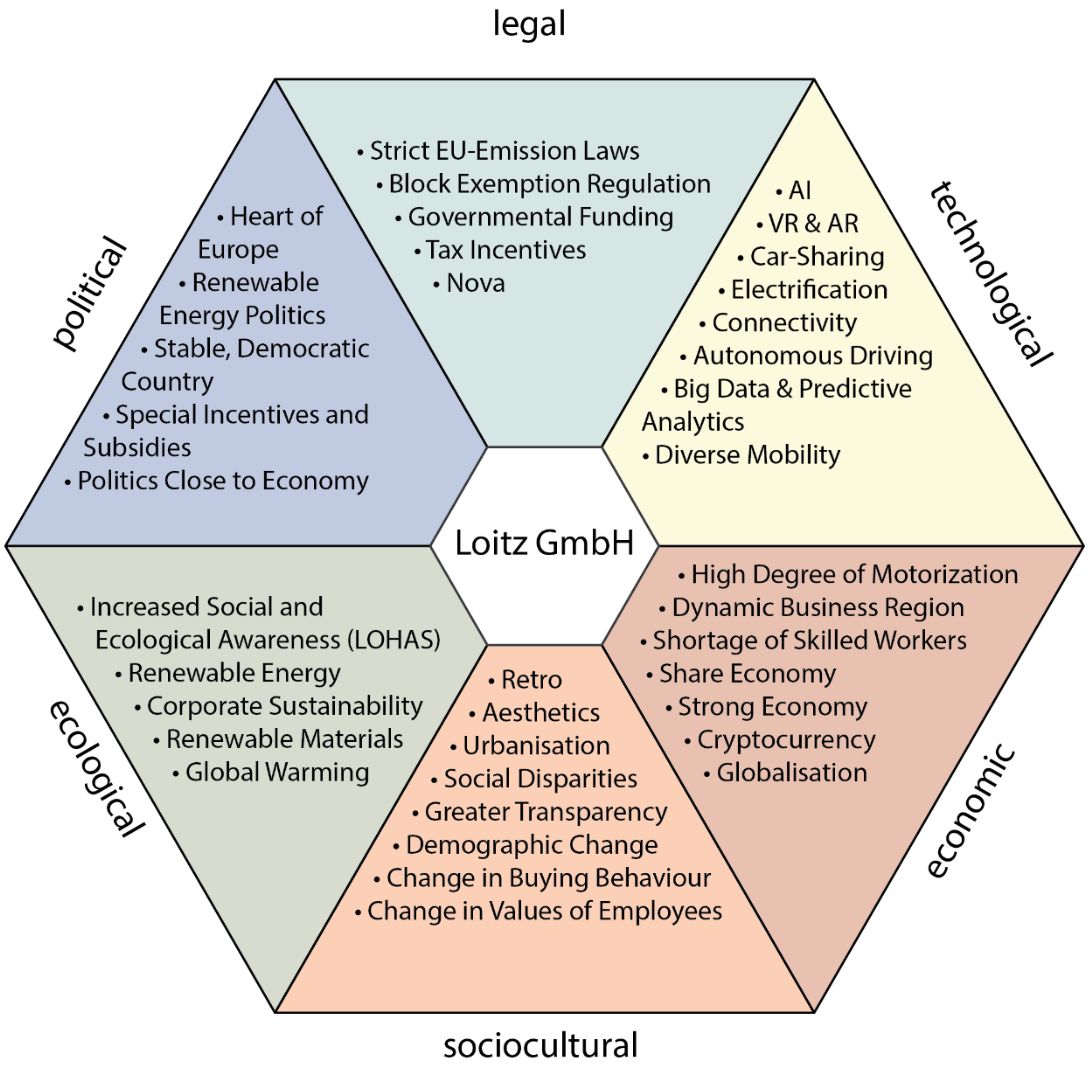

Figure 2.13: Specific PESTEL-Analysis.

The next step was to estimate a rough timeline when the important key drivers need to be addressed in the company's strategy. Figure 2.14 was created as a timeline when macroenvironmental factors should be addressed. The evaluation of the factors according to their relevance happened in a qualitative discussion with the management of the company. The factors in figure 2.14 are either macroenvironmental opportunities or threats.

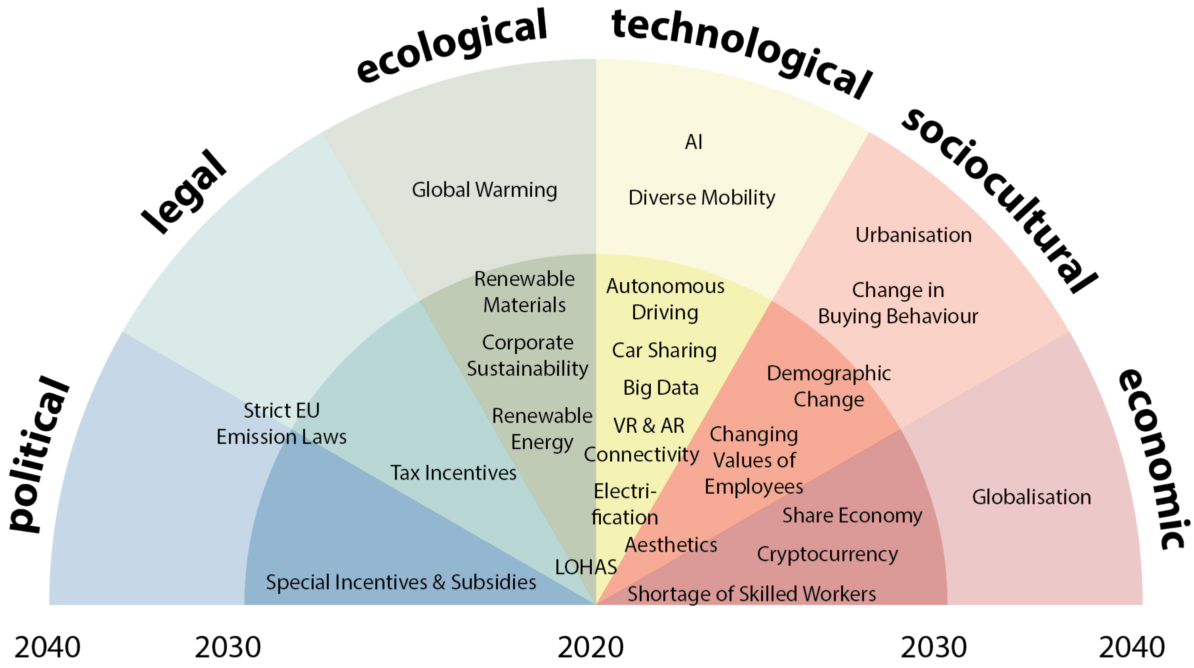

Figure 2.14: Specific macroenvironmental factor radar with strategy relevance timeline (Wunder, 2016, p. 83 adapted)

The timeline starts at the year 2020 and ends at 2040. The figure is divided into two segments. The first segment is in the time range between the year 2020 and 2030 and the second segments is in the time range between 2030 to 2040. For each of the six main areas (political, legal, ecological, technological, sociocultural, and economic) important factors are shown. Those factors are either in the first sector (2020-2030) or in the second sector (2030 to 2040). Inside a sector the factors are sorted regarding their relevancy for the firm. For example, the area of economic. "Globalisation" is in the second sector of that area which means that the company is not planning to address this factor very urgently. The three factors "Shortage of Skilled Workers", "Cryptocurrency", and "Share Economy" are in the first sector and the company plans to address those factors in this specific order in the timespan between 2020 and 2030.

2.1.1.8 Macroenvironmental Opportunities and Threats

Table 2.2 summarises macroenvironmental opportunities and threats investigated with the help of the PESTEL-framework. In this table the opportunities and threats are not sorted. Those factors are input-data for the SWOT-Analysis and are summarised in chapter 2.1.4 on page 73.

Opportunities	Threats
• Electrification • Connectivity • Demographic Change • Autonomous Driving • Car-Sharing • Strong Economy • Aesthetics • Cryptocurrency • Big Data & Predictive Analytics • Diverse Mobility	• Shortage of Skilled Workers • Global Warming • Share Economy • Strict EU-Emission Laws • Change in Buying Behaviour • Increased Social and Ecological Awareness (LOHAS) • Change in Values of Employees • AI

Table 2.2: Macroenvironmental opportunities and threats.

2.1.2 Industry

The industry analysis moves one layer closer towards the company as illustrated in figure 2.1 on page 6. Important tasks are to understand the competitive forces surrounding a firm and the related profit potential. Those factors determine the attractiveness of an industry. The first step was to determine the relevant market which is the boundary for the analysis (Wunder, 2016, p. 86). The chosen industry for this thesis is the automotive retail industry. At some parts it was necessary to look at the automotive industry in general to get a better understanding of some details. The second step was to identify the competitive forces in the defined industry. The tool used is the Industry Profitability and Competitive Forces Analysis also called Porter's 5 Forces by Harvard professor Michael E. Porter. The five forces analysis tries to identify the threats of entry, the bargaining power of buyers, the threat of substitutes, the bargaining power of suppliers, and the rivalry among existing competitors in the automotive retail industry (Vorbach, 2015, p. 152 f; Wunder, 2016, p. 92 ff). With this information structural characteristics of a branch can be identified, a position of the firm within a branch can be detected and a plan for further actions can be developed (Vorbach, 2015, pp. 152–157). The third step was to identify and analyse the industry life cycle of the automotive retail industry. Analysing the industry life cycle is strongly dependent on the region. As important region in this case Austria was chosen. As a next step, different retail formats of the automotive business have been analysed. For this purpose the results of a study of a German professor named Martin Fassnacht (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011) were used. At the end of this chapter the industry-specific opportunities and threats are summarised.

2.1.2.1 Defining the Relevant Market

The relevant market is the part of the entire market, on which the company is concentrating and adjusting its activities (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 248). It includes all the meaningful exchanges for buy and sell decisions between products in objective, spatial and temporal terms (Bruhn, 2016, p. 19).

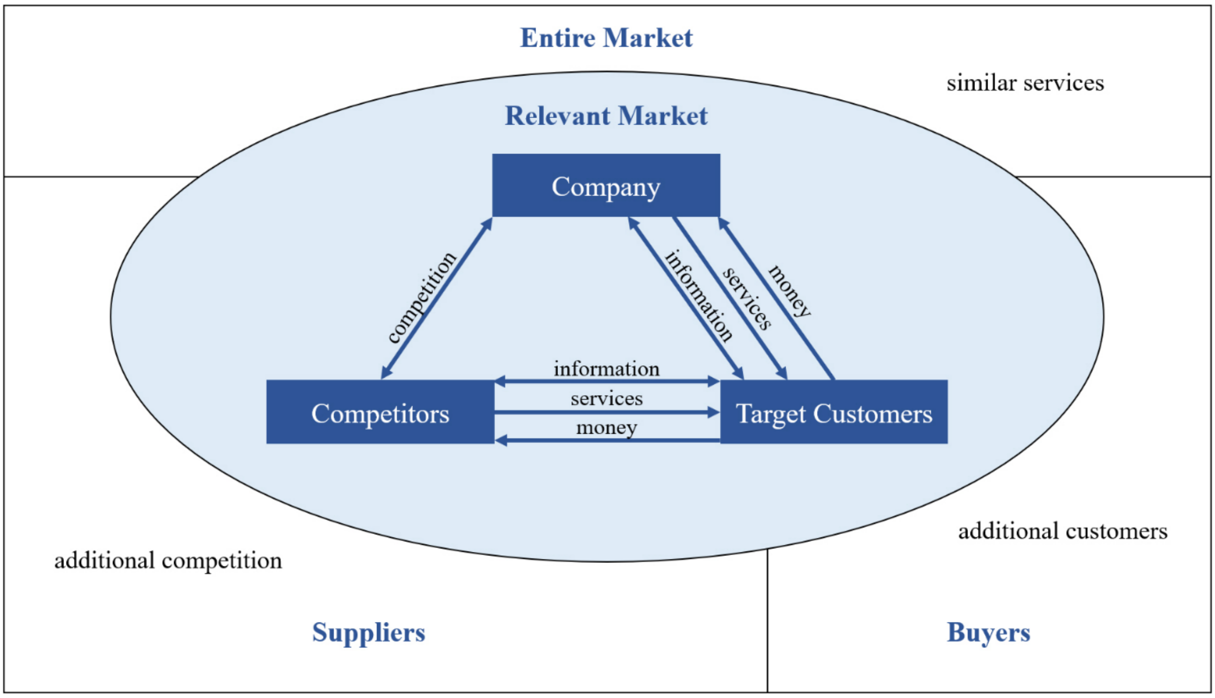

Figure 2.15: Market elements (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 248; adapted).

Figure 2.15 shows an illustration of the relevant market and its surroundings. The relevant market contains three main pillars. The pillars are called company, competition and target-customers. There is a strong interaction between these pillars. This picture illustrates this circumstance in an easy to understand way. (Wunder, 2016, p. 248 f)

Every company should precisely know its relevant market. Therefore, the relevant market gets separated into homogenous market parts which are called market segments. A market segment should clearly differ from other market segments. (Bruhn, 2016, p. 58 ff; Wunder, 2016, p. 249).

Willi Diez, the director of the "Institut für Automobilwirtschaft" at the University of Applied Sciences Nürtingen in Germany (Diez, 2007), shows in figure 2.16 the markets of the automotive industry, beginning with the market for engineering performance and ending at the market for recycling. The usual markets car dealers are working in, starts at the new car sales market, followed by the market for financial- and insurance services, the after-market and the used car sales market. Some automotive retailers are also participating in the fuel-retail market. (Diez, 2007, p. 3)

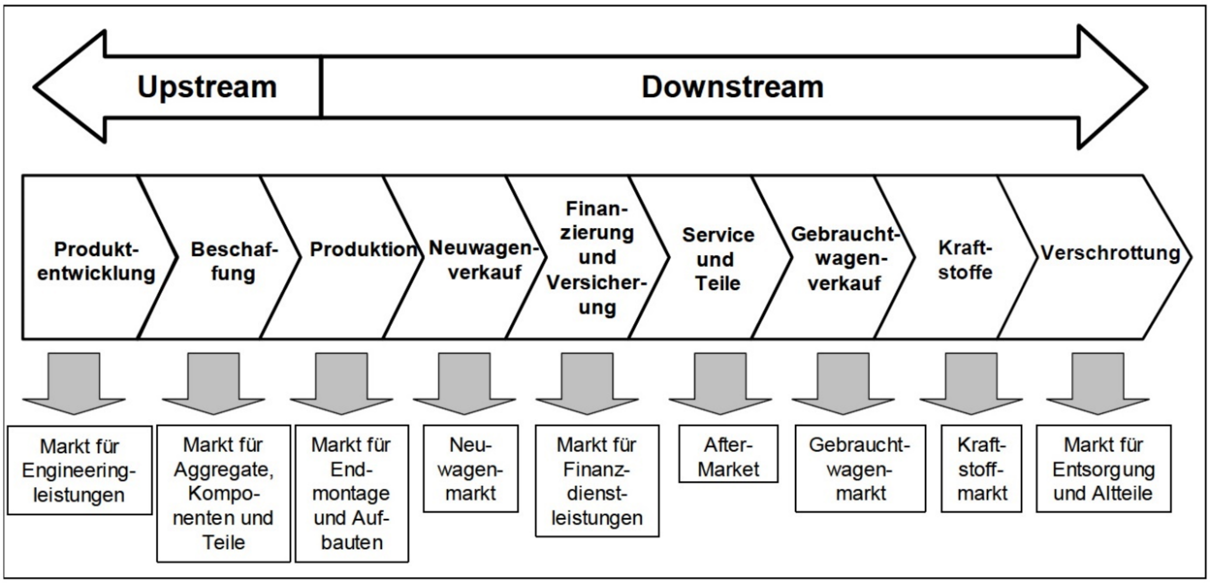

Figure 2.16: Car market as a combination of markets. (Diez, 2007, p. 3)

Those are the usual core-markets automotive car retailers are working in:

- New car sales market
- Financial- and insurance service market
- After-market
- Used car sales market

There are different methods for defining a relevant market. The main question is, on what criteria companies are competing against each other. Common competition criteria are (Bruhn, 2016, p. 19 f; Wunder, 2016, p. 87):

- **Technologies**: Based on which technologies are companies competing?
- **Products and services**: On what products or services are companies competing?
- **Customer needs and wants**: For the fulfilment of which customer needs or wants are companies competing?
- **Customer groups and market segments**: Which customer groups are companies competing for?
- **Geographies**: In which region are companies competing?

The relevant market can be defined on an individual criterion or can be based on a combination of those. Normally, either two or three criteria are combined to define the relevant market. (Wunder, 2016, p. 87)

Car retailers are competing on every aspect mentioned above while some criteria are more, some are less important. There is relatively little information to be found, dealing with relevant markets of automotive retail companies, which makes defining it complicated.

The first competition criterion according to Bruhn and Wunder is technology. The technologies car dealers are competing in are mainly the workshop equipment and the engine-type of the cars offered. Most of those technologies are given by the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs, also called brands in the following chapters) a car dealer has contracts with. OEMs differ a lot in technology and know-how these days. There are brands who offer a wide variety of cars with electric engines and other brands simply do not. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the most innovative OEMs in 2017 are Volkswagen, Daimler and Tesla. Volkswagen in first, Daimler in second and Tesla in third position (PwC, 2017). Besides the technology a company gets through the contracts with their OEMs there is still the possibility a firm produces its own technology that can give a business advantage over other dealers. One example for a dealership-specific technology would be to develop a free to use smartphone app for customers which informs the customers about important car-related information. Car-related information could be service intervals and the due date for the §57a examination. This could lead to better customer loyalty. Nevertheless, in this thesis the technology criterion is not considered as competition criterion defining the relevant automotive retail market.

The second competition criterion is “products and services”. Products and services of a car dealer are very important for many aspects of competition. Some of the products are given by the OEMs, the dealer has contracts with. There are many extra services car dealers can offer to get a high level of customer satisfaction. Examples for those services are express maintenance, vehicle pickup and drop, car care solutions, replacement vehicles and roadside assistance (Loitz GmbH, 2018b).

The third competition criterium is “customer needs and wants”. This criterium is very important for the definition of the relevant market in this thesis because it makes it possible to act from the customer's point of view. Additionally, in chapter 2.1.3.2 a customer analysis is conducted to get further information from customers as external sources.

The last competition criteria are “customer groups and market segments” and “geographies”.

There are different methods to visualise the most important criteria, concerning the relevant market. There is an inside-out and an outside-in perspective for defining the relevant market (Wunder, 2016, p. 89). The inside-out perspective uses the company’s existing offerings as a starting point. In this type of approach, the existing products and services are typically combined with the different market segments or customer groups. The downside of the inside-out approach is the strong orientation only on business areas that are currently addressed by the company. If the research is too inside-focused important customer needs and wants are only indirectly addressed. If a company wants to capture those customer needs and wants more directly, an outside-in approach should be considered. Outside-in means that a different perspective of looking at the company should be considered. This can be done by employees of the company or leadership but to be open minded is important for this approach. The outside-in approach is suitable for defining the relevant market not only in business areas, that are currently addressed, also in product-market combinations that are not addressed yet. In this approach customer needs or wants are used as one criterion for the market definition, which is combined with one or two other criteria such as products or services and customer groups to fulfil the need. In terms of better visualisation, two criteria (customer needs/ wants and products/services) define the relevant market in the first two-dimensional chart (figure 2.17). In total three two dimensional charts were created and combined in a final three dimensional chart (see figure 2.20 on page 33). (Wunder, 2016, p. 89 f)

The three charts (figure 2.17, figure 2.18 and figure 2.19) were created by leading employees and the leadership of the company. The approach was to set up a meeting with the key employees of the company. The leadership of the workshop (Hubert W.), office (Ulrike L.), warehouse (Maria B.), sales (Thomas M.) and the CEO Anton Loitz Sen. were invited to the meeting. The research method was qualitative which involved observation and experience of the participants. All the participants in the meeting possess a very long expertise in the field of automotive retail. Due to that reason the outcome can be interpreted as meaningful qualitative research.

The first thing to be discussed in that meeting was the definition of the horizontal- and vertical axes in an outside-in approach. The outcome was to make three different charts with a common vertical axe, the products/ services. The reason the common vertical axes was that out of those products and services the final market segments were built. There are three different horizontal axes which are customer needs/wants, the geographic region and the customer groups. With those three charts it was possible to narrow down the relevant market for the company.

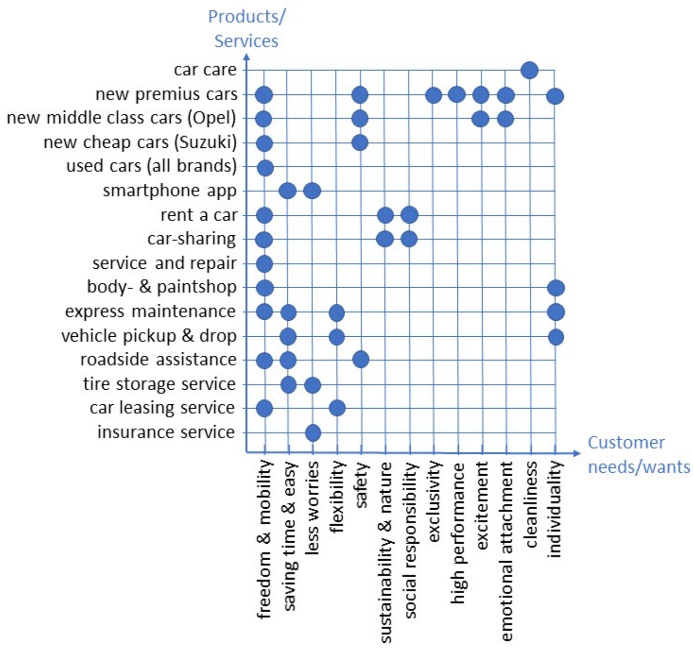

Figure 2.17: Outside-in definition of relevant markets based on the criteria products/ services and customer needs/ wants (Wunder, 2016, p. 90 adapted).

The second step was to define the factors included in the axes. The customer needs and wants were difficult to be defined by the group since every human has different needs and wants. In the meeting the participants (including myself) tried to identify a broad summary of possible needs and wants of customers (see figure 2.17 on page 30). After that the products and services were defined. The same approach was done for the other axes in the following figures of this chapter. The discussion was open minded which was important for the outcome. The firm does not offer all the products and services described in figure 2.17. This outside-in definition gives a better understanding of what services and products customers want and need compared to the inside-out definition explained earlier.

The evaluation and rating of the factors was the third part of the meeting. This was done in group discussion where each factor was evaluated individually. The results of those three charts have been developed through expert discussions in a qualitative manner.

Figure 2.17 shows that most of the products and services car dealers offer are strongly dependent on customers who want freedom and/ or mobility. Social responsibility, sustainability and nature are customer wants which can be pleased by services such as rent a car or car-sharing. Customer needs and wants such as exclusivity and high performance remain reserved by premium car manufacturers. Premium manufacturers offer their customers the latest technologies available in high priced products.

Saving money is not added as a criterium.

Analysing figure 2.17 leads to the assumption, that there are relevant markets additional to the core-markets described earlier. Those markets are:

- Car care market
- Rent a car & car-sharing market

If the customer needs and wants are considered those two markets need to be investigated by car-dealers.

The relevant market, based on the region, is dependent on the product or service offered, which can be seen in figure 2.18.

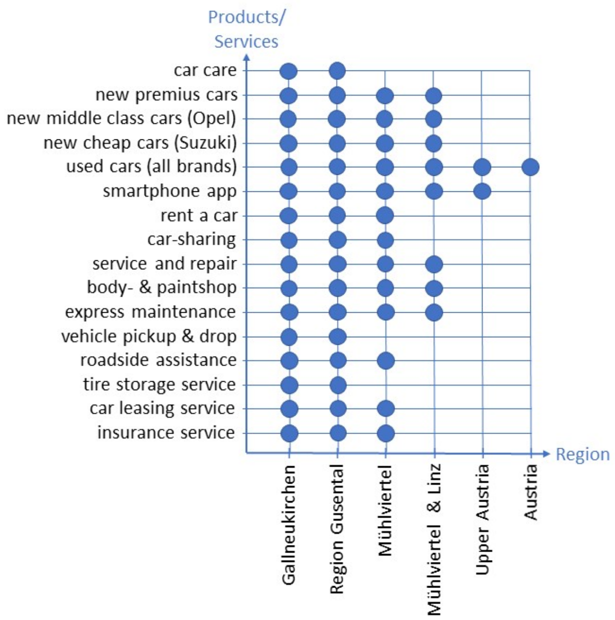

Figure 2.18: Outside-in definition of relevant markets based on the criteria products/ services and the region (Wunder, 2016, p. 90 adapted).

The good utilisation of world wide web technology in Austria leads to circumstance, where the geographic criteria becomes less important for specific products and services. Borders are no obstacles in terms of used car sales, which leads to increased rivalry among the car dealers. Firms must decide on which scale they want to operate. Autohaus Loitz decided to stay physically located in Gallneukirchen and operates in all Austria via online portals for used car sales. Selling cars locally is better for workshop utilisation in the current business plan where the workshop is a major part of the revenue (Loitz GmbH, 2018a). A car sold to a place far away from the workshop, will not lead to follow-up workshop orders and repairs.

There are six groups of geographical classifications used, to be able doing rough regional classification. Gallneukirchen is the location of the company. “Region Gusental” is the area of five communities near Upper Austria’s capital Linz, consisting of Alberndorf, Altenberg, Engerwitzdorf, Gallneukirchen and Katsdorf. The “Mühlviertel” is the part of Upper Austria, which is north of the Danube. “Mühlviertel & Linz” adds Linz to the region of Mühlviertel.

The relevant markets can now be specified in geographic terms:

- Region Gusental
    - Car care market
- Mühlviertel:
    - Financial- and insurance service market
    - Rent a car & car-sharing market
- Mühlviertel & Linz:
    - New car sales market
    - After-market
- Austria:
    - Used car sales market

To know what customer groups a company is competing for, is of major importance (Vorbach, 2015, p. 160). A company can adjust its marketing, product design and services according the relevant customer groups. Examples for customer groups are private customers, business to business customers (b2b), companies or governments. Some car dealers address all customer groups mentioned, some specialised on specific customer groups such as b2b-customers, companies or wealthy private customers.

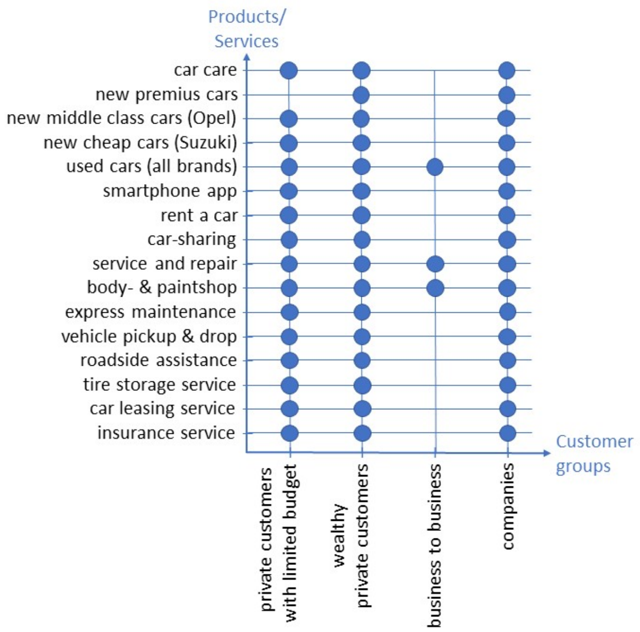

Figure 2.19: Outside-in definition of relevant markets based on the criteria products/ services and customer groups(Wunder, 2016, p. 90 adapted).

All customer groups mentioned in figure 2.19 are of major importance to car dealers. There is a differentiation between private customers with a limited budget and wealthy private customers. The target group when selling new premium cars is wealthy customers. This is a product Loitz GmbH is not offering its customers today. Most of the products and services of the company are of importance to private customers with a limited budget as well as wealthy private customers. This shows that a big customer group which is not directly addressed by the company yet can be gained with the offering of a premium brand.

This leads to a final definition of the relevant market:

- **New car sales** market (Mühlviertel & Linz) for private customers and companies
- **Financial- and insurance service** market (Mühlviertel) for private customers and companies
- **Rent a car & car-sharing** market (Mühlviertel) private customers and companies
- **Car care** market (Region Gusental) private customers and companies
- **After-market** (Mühlviertel & Linz) for private-, b2b-customers and companies
- **Used car sales** market (all Austria) for private-, b2b-customers and companies

The definition of the relevant market of Autohaus Loitz is visually displayed in figure 2.20. The vertical axle shows the relevant market segments of the company and the horizontal axle shows the region those markets are addressed by the company. The 45-degree axle displays for which customer groups the market segments are defined. An example is the rent a car & car sharing market which is offered in the region Mühlviertel for the customer group company and private. This type of virtualisation gives a good overview on the relevant market segments of the company. The grey cube shows the entire market scope. Where the coloured rectangles show the relevant market with the different market segments.

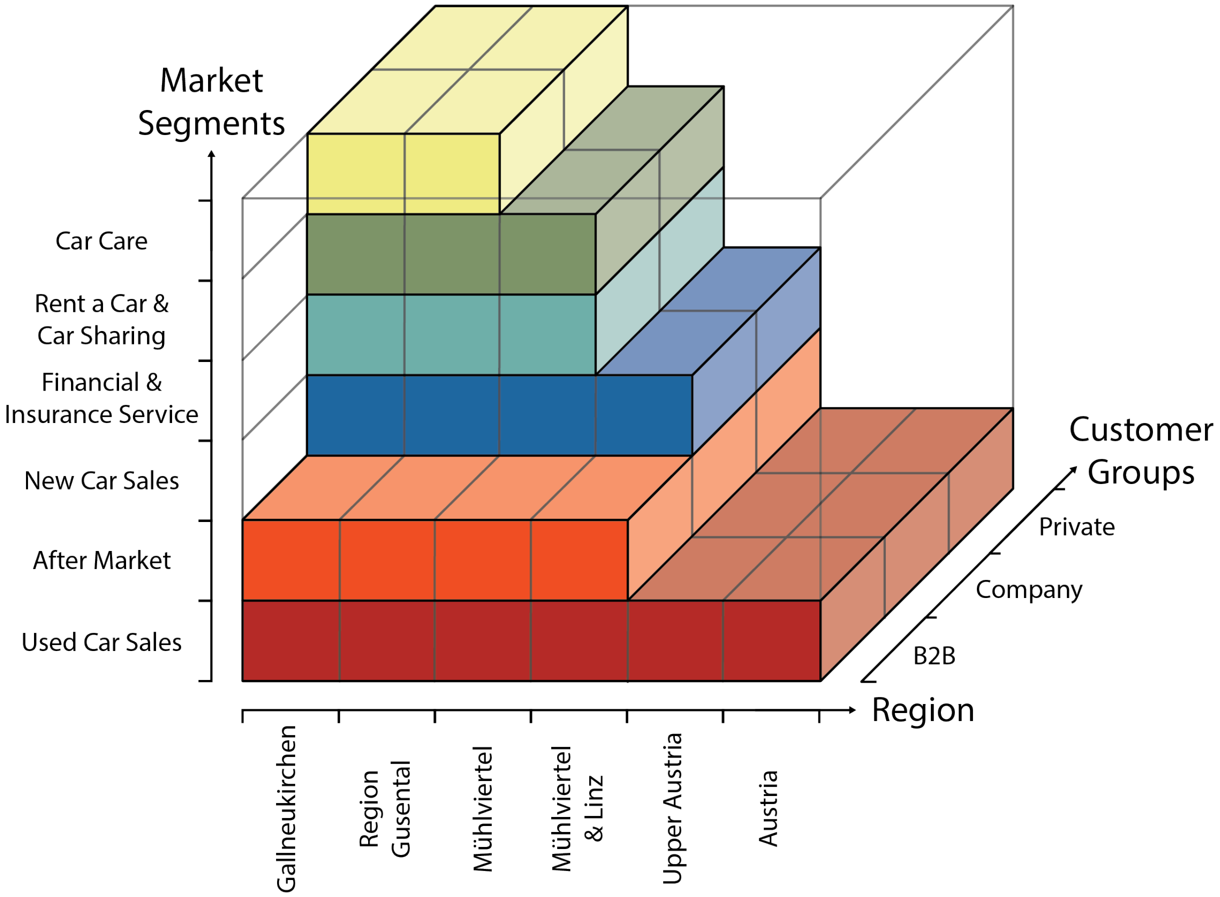

Figure 2.20: Summary of the relevant market segments of Autohaus Loitz.

The difference between "B2B" and "Company" mentioned in figure 2.20 is that b2b customers are automotive companies which Autohaus Loitz is cooperating with. Those b2b customers get special deals on aftermarket services and used cars. An example for an aftermarket service Loitz GmbH is offering to other automotive retail companies is the paintshop. Company describes all other companies.

An opportunity for the company could be to expand into new markets. One promising sub-market for the company is the premium car market for new car sales and after-sales. The car-sharing market is another possibility for a new growing market the company should investigate. Additionally, the car-care market should be monitored closely. The car-care market has high potential in the region.

2.1.2.2 Industry Profitability Analysis and Competitive Forces

This concept identifies structural characteristics in terms of the extent of competition intensity and therefore the rentability of the firm and branch in general (Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 309). Conducting an industry structure analysis helps identify the company's strengths and weaknesses relative to the industry. The strengths and weaknesses of the company result from its position in relation to these competitive forces (Vorbach, 2015, p. 157). Figure 2.21 shows the five competitive forces, used in Porters five forces model of industry profitability, which will be described in more detail below (Porter, 2014, p. 27; Vorbach, 2015, p. 153; Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 243; Wunder, 2016, p. 92; Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 311).

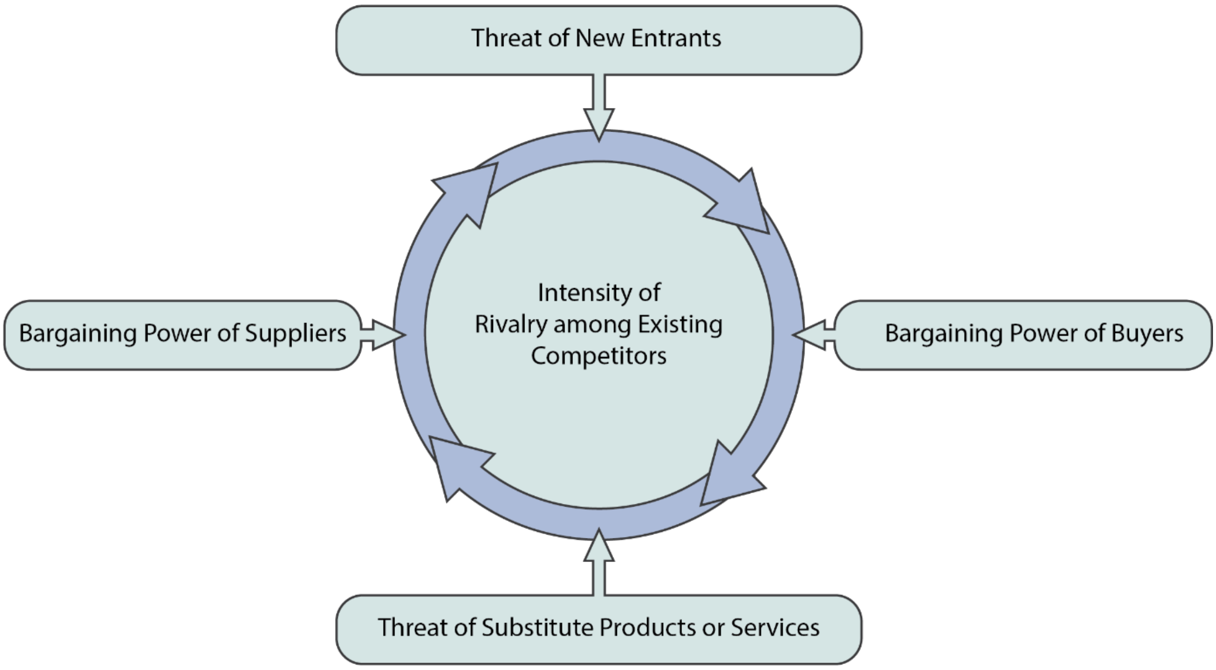

Figure 2.21: The Porter five forces model of industry profitability (Porter, 2014, p. 27 adapted).

2.1.2.2.1 Threat of New Entrants

New entrants increase existing capacity in the industry. The probability that new entrants will enter the market depends on the amount of entry barriers and the expected reaction of the established competitors. The threat of new entrants is low, when the barriers are high and strong countermeasures of the established competitors are being expected. (Vorbach, 2015, p. 153 f)

If the growth of the industry is very slow, then the admission of newcomers is limited. The revenues of the incumbents would fall, which would lead to a deterioration of their financial position. This is true for the whole automotive industry, as well as car dealerships. The newcomers must expect a strong reaction of the established competitors, since there is a strong connection between those companies and the industry. (Vorbach, 2015, p. 154)

The economies of scale are not to be neglected in the car dealer business. Those economies of scale could be getting better price when buying more cars, less license-costs per user for platforms and services, professional marketing and many more. Big dealers are buying smaller ones to gain those benefits.

Capital requirements are relatively high for new entrants. This also highly depends on the market the firm is operating in. Selling used cars does not need a big capital, whereas for example a car service shop of a specific brand needs a lot of required capital for workshop, employee training, standard and special tools. The sales of new cars require a lot of starting capital due to the corporate identity required by the OEMs.

There are no costs customer switching costs. This makes the branch attractive for new entrants.

Entry barriers are high in new car sales market, because of guaranteed regions dealers get. This means for example, if a Suzuki dealer is not violating its contract, Suzuki is not allowed to put another dealer in his guaranteed region. This makes it difficult for new companies entering the new vehicle sales market in Austria. But not every car-brand has dealer-specific restricted areas. Markets like Rent a car, car-sharing and the after-market have a medium to high entry barrier. The entry barriers of the other relevant markets such as car care and used car sales are very low. Over all, the threat of entry can be considered as high for the relevant markets' car dealers are operating in.

The possibility of new entrants disrupting the traditional market of automotive retail is high. Due to electrification in general it gets easier for tech-giants like Apple or Google to play a major part in the automotive industry.

2.1.2.2.2 Intensity of Rivalry among Existing Competitors

The intensity of direct competition between a company and its most immediate rivals is described as rivalry. Rivals are firms who offer similar products or services for market segments or customer groups in the relevant geographic location of a company. In most industries, those competitors are independent to each other, meaning that a competitive move of one firm may result in a significant loss of profitability at a rival company. The more intense the rivalry amongst companies is, the more likely it is that a majority of the profit is spent to stay competitive. (Wunder, 2016, p. 94 f)

The Block Exemption Regulation (BER), called "Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung" in German, concerns agreements regarding the sale of automotive products, as well as the provision of after-sales services in all Europe. OEMs sell their vehicles and parts through a network of authorised distributors and repairers who provide a complete package of service, maintenance and repair services.

In the automotive industry, the reform of the BER in 2002 called regulation 1400/2002 (EU-Kommission, 2002) triggered massive structural changes. With the change of the regulation, the exclusive dealer contracts were separated into dealer, service and parts contracts, the area protection for vehicle dealers was revoked, multi-brand dealers approved, and the brand service networks opened. Due to those changes, the number of car dealers in Austria has risen abruptly, measured by the active members of the Austrian "Fachgruppe KFZ-Handel" from 2003 to 2015 by 53 % and at the workshops by 49 %. The lively start-up activities are mostly concentrated in brand-independent companies, disrupting the used-car sales business. (Wolf, 2016, p. 4)

Since the end of May 2010, the 1400/2002 (EU-Kommission, 2002) is no longer effective. The new Block Exemption Regulation called 461/2010 (EU-Kommission, 2010b) has been valid since first of June 2010.

On the first on June 2013, new car sales switched from regulation 461/2010 (EU-Kommission, 2010b) to 330/2010 (EU-Kommission, 2010a). With the new regulation 330/2010, the manufacturers were again given the possibility to demand a stronger brand separation in showrooms, to restrict the authorisation for several locations and to terminate dealer contracts easier and faster. (Wolf, 2016, p. 5)

Additional to the changes of 330/2010 (EU-Kommission, 2010a), a new law was made in Austria. The "Kraftfahrzeugsektor Schutzgesetz (KraSchG)" (RIS, 2013). The KraSchG change strengthened non-contracted workshops by giving them access to technical information, which was previously reserved for authorized workshops. Since then, the number of non-brand vehicle garages increased strongly and thus also the competitive pressure in the service sector. As a result, it became more difficult, especially for small official-brand dealers, to compensate the relatively low earning potential in the vehicle trade with good earnings from the workshop business. (Wolf, 2016, p. 4 f)

Those factors can influence the intensity of rivalry:

- There is a high number of competitors.
- The automotive retail industry is very large and developed.
- Usually the companies compete for different customer segments.
- There is the threat of being put under pressure by large retailers.

Autohaus Loitz is facing competition from many car retailers in the region. This competition is analysed in the competitor analysis in chapter 2.1.3.1 on page 51. The intensity of rivalry among existing competitors in the automotive retail business is very high.

2.1.2.2.3 Bargaining Power of Buyers

Buyers can reduce the focal firm's profitability directly by claiming low prices, higher quality, better performance or higher service levels. The bargaining power of buyers is dependent on the state of the market and the percentage of purchases referred to the total amount of goods and services sold in the branch. (Vorbach, 2015, p. 155 f; Wunder, 2016, p. 93; Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 315 f)

The power of buyers in the relevant markets results from following factors (Vorbach, 2015, p. 155 f):

- The lack of product differentiation in the automotive industry enhances the bargaining power of customers. Standardisation makes it easy for customers to buy at a different company.
- If the switching costs are low or non-existing, buyers are not bound to a specific supplier. Switching costs of buyers in the automotive business can be considered very low.
- The bargaining power of buyers is higher, the more the buyers know about demand, recent market prices and costs the supplier is facing. Customers of car dealers are very well informed about those factors. This strengthens their bargaining power.

In general, not only in this branch, services are becoming more important for customers and therefore companies are adding many free services to satisfy the customer needs. A Mercedes-Benz dealer located in Sydney described in Anders Parment's book "Die Zukunft des Autohandels", that car dealers are facing a lot of costs because of additional services offered. He described that ten years ago there was no need for a car dealer to provide its customers with a replacement vehicle when they brought their car in for service or inspection. Now this dealer is giving customers a free replacement vehicle until their personal cars are fully repaired or serviced. Ten years ago, they had no replacement vehicles, now they own 15 Mercedes A-class. Customer expectations are rising and some customers who turn in their S-class are not satisfied by an A-class as a replacement vehicle. They want the same luxury class they drive every day. This leads to a high rise in costs car dealers are facing. Autohaus Loitz is facing similar issues which lead to fixed costs for a pleasing customer satisfaction. (Parment, 2016, p. 144)

Factors influencing the bargaining power of buyers are:

- There are many buyers
- Low switching costs to alternative brands or dealers
- Buyers are price sensitive and their decision is often based on how much does a vehicle cost
- Buyers do not threaten backward integration
- Internet sales
- Buyers can know everything about the products due to the information from the internet
- The possibility to request offers on the internet

Over all the bargaining power of buyers can be interpreted as strong considering the core business of Loitz GmbH.

2.1.2.2.4 Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Suppliers are those who supply the firm with what it needs to produce its products and services. They can affect the company's business by raising prices or reducing the quality of goods and services. Therefore, powerful suppliers can harm the focal firm's profitability. (Wunder, 2016, p. 94)

Some conditions that facilitate supplier power are (Wunder, 2016, p. 94):

- A small number of suppliers for the focal firm's purchases.
- The Focal firm's purchases represent only a small percentage of supplier's sale. This is the fact in automotive retail. Since there are a lot of official dealers buying products from their OEMs, the OEM as a supplier has massive power on their official dealers.
- The supplier has the potential to vertically integrate forward. This happens with some car brands, where the OEM wants more influence on the retailer. For example, Volkswagen has 105 certified dealers in Austria, with 34 of them run by Volkswagen itself under the name Porsche (Volkswagen AG, 2018) and about the same number is also run by Volkswagen under the old dealer name.

In automotive retail the OEMs as suppliers are very powerful. This in one advantage of a multi-brand dealer such as Loitz GmbH. The bargaining power of the OEMs supplying multi-brand car dealers is not as high as their bargaining power considering exclusive car dealers.

2.1.2.2.5 Threat of Substitute Products or Services

Substitutes are products or services, who fulfil the functionality of a specific product or service in a branch. Therefore, companies who produce substitutes are competitors of all firms in a branch (Vorbach, 2015, p. 155). Those substitutes are typically available from outside the defined relevant market. Considering the relevant market of new and used car sales, examples of substitutes would be using public transport or driving a motorcycle. If the price/performance ratio of a substitute is significantly better than the focal firm's offering or even if the price for the focal firm's product rises, customers strive to switch to substitutes. Those substitutes create a price ceiling. The higher the threat of substitutes, the less attractive the industry will be. Managers are required to look outside the boundaries of their relevant market to be able to consider more distant threats and constraints. (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 243; Wunder, 2016, p. 93 f)

The threat of substitutes is determined by:

- There are various alternative types of transportation, such as bicycles, motorcycles, public transport, taxis and aircrafts
- Alternative types of transportation almost always cost less and sometimes are more environmentally friendly
- Substitutes to cars can rarely offer the same convenience

Substitute products and services are a moderate threat to the automotive retail industry until they become as convenient as owning a car.

2.1.2.2.6 Conclusion with Porter's Five Forces

The automotive retail branch is not very attractive due to various factors. Figure 2.22 gives a summary of the relevant factors which influence the attractiveness of this branch. Overall the forces are high. The higher the forces the less attractive an industry is. This leads to a not very attractive automotive retail industry to operate in.

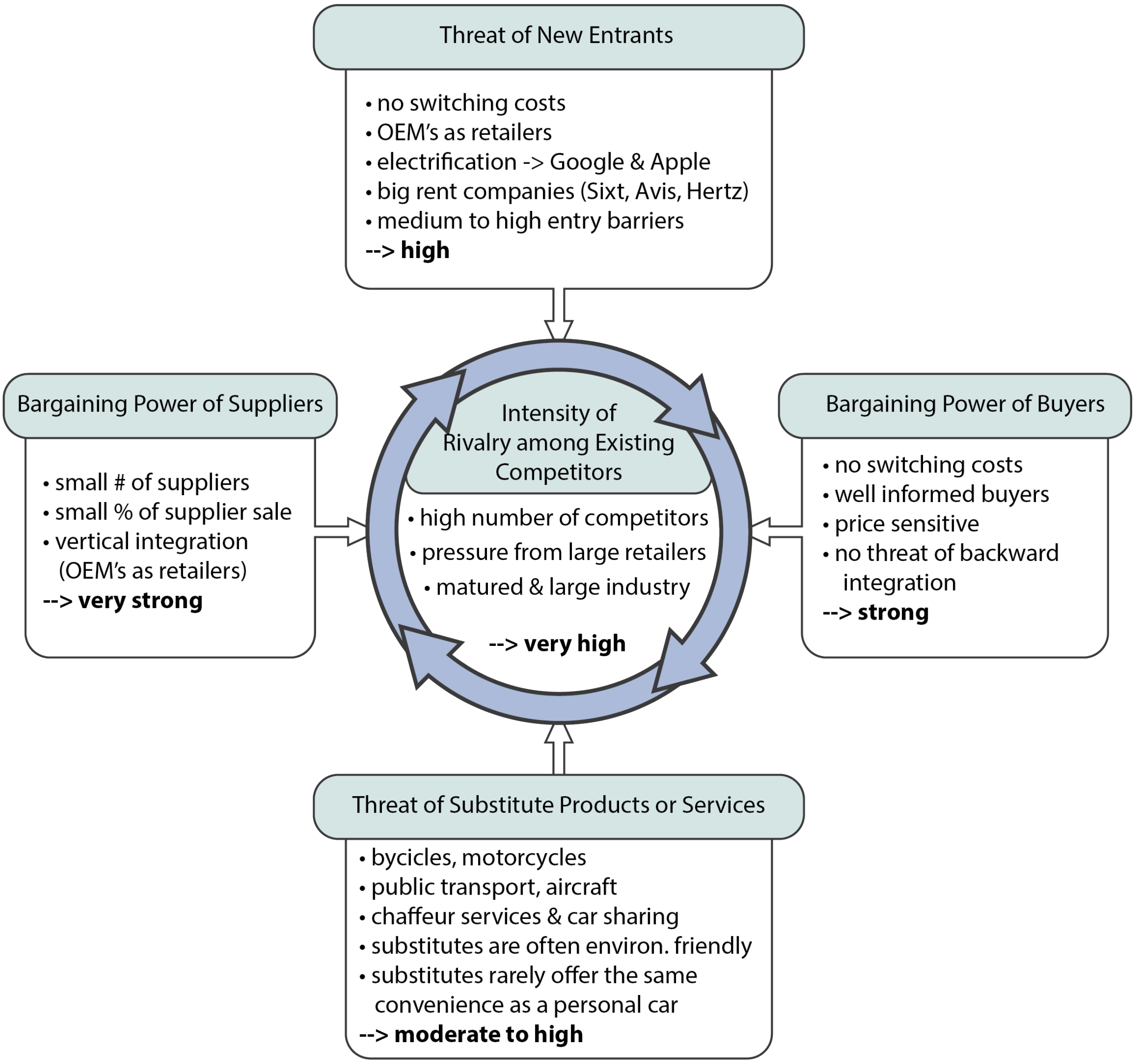

Figure 2.22: Porter's Five Forces analysis of the automotive retail business.

The threat of new entrants is high due to some relevant factors show in figure 2.22. There are no switching costs in the automotive retail business which makes it easy for customers to change their current dealer. There is a possibility that the OEMs retail their cars themselves which puts massive pressure on automotive retail companies. Electrification will lead to new entrants in the automotive business. The automotive retail industry has big car rental companies as competition. The entry barriers for automotive retail is medium to high which lowers the threat of new entrants.

There is a very high intensity of rivalry among existing competitors. The number of competitors is high, there is pressure from large retailers and the industry is mature and large. All those factors increase the intensity of rivalry.

The bargaining power of buyers is strong. The fact that there is no switching cost not only affects the threat of new entrants, it also affects the bargaining power of buyers. The buyers are very well informed through the media and the internet. The products are relatively expensive compared to other products in daily life. Customers are very price-sensitive.

The bargaining power of suppliers is very strong. There is only a small number of suppliers which increases their power. The retail companies only sell a small percentage of the overall supplier sales. This makes the wishes of individual retail companies mostly irrelevant to OEMs. Additionally, as mentioned above on page 37, there is the possibility of forward integration of the OEMs. All those factors increase the bargaining power of the suppliers.

The threat of substitute products or services is moderate to high. There are many substitutes to cars on the market. Some substitutes are bicycles, motorcycles, public transport, and aircraft. Only rarely is the same convenience that customers know from personal cars achieved by those substitutes. Some substitutes achieve a high amount of convenience. An example would be chauffeur services. Car-sharing does not provide the same amount of convenience as the owner of a personal car obtains. The main reason for this is the concept of sharing itself. If a product is shared with others personal flexibility is lost. An example of this is if you want to spontaneously get to another location and there is no sharing vehicle in the area available for use, it may take a long time to reach that location. With your own vehicle you are much more flexible in this regard. Additionally, many people store personal items they need for work or private use-cases in their vehicles. This is not possible in a shared car. Substitute products are often environmentally friendly which makes them favourable compared to personal cars.

2.1.2.3 Industry Life Cycle

There is the assumption, that a branch follows a development pattern following four major phases: development-, growth-, maturity- and the shrinkage-phase (Hungenberg, 2014, p. 119 f). *Johnson, Scholes and Whittington* added another phase to the concept called market shakeout and displayed the influence of each phase to Porter's five forces (Johnson *et al.*, 2011, p. 95 f; Vorbach, 2015, p. 157 f). The analysis of the industry life cycle makes companies aware of the different structural influences of the respective phase, as well as the requirements of the market and the strategic behaviour of the company. However, it should be noted that the industry life cycle is only an ideal behaviour and does not necessarily have to proceed in this way. (Hungenberg, 2014, p. 119 f; Vorbach, 2015, p. 158)

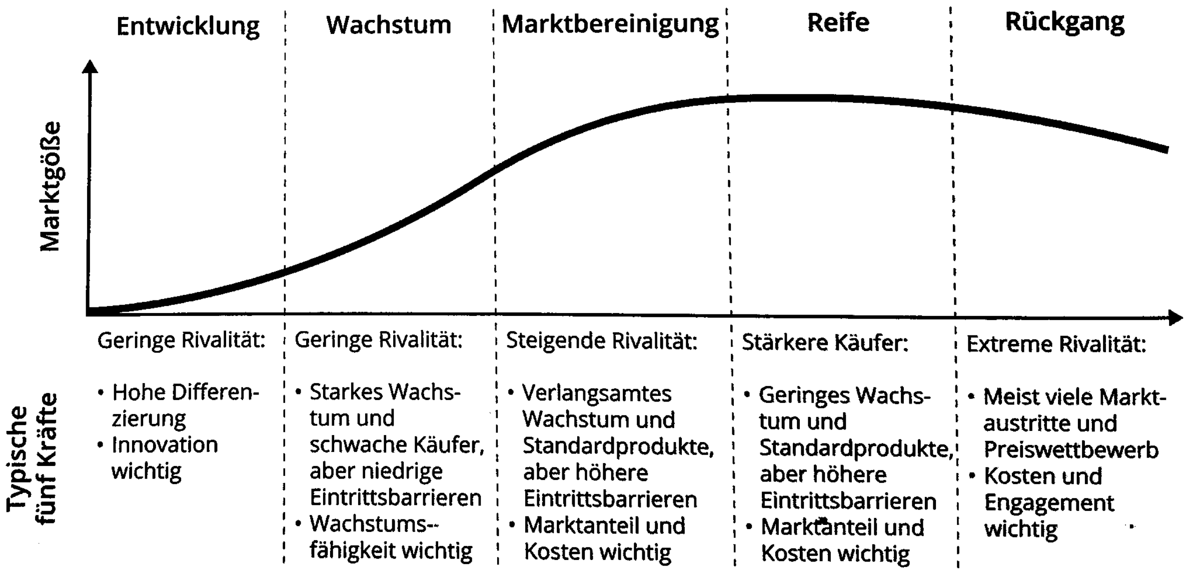

Figure 2.23: The industry life cycle (Johnson *et al.*, 2011, p. 96; Vorbach, 2015, p. 158)

Figure 2.23 shows the adapted industry life cycle of *Johnson* (Johnson *et al.*, 2011, p. 96). The industry life cycle is strongly dependent on the investigated region. This research puts Austria in the focal point of consideration. If the whole world is considered as a region the automotive market is still in the phase of growth. Figure 2.24 displays the development of the worldwide automotive market from 2000 to 2016. In 2016, a worldwide peak of 78.1 million passenger cars was achieved. Between 2000 and 2008 the annual growth rate of the worldwide passenger car sales was 1,4 percent. This growth rate jumped to 5.2 percent in the period from 2008 to 2016. The main reason the worldwide automotive market is still in a growth phase is due to the Chinese market and the recovery in the US and Western Europe after the financial crisis in 2008/2009. Figure 2.25 shows those three biggest automotive markets in the world in comparison. In the longer term, there is no real growth in Western Europe and the US, but rather a return to the level of sales that has already been reached historically. Only China and a few other small markets are seeing real car-stock growth. This development confirms that the USA, Western Europe and thus also Austria are mature and largely saturated markets. Western Europe can be interpreted as a reference statistic for Austria. In this case the maturity phase is reached as described. (Diez, 2018, p. 61 ff)

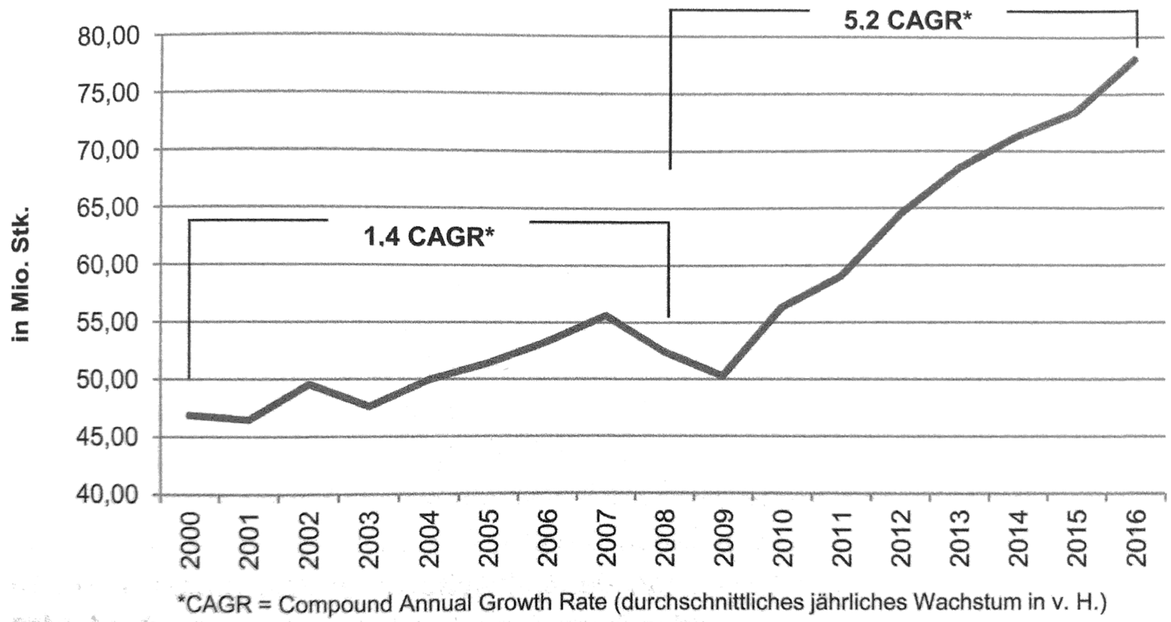

Figure 2.24: The development of the worldwide automotive market from 2000 to 2016 (Diez, 2018, p. 61).

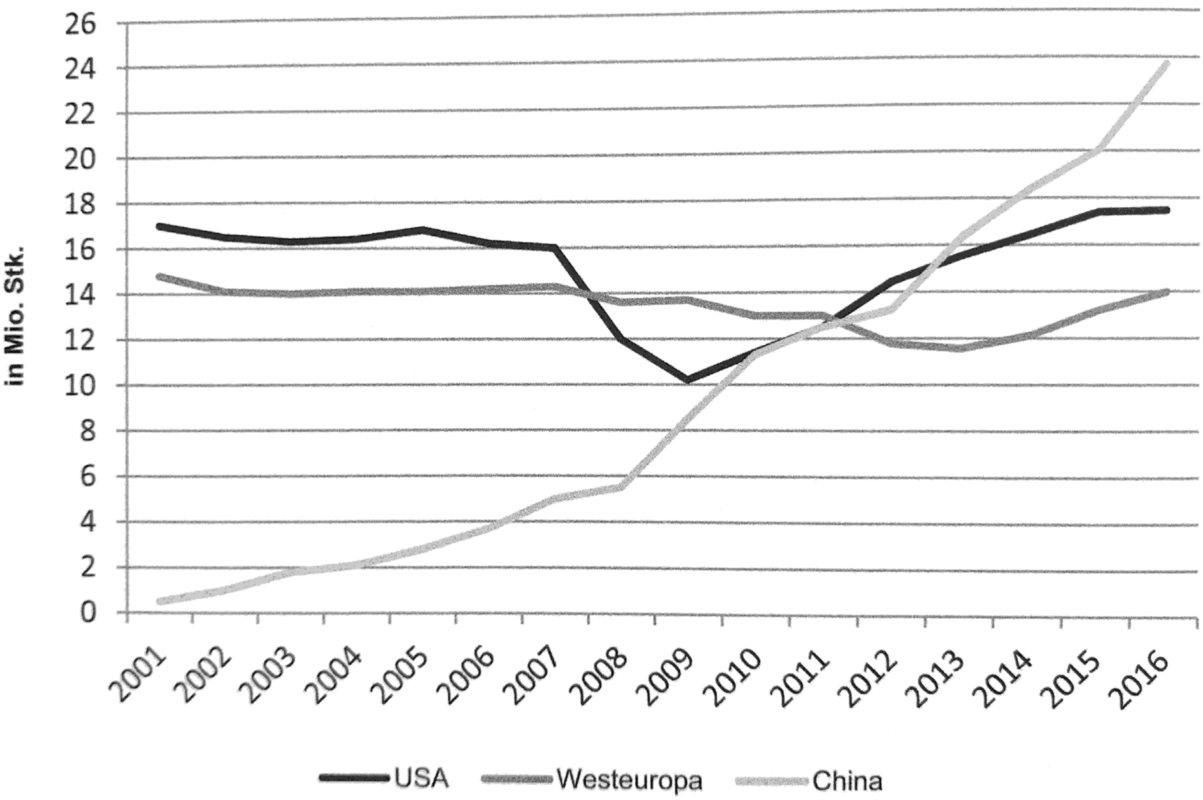

Figure 2.25: Development of car sales in selected markets (Diez, 2018, p. 62).

In mature automobile markets as Austria there is an extensive ownership of cars by a broad section of the population. As a result, it is possible to postpone replacement purchases in macroeconomic crisis situations without the owners having to deal with significant mobility restrictions. Conversely, the temporary abandonment of the purchase of new vehicles leads to a strong increase in demand in times of economic upswings. There is a need to catch up regarding the modernization of old cars. (Diez, 2018, p. 63)

Another indication of the degree of maturity of automotive markets is the motorisation density. Figure 2.26 shows the motorisation density for selected markets. The data in figure 2.26 is from the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) which is based in Paris, France. Austria has a very high average motorisation of 609 vehicles per 1000 inhabitants. It must be mentioned that the numbers of figure 2.26 include commercial vehicles. The size of the markets matter therefore, China, India and Africa will play a significant role for the development of the automotive industry. (OICA, 2018)

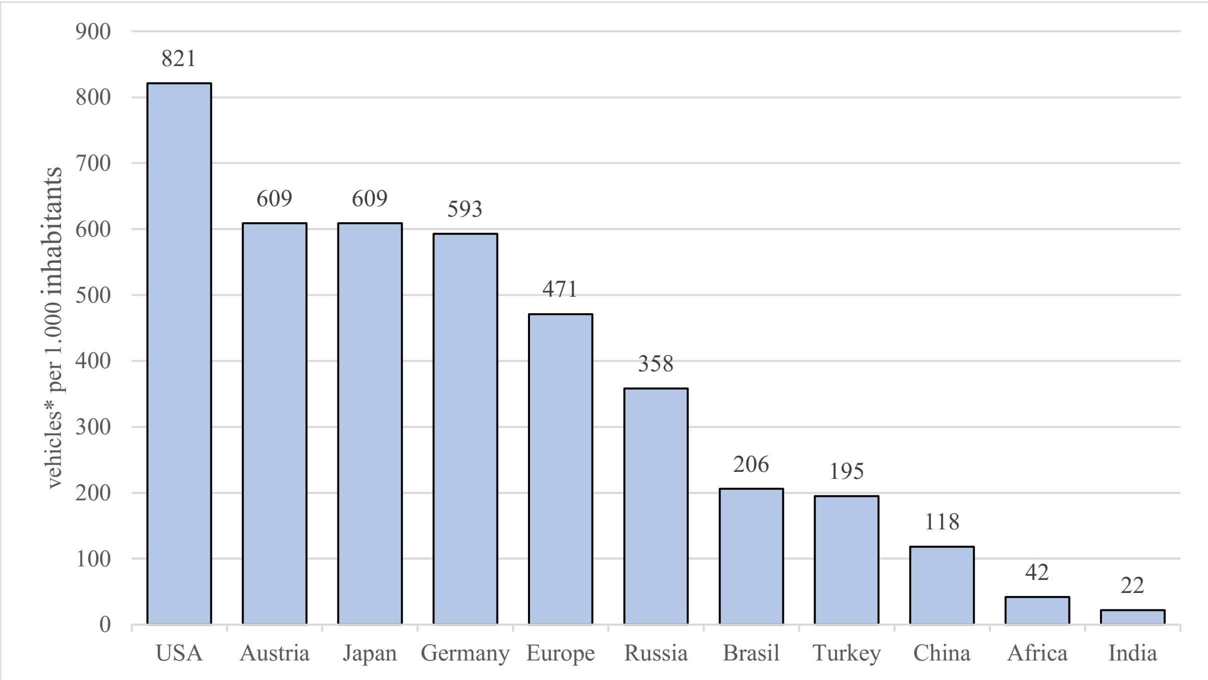

Figure 2.26: Motorisation density in selected countries in 2015.*The amount of vehicles include private and commercial vehicles. (OICA, 2018)

As a conclusion the industry life cycle of the automotive retail industry in Austria can be rated as mature. It can be assumed to be at the end of the 4^{th} phase called maturity stage. In the maturity stage the entry barriers are higher, and the economies of scale and benefits of the learning curve are taken benefit of. The size of the market-share is of major importance. The revenues as well as the capital requirement reach their maximum which lead to a sinking contribution margin. The last phase called the shrinking phase is dominated by high rivalry put down to high exit barriers and declining revenue. It must be mentioned again that the industry life cycle represents an idealisation. Therefore reality may deviate from the expected behaviour. (Hungenberg, 2014, p. 120). (Vorbach, 2015, p. 157 f)

That Austria's automotive retail industry is in the maturity-phase is a threat to the company. The maturity-phase is characterised by low growth and standard-products and services but higher entry-barriers. If there is no growth in the market a company can only sell more vehicles by increasing their market-share. This is often done by dropping the price of products which additionally leads to a strong market-wide rivalry. The market share and cost-structures of companies are important (see figure 2.23).

2.1.2.4 Retail Formats in Automotive Business

This chapter contains research questions and results of a large German study (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011) about different retail formats of car dealerships. It also shows which type of company is preferred by new car customers. It is difficult to find recent information about automotive retail. Therefore, a paper from 2011 was used as basis. Nevertheless, the results of this paper can be considered highly relevant for this thesis.

Whereas most retail industries are characterised by a great diversity of competitive retail formats the automotive industry largely relies on a single format. This format is called the authorised car retailer. However, automotive manufacturers and retailers are both looking for new ways of expanding sales activities by implementing new and innovative retail formats. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1181)

The two research questions of that paper (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011) were:

- What new retail formats can compete with the existing traditional authorised car dealers?
- What customer preferences are existing regarding the design of retail formats in automotive industry?

There are several typical characteristics of cars (high investment, technical complexity, extreme high variety of cars to choose from, long operating life) leading to special buying and usage behaviour of the customers (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1184):

- long and intensive preparatory phase
- long and intensive purchasing phase
- long usage phase with service and repair tasks

Based on eleven characteristics new automotive retail formats were constructed. Those eleven characteristics can be found in appendix 6 at the end of the thesis. Those retail formats needed to be practical viable and based on existing or in automotive retail industry discussed approaches. Additionally, it was important that the retail formats differ greatly from each other. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1187)

The following retail formats were identified (see table 2.3, table 2.4, table 2.5 and table 2.6) (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1186 ff):

- classic car dealers
- experience car dealers
- multi-brand car dealers
- car discounters
- category-killers
- car-clubs
- mobility providers

The **classic car dealer** is a small traditional brand exclusive car dealer. This retail format was used as base for the typology process. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1187)

Experience car dealers offer a great customer experience included in the purchase process. The difference to the classic car dealer is the size and the enhanced range of services. Experience care dealers offer a big showroom with many cars to the customers. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1187)

	Classic Car Dealer	**Experience Car Dealer**
brand selection	One brand	One brand
model selection	Full model programme is sold	Full model programme is sold
variant selection	Selection of stock vehicles and individual vehicle configuration from the manufacturer	Selection of stock vehicles and individual vehicle configuration from the manufacturer
supplementary program	Supplementary program with direct automotive reference	Supplementary program with direct automotive reference
atmosphere	Simple and basic atmosphere	Feel-good atmosphere
vehicles on display	**Small** number of common vehicles on display	**Many** common vehicles on display
consulting services	Individual consultation by trained professionals	Individual consultation by trained professionals
possibility of test drive	**Small** selection of vehicles for test drive	**Large** selection of vehicles for test drive
additional services	Additional services are offered	Additional services are offered
after sales	Authorised Service Centre	Authorised Service Centre
price	Average price level	Average price level

Table 2.3: Retail formats in automotive business (1 of 4) (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1188, adapted).

A special feature of the complex retail format of the **multi-brand car dealer** is the task of brand exclusivity. Within a car dealership, several brands are each offered with a contract workshop. Without reducing post-purchase services (after-sales), multi-brand dealers offer greater choice and better comparability of vehicles of different brands. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1187)

Car-discounters offer an excellent price. Therefore, all post-purchase services are reduced and only standardised vehicles of different brands which are currently available at the company are sold. Those discounters are not offering any after-sales services but are imaginable with a brand-free workshop with limited scope of services. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1187)

	Multi-Brand Car Dealer	**Car-Discounter**
brand selection	Two or more brands	Two or more brands
model selection	Full model programme is sold	Only standard models are sold
variant selection	Selection of stock vehicles and individual vehicle configuration from the manufacturer	Only stock vehicles are sold
supplementary program	Supplementary program with direct automotive reference	**No** supplementary program
atmosphere	Simple and basic atmosphere	Simple and basic atmosphere
vehicles on display	**Small** number of common vehicles on display	**No** common vehicles on display

consulting services	Individual consultation by trained professionals	**No** consulting
possibility of test drive	**Large** selection of vehicles for test drive	**No** test drive
additional services	Additional services are offered	Only sale and financial services are offered
after sales	Authorised Service Centre	**No** after sales at the retailer
price	Average price level	Absolutely cheapest provider

Table 2.4: Retail formats in automotive business (2 of 4) (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1188; adapted).

The term **Category-Killer** describes a car dealership with the focus on a special segment or category of cars (e.g. cabriolets, vans, luxury cars, off-road cars) of different brands. The category specific know-how is core competence of this retail format. Big showrooms, atmosphere and a garage (after sales) does not belong to the core competencies. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1187)

The **Car-Club** is a brand-exclusive retail format without workshop. Significant characteristic is the exclusivity, not the size. The cars are displayed in a club-atmosphere often in a central city-location. There are many extra-services available. Some of them are not related to the automotive industry (e.g. cafés, restaurants, fashion stores, etc.). (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1187 ff)

	Category-Killer	**Car-Club**
brand selection	Two or more brands	One brand
model selection	Different models of a car **category** are sold (e.g. family-vans, converti-bles, …)	Full model programme is sold
variant selection	Only stock vehicles are sold	Individual car configuration from the manufacturer and **additional refine-ment** possible
supplementary program	Supplementary program with direct automotive reference	Supplementary program with **no** di-rect automotive reference
atmosphere	Simple and basic atmosphere	**Club** atmosphere
vehicles on display	Small number of common vehicles on display	Small number of common vehicles on display
consulting services	Individual consultation by trained professionals that **fit my personality**	Individual consultation by trained professionals
possibility of test drive	Small selection of vehicles for test drive	Small selection of vehicles for test drive
additional services	Additional services are offered	Additional services are offered
after sales	**independent** workshop	**No** after sales at the retailer
price	**slightly** above the average price level	**slightly** above the average price level

Table 2.5: Retail formats in automotive business (3 of 4) (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1188; adapted).

The last automotive retail format analysed is the **mobility-provider** (see table 2.6 below). As the name suggests, providing mobility is the focus of this kind of retailer. This retail format can be described more as a service provider than a car dealer. The full service-concept is the most important performance feature. Mobility providers sell the rights to use a vehicle as a long-term rental. Currently mobility providers are often seen in the b2b-sector. Due to experts in the automotive sector mobility providers in the b2c-sector (business to customer) are seen as future trends (Diez and Reindl, 2002, p. 153). (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1189)

	Mobility-Provider
brand selection	Two or more brands
model selection	Only standard models
variant selection	Only stock vehicles
supplementary program	Supplementary program with direct automotive reference
atmosphere	Simple and basic atmosphere
vehicles on display	**No** common vehicles on display
consulting services	Individual consultation by trained professionals
possibility of test drive	Small selection of vehicles for test drive
additional services	Full-Service-Concepts are offered
after sales	**No** after sales at the retailer
price	**slightly** above the average price level

Table 2.6: Retail formats in automotive business (4 of 4) (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1188; adapted).

Table 2.3, table 2.4, table 2.5 and table 2.6 summarise the specific characteristics of seven different automotive retail formats.

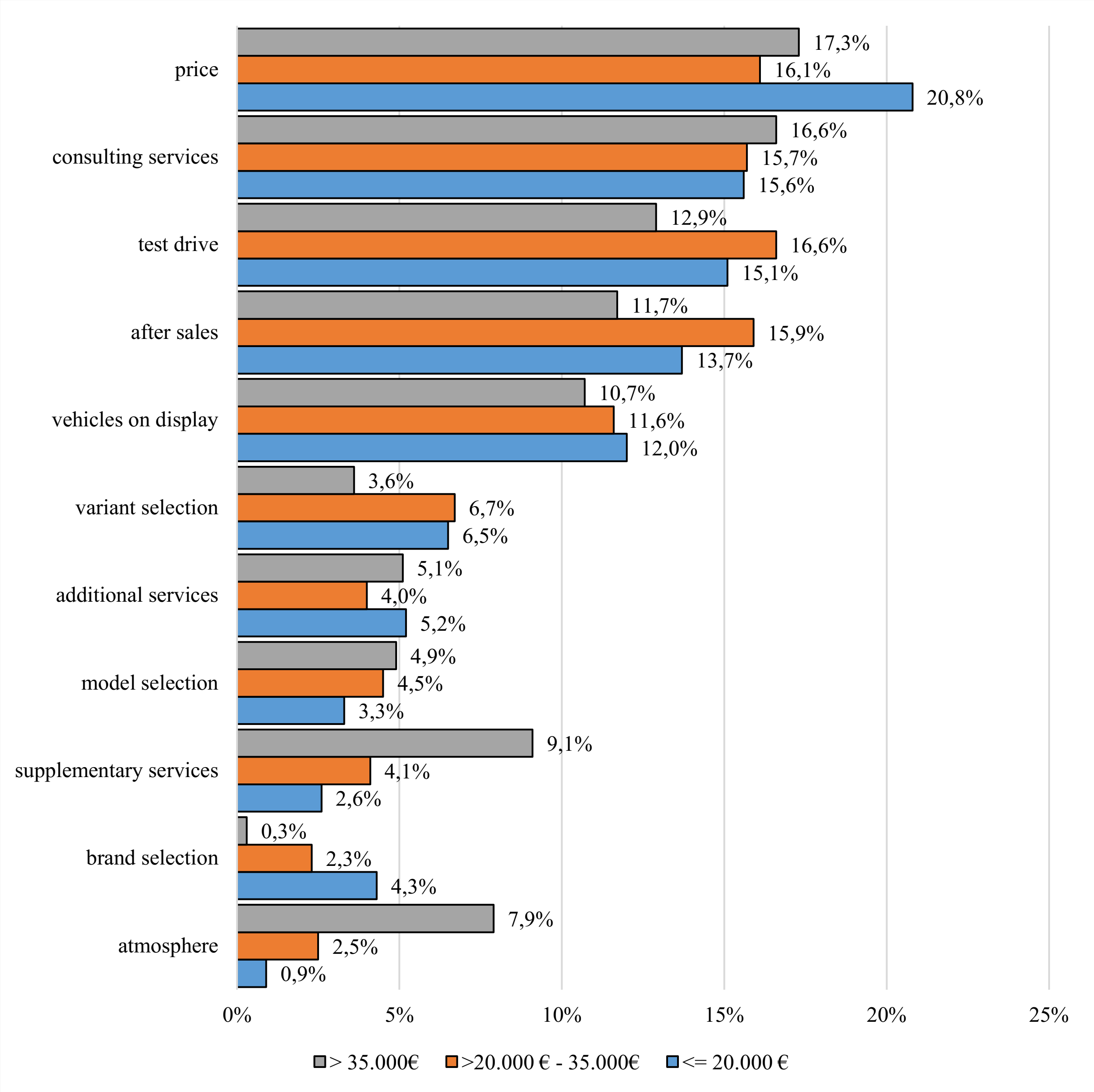

Figure 2.27: Relative importance of the investigated areas for new car customers depending on the expense readiness (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1198; adapted).

Relative importance indicates the percentage of preference change that can be maximized by varying the characteristics of a feature. Figure 2.27 shows that the price is the factor with the highest potential of preference change for new car customers. 80.8 % of preference formation is determined by performance characteristics. Consulting services, test drive, workshop and additional services are service-specific retail format characteristics and account for 50.3 % of preference change. The six characteristics variant selection, additional services, model selection, additional program, brand selection and atmosphere are together rated with 23.5 % of preference change which is rather insignificant. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1193)

A comparison of the features atmosphere and vehicles on display at figure 2.27 show that new car buyers prefer a large car dealership with many vehicles on display rather than a simple sales atmosphere of smaller car dealerships with a feel-good or club atmosphere. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1196)

Figure 2.27 additionally shows a segment specific view which allows the analysis of heterogeneous preferences of buyers. The segmentation is done via the expense readiness of the customers. Big differences are primarily at the less important characteristics additional program, brand selection and atmosphere. (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1198)

As a result, retail formats which rely on the concept of the classic car dealer are segment-independent the better rated concepts (see figure 2.28). Experience car dealers as well as multi-brand car dealers are derivations of the classic car dealer with additional services (see table 2.3 and table 2.4). (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1199)

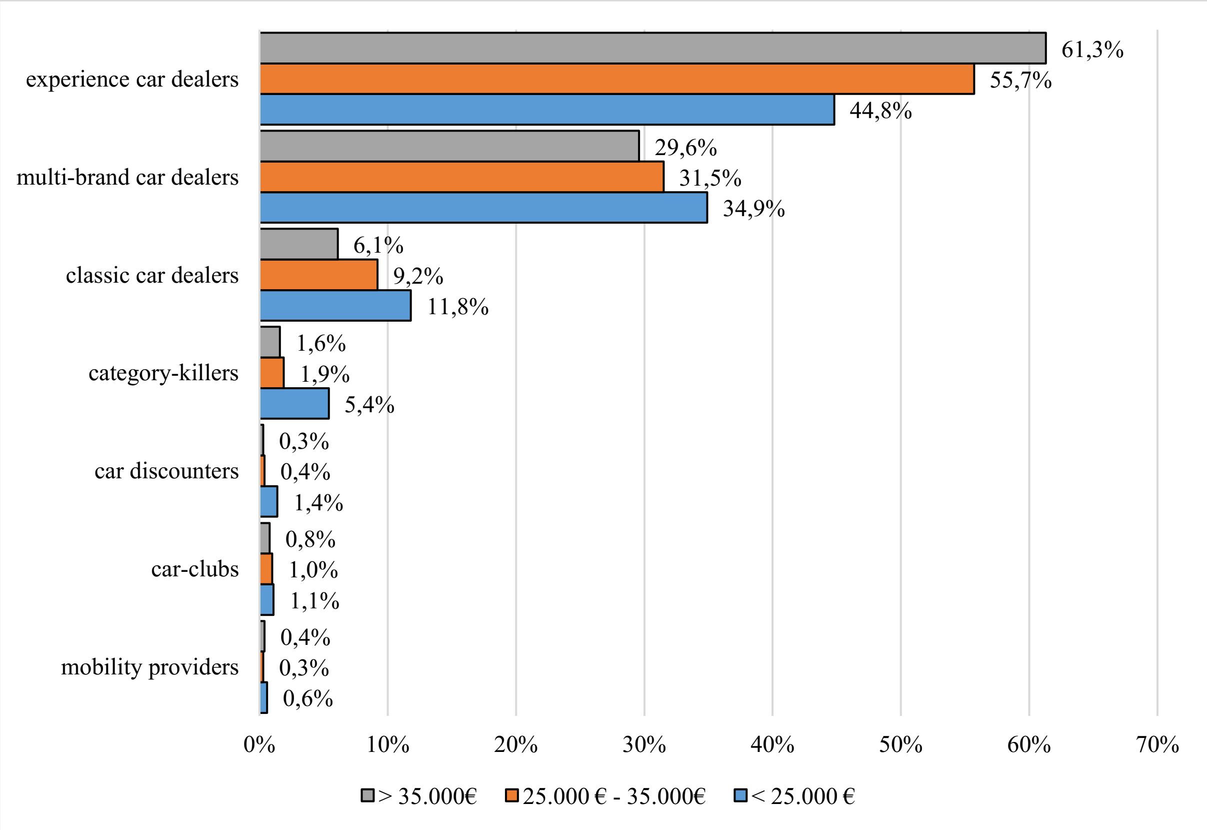

Figure 2.28: Market simulation depending on the expense readiness of new vehicle customers. The sum of the segments add up to 100 % (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1200; adapted).

Following factors should be considered by automotive retail companies (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1199):

- Value of cars and atmosphere should be customer group specific. The higher the expense readiness, the more important is the atmosphere of the car retailer. (see figure 2.27)
- Services in the premium car segment should exceed the sales: The higher the car-value, the more extra services should be provided. (see figure 2.27)
- In low-price segments the core-business counts: Dealers in this segment should try to concentrate on the core-business and on a purposive design and organisation of the car dealership to get low prices.
- Multi-brand car dealer concepts are better suited for the compact and small car segment. Brand exclusive retail formats are tendential success-promising in the premium sector.

The analysis of the preference structures of new car buyers has shown that retail formats that are based on the existing traditional authorised car dealer meet the needs of the new car buyers in essential features. The traditional authorised car dealer is a good base for selective development. Three central statements can be derived from the results of the study (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1200):

- The preference-structures of new car buyers are based on the brand-exclusive dealer concept with close manufacturer loyalty. Operating forms based on this concept will continue to dominate the future market.
- The trend goes to larger dealership with a high amount of core services. In addition to an official brand-workshop, professional advice, a test drive in the desired model and a large showroom are the decisive factors for choosing a car dealership.
- As a general tendency the requirements of new car customers regarding their automotive retailer are similar. Their preferences are less heterogenous than expected.

There are five central approaches which lead to a target group specific adjustment of the retail format in dependency of the positioning of the brand (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1201):

- Establish larger retail formats: Operating modes with a larger number of exhibition vehicles and vehicles for test drives are preferred.
- Consistency between manufacturer and dealer: new car buyers want a close connection between both actors. Free operating forms tend to have low market opportunities.
- Retail formats should offer sales and workshop services: new car buyers want sales and official workshops in the same car dealership.
- Concentrating on core services and not on the infrastructure (e.g. buildings): By improving the core services such as professional advice and test drive, the customer benefit can be significantly increased. This cannot be achieved by a complex and stylish atmosphere in the dealership.
- Accurate testing of multi-brand retail formats and additional services: In general, the central requirements of new car buyers cannot be met in this way.

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, the research of *Prof. Fassnacht* is from the year 2011. The statements of this research can be used as a solid basis for the strategy development of automotive retailers.

2.1.2.5 Industry-Specific Opportunities and Threats

Table 2.7 summarises industry-specific opportunities and threats investigated with the help of the tools used in this chapter. In this table the opportunities and threats are not sorted. Those factors are input-data for the SWOT-Analysis and are summarised in chapter 2.1.4 on page 73.

Opportunities	Threats
• very large market size • establishing a larger dealership • additional core-services • premium car market (sales and after-sales) • car-sharing market • expanding the car-care business	• mature industry • high number of competitors • car-sales strongly dependent on good economic situation • high threat of new entrants • price pressure by large retailers • high bargaining power of the OEMs • very low switching costs

Table 2.7: Industry-specific opportunities and threats.

2.1.3 Competitive Arena

In the last section a general analysis of the automotive retail industry has been compiled. The final step of the external strategy analysis is dealing with the competitive area, which is the immediate competitive environment of a company (see figure 2.1 on page 6). The key areas of this layer of strategic environmental analysis are submarkets and corresponding customers and competitors in the market, as well as suppliers and partners (Wunder, 2016, p. 97). According to *Prof. Stefan Vorbach* the competitive area is used to get a detailed view of the industry intern structure by analysing the markets, customers and competitors (Vorbach, 2015, p. 159). The relevant market of the studied company has been analysed above in section 2.1.2.1 on page 27. This chapter uses the definition of the relevant market from section 2.1.2.1. The first part of this chapter investigates the direct and indirect competition of the company. The competition was analysed by web research and company meetings. The second part deals with the customers of the company. An online survey was developed and used for an evaluation of the current customer satisfaction of the company. The results show how the company is perceived externally by its customers. In chapter 2.1.2.1 figure 2.15 on page 27 shows the interaction between relevant market, the company, competitors and customers (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 248). This chapter gives a closer look at that interaction. At the end of the chapter the opportunities and threats as well as the strengths and weaknesses are summarised.

2.1.3.1 Competitor Analysis

In general, a company can only be successful if it fulfils the needs and wants of their customers better than their competitors (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 267). Competitors are related to the offering of products and services in a specific market segment. Typically, competitors are continuously trying to outplay and outsmart each other with the objective to win in the marketplace, that is to gain a larger market share or a higher profitability than their rivals in the target market. The main goal of the competitor analysis is to gain an insight into how competitors may impact the company's performance, and thus, need to be considered when formulating strategies. (Wunder, 2016, p. 104)

Thomas Wunder mentions three key areas for conducting a competitor analysis, which are:

- Identifying competitors: Against who do, or will we compete?
- Evaluating competitors: What threat or opportunities are imposed by our competitors?
- Monitoring competitors: What new threats or opportunities arise from competitors?

Answering those questions lead to opportunities and threats which are used for conducting the SWOT-Analysis in chapter 4.

Competitors can be classified into direct and indirect competitors. Direct competitors are other firms within the relevant market that offer the same products and services targeting the same customer base. Indirect competitors offer customers alternative products or services that fulfil customer needs in a different way. Often indirect competitors tend to come from outside the relevant market. (Wunder, 2016, p. 105 f)

Firstly, direct competitors were identified in a company meeting and via web research. Most of the automotive retail and service companies in Upper Austria are small or medium sized with the legal form of Limited ("GmbH"). This makes it difficult to get financial information about competitors. Nevertheless, there is data available of comparable companies to Autohaus Loitz in the automotive retail branch. An industry comparison between Autohaus Loitz and similar companies can be seen at chapter 2.2.3.2 on page 89.

A total of 51 regional competitors has been identified. Some of them are competing with Autohaus Loitz in the after sales business, in the new car retail business and others in the used car retail business. The detailed elaboration can be found in the appendix at the end of the thesis (see appendix-1).

Out of those 51 regional competitors, the most important ones were figured out. This was done together with employees working in after sales and new and used car sales. Due to their long experience in business, these professionals know what competitors harm the studied company the most. Therefore, the criteria for choosing the important competitors was qualitative research done by expert opinions.

The focus of the competitor analysis consists of three of the six relevant market segments previously analysed in chapter 2.1.2.1. Those are the three most important markets for the company at the moment (Loitz GmbH, 2018a):

- New car sales market
- Used car sales market
- After sales market

For the financial- and insurance service market which is also described as a relevant market in chapter 2.1.2.1 no competitor analysis was performed since there is no easy way influencing this business. A handful of big companies which are working together with many car dealers dominate the market. The services offered of those companies are similar.

The regional rent a car & car-sharing market is done by the retailers mentioned below in table 2.9. Additionally, there are rent a car companies specialised in this market segment as Hertz, Avis, Sixt and Buchbinder. Those companies are all located in the centre or at the Blue Danube Airport in Linz. A list of relevant car-sharing companies can be found in table 2.8. At the moment those companies are indirect competition to Autohaus Loitz. This is mainly because of their respective distance to Loitz GmbH. Autohaus Loitz is offering rent a car services to its customers.

Ownership of the vehicle	**Company Name**	**Homepage**	**Direct or indirect competitor**	**Region (Austria)**
company	car2go Österreich GmbH (Daimler)	https://www.car2go.com/	indirect	Vienna only
company	DriveNow (Venture between BMW Group and Sixt)	https://www.drive-now.com/	indirect	Vienna only
private	IBIOLA Mobility Solutions GmbH	https://carsharing247.com/	indirect	all Austria
private	Caruso Carsharing eGen	https://www.carusocarsharing.com/	indirect	all Austria
private	Drivy SAS	https://www.drivy.at/	indirect	all Austria
private	Turo Inc.	https://turo.com/	indirect	all Austria
company	STADTAUTO Carsharing GmbH (Cooperation with Hyundai)	https://www.stadtauto.at/	indirect	Vienna only

Table 2.8: Austrian car-sharing platforms per August the 20th 2018.

Table 2.8 describes the current car-sharing companies operating in Austria. There needs to be a differentiation between car-sharing companies who own the cars they share and companies who only provide the platform to private customers who can share their private car in exchange for money. Most of the car sharing companies who own their fleet operate in Vienna. Examples of Austria’s biggest car sharing companies are car2go and DriveNow which only operate in Vienna. There are different ideas behind car sharing. The strategy of the companies who are holding a car-fleet is to give mobility to people who do not own a car themselves out of numerous reasons (do not want to, not able to, do not need). This strategy generates a new market for those companies. The idea of companies who only provide the car-sharing platforms is to enable private persons to share their cars when currently not in use by them. The car-sharing market is not considered as competition in the region just now. Nevertheless, the development of car-sharing needs to be monitored by the company.

The car care market is not analysed because every top competitor is offering it as an additional service. In the closer region of Autohaus Loitz there are no specific car-care companies who are specialised only in this business. Expanding the car-care in terms of size and can be an opportunity for the company.

There are different competitors in each of the six market segments. There are companies specialised just on one specific market segment and others who are competing on more segments.

The top direct competitors are:

Distance in km	Company Name	Official passenger car brands	Direct or indirect competitor	Employees
3,8	Autohaus Schöndorfer GmbH	Volkswagen, Seat, Microcar	direct	24
5,2	Autohaus Himmelbauer	Mitsubishi, Hyundai	direct	12
8,8	Autohaus Ortner GmbH (Standort: Wartberg)	Skoda, Volkswagen Service, Audi Service	direct	26
9,3	Kneidinger Center GmbH	Volkswagen, Audi, Skoda	direct/indirect	34
9,6	Auto Günther GmbH (Standort: Urfahr)	Opel, Kia, Peugeot	direct	26
9,6	Bauer Florian GmbH	Ford	direct	-
9,7	Lietz GmbH (Standort: Urfahr)	Mazda, Hyundai	direct	22
9,8	Autohaus Dornach (AC Auto Vertriebs und Service GmbH)	Ford, Fiat	direct	-
11,6	Pleiner GmbH & Co KG	Opel	direct	-

Table 2.9: Top direct competitors of Autohaus Loitz.

The direct competition in the new car sales market offers the same and sometimes more services as Autohaus Loitz. All competitors in new car sales are present in all the other markets considered relevant by Autohaus Loitz. Those companies usually have 12 to 34 employees and represent one or more official car brands. Autohaus Loitz has 22 employees. All the companies in table 2.9 are direct competitors to Autohaus Loitz. Kneidinger Center GmbH additionally sells the brand Audi which is considered as indirect competition because it is a premium brand. Autohaus Loitz is currently not offering new cars of premium brands which will be the subject of discussion later at strategy formulation. Kneidinger Center GmbH is the only company selling new premium cars within the reach of approximately eleven kilometres. The next new premium car retail companies are mostly located in Linz.

The distance in km has been measured online via google maps with the parameters of shortest distance driven with a car. The starting point was the location auf Autohaus Loitz, Linzerstraße 11 in 4210 Gallneukirchen. The number of employees has been acquired on the specific company websites.

Additional regional and direct competitors in the used car sales market:

Distance in km	Company Name	Services	Direct or indirect competitor	Employees
2,4	Car Selection Lenzenweger	Premium used cars	direct	3
6,2	RR Motors GmbH & Co KG	Premium used cars	direct	2

Table 2.10: Additional regional and direct competitors in used car sales.

There are two additional small companies who are competing with Autohaus Loitz in used car sales. Those two companies specialise in selling premium used cars. The style of competition is direct. Autohaus Loitz sells premium used cars as well as standard ones. Table 2.10 above shows those two companies. An opportunity for the company could be to increase its sales in premium used cars. The two mentioned companies in table 2.10 are growing every year.

Additional regional and direct competitors in the after sales market:

Distance in km	Company Name	Official passenger car brands	Direct or indirect competitor	Employees
2,1	Alois Lanzerstorfer	-	direct	-
2,4	Car Selection Lenzenweger	-	direct	3
2,6	IBM Transporte Brandstetter GmbH	-	direct	-
1	Reifen Wondraschek GmbH	-	direct	-
6	Johann Keplinger GmbH & Co KG	-	direct	15
6,6	Hennebichler GmbH	-	direct	10
7,2	KFZ Hufnagel GmbH	-	direct	3
6,5	Konrad Leonhartsberger GmbH	-	direct	-
7,7	Manfred Aichinger	-	direct	2

Table 2.11: Additional regional and direct competitors in after sales.

Table 2.11 shows the additional regional and direct competitors in after sales. None of those companies have contracts with official passenger car brands. The main problem with those competitors is, that most of them are very small and hurt the company in terms of after sales. Most of them only do standard service tasks which can be done very easy and fast with little knowledge. Those standard services are a big part of the after sales profit of Autohaus Loitz. Small companies have very low fixed costs which allows them to do easy service tasks very inexpensive and easily. There is a threat coming from those companies regarding the after-sales.

The aim of this competitor analysis was to have a report about the regional competitors. The full report can be found in appendix-1. The important competitors mentioned in this chapter should be constantly monitored by the company. Additionally, opportunities and threats coming from the competitors are summarised at the end of the chapter competitive area.

2.1.3.2 Customer Analysis / Customer Survey

Customers are individual people or groups who decide to buy a product or service from company. They are an essential strategic factor for any company. The identification of existing and future customer requirements and the customer retention of valuable customers are prerequisites for a successful strategy. (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 253)

It is important to clarify some terms for better understanding. Customer needs are basic human requirements. Wants are shaped by our society. For example: People need food but may want a beer and a schnitzel. Demands are wants for specific products backed by the ability to pay. Companies should not only produce products people want, people must be willing and able to buy them. Finally, customer requirements are precise product or service requirements expressed by the customers. (Wunder, 2016, p. 102)

Customer loyalty and long-lasting customer relationship are the main cornerstones of the present strategy of Autohaus Loitz. The company wants to ensure long-term commitment and continuity of their customer base. A major part of the vision of the company is to be the number one automotive retailer and customer's first choice. Therefore, high level of customer satisfaction is key to the company's strategy and long-term goals.

Not every customer can be addressed and satisfied by a single company, therefore its typically for companies to define promising customer target groups that it wants to focus on strategically. After having defined the relevant market and having developed a basic understanding of its competitive forces, the buyers as one of the firm's most important stakeholders should be analysed more in detail. In the industry analysis, conducted earlier in chapter 2.1.2, the focus was to look at the general bargaining power of customers. With the customer analysis the company tries to understand specific customer needs and wants as well as some specific market characteristics. (Wunder, 2016, p. 97)

The following three questions are relevant in this context (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 253):

1) Who are the current and potential customers of a company?
2) How to get customers in the first place and keep them?
3) What are the customer requirements and what makes them valuable?

To better understand customer needs of Loitz GmbH a customer survey was conducted. The main objective of the customer survey was to collect customer data and analyse the data to identify strengths and areas of improvement. Not all data of the customer satisfaction survey was included in this research. This chapter tries to give a good overview on the most important facts of the survey and to answer the three questions above. The answers lead to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which are used for the SWOT-Analysis conducted in chapter 4 on page 99 and are summarised in chapter 2.1.4 on page 73.

The structure of this chapter is as follows:

- First, the approach of the customer survey is explained.
- The second part tries to figure out details about the participants of the survey. Those specific details are age-structure, gender, place of residence and how long they have been customers of the company. The first question who the current and potential customers of the company are is partially answered in this part.
- The third part deals with the customer satisfaction playing an important role for keeping customers as a company. The second question is partially answered in this part.
- The fourth part shows possible competencies of the company which have been rated by the participants of the customer survey. Customers are the closest layer of the competitive arena surrounding the company (see figure 2.1 on page 6). This external point of view was helpful for the company analysis below in chapter 2.2 on page 74 where competencies have been analysed by the employees and management of the company. Having an external point of view can give

various hints company-related people (management, employees, friends or family) often cannot see.

- The fifth part identifies customer requirements for new- and used car sales. The results of chapter 2.1.2.4 on page 43 have been compared with the results of the customer survey. A conclusion what customer requirements are is made at the end of the chapter. This answers the third question.
- The last part is the evaluation of open questions about strengths and weaknesses from the customer's point of view. Additionally, strengths and weaknesses identified earlier in this chapter are included in this summary. This part is used for the SWOT-analysis in chapter 4.

2.1.3.2.1 Approach of the Customer Survey

Data was collected by a web-based survey tool called LimeSurvey Professional. The web-based survey is an excellent way to get customer information quite fast compared to the traditional way of sending a letter.

The language of the customer survey was German.

The research was conducted as a quantitative research. 721 data-sets with email, first name and last name were used from the company's active database (see table 2.12). Only customers who allowed the company to send them marketing emails were invited to the survey.

In the invitation email there was the possibility to opt-out. 32 customers choose to no longer get emails from the company. Those customer-permissions have been updated in the company's dealer management system (DMS).

Total records	721
Total invitations sent	721
Total opted out	32
Incomplete responses	43
Full responses	166
Total surveys completed	209

Table 2.12: Survey data sets.

If there was no reaction to the invitation email after 4 days, the customer got a notification email which reminded them to evaluate the survey. Customers were only notified one time.

To be able to do the survey a key was needed. Each participant got a key which identified the participant exactly. This way it was impossible for any participant to do the survey multiple times. The key was integrated into the link in the email, the only thing participants had to do was click the link in their mail. Everything else was done automatically.

In total 209 customers evaluated the survey. 166 of them did a full evaluation and 43 only partially completed the survey.

34.5 % of the invited customers participated in the survey. This number was higher than expected by the company.

It is important to note that the survey was anonymous and there was no timestamp added to the participants' answers.

The survey was built in a way, that the customers can effortlessly finish it in 2 to 3 minutes. It consists of five groups with a total of 15 questions. There are matrix questions counting as one question but containing many sub-questions. A PDF-summary of the survey questions can be seen in appendix-2 at the end of the thesis. At each question the possibility to refuse to answer was given. For example, a customer who only visits the company for car-wash cannot rate the after-sales service quality.

An interesting aspect is also whether the number of choices is even or odd. If the number is even, there is no neutral category and the respondents are forced to make a substantive statement. This may be desirable in some situations. In others it may lead to distortions, since a neutral attitude can indeed occur and then of course should find room in the questionnaire. (Kreutzmann and Castrillejo Mojado, 2017)

In this research an even number of answer-possibilities was chosen. To each standard question the customer had the possibility to choose one out of four answers. The employee survey in chapter 2.2.1 on page 74 was built the same way. Those four answers were represented with smileys. The smileys mean: “Very good”, “Good”, “Bad” and “Very bad”. This description was also labelled beside the smileys. If there is no middle, the participants are forced to choose a clear tendency. Either good or bad.

An easy to understand and clear structure of the survey was very important to make it as easy as possible for all types of participants. How to ask specific questions was important as well. The goal was to ask in a specific way that all participants understand the question the way they were meant to be understood by the creator.

2.1.3.2.2 Current and potential Customers

The initial step is to determine existing and potential customers. Existing customers are repeating to buy products or services, whereas potential customers have never bought a product or service before but could be future buyers. (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 254)

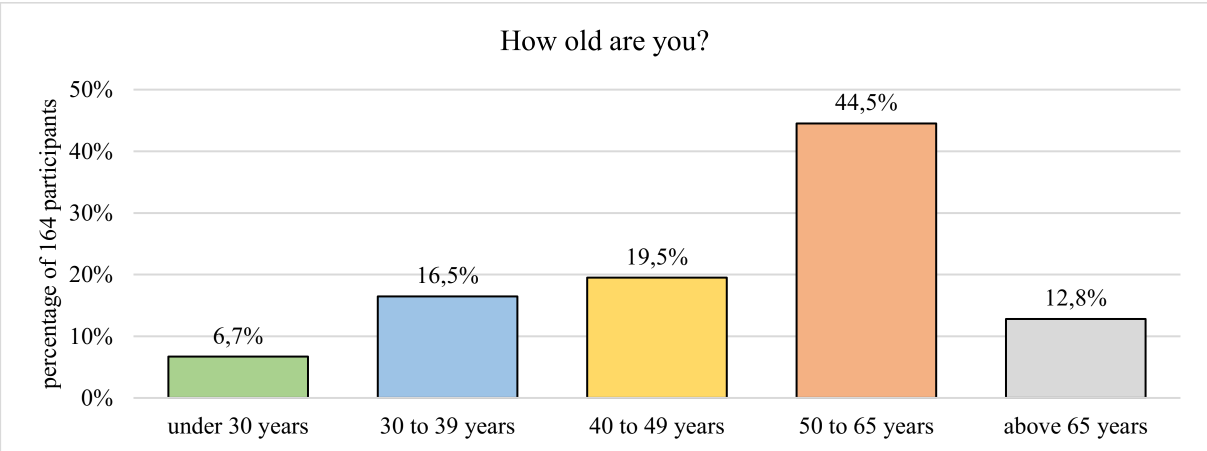

Figure 2.29: The age distribution of customers who participated in the online survey. Summary for D01.

Participants in the survey were asked personal questions about their age, gender, place of residence and for how long they are customers of the company. The age-structure of the existing customers who participated in the survey can be seen in figure 2.29. Most customers (44.5 %) who participated in the survey are between 50 and 65 years old. Only 6.7 % are aged under 30 years. A major part of the customer-base of Autohaus Loitz is high-aged. 76.8 % of the persons who participated in the online survey were aged 40 and above.

The gender distribution of the participants can be seen in figure 2.30. 60.6 % are male and 39.4 % are female. More male than female customers did the survey.

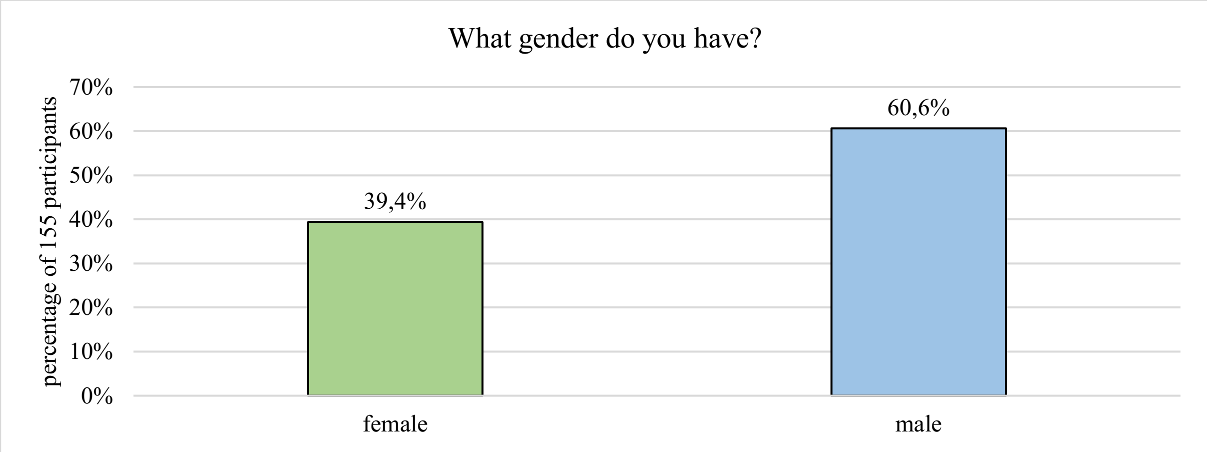

Figure 2.30: The gender of the customers who participated in the online survey. Summary for D02.

The next question was where the customers are living. It is important for marketing to know the place of residence of the customer-base. About one quarter of the customers are based in Gallneukirchen which is the company location (see figure 2.31). Another quarter is living close to Gallneukirchen (<5 km). The rest is living more than 5 km away from the current company location.

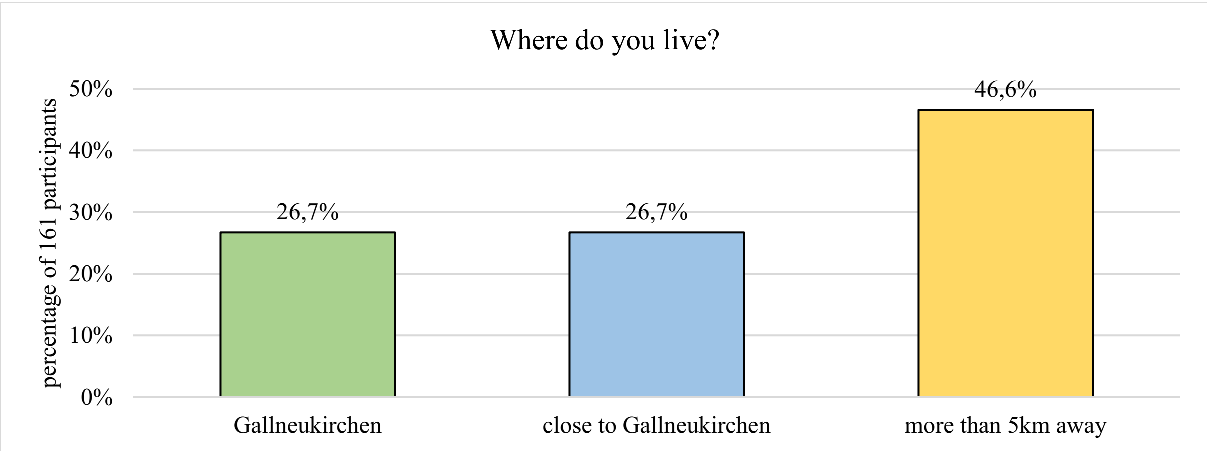

Figure 2.31: Place of residence of the customers who participated in the survey. Summary for D03.

75 % of the participants are long-time customers of the company. They are customers for more than 3 years which can be considered as a long time (see figure 2.32). Only a small percentage of participants are customers for less than one year. The fact that many customers are long-time customers can be interpreted by the high customer satisfaction in the company. The customer satisfaction is evaluated in the next chapter 2.1.3.2.3 on page 59.

The survey did not determine how wealthy the clients are. With the knowledge of the wealth of the customers a more precise conclusion on the existing customers would have been possible. The company offers new cars of Suzuki, Opel and Microcar. The average new vehicle customer of the company has low- to medium income.

As a conclusion, the typical customer of the company is above 40 years, living in the region around Gallneukirchen and to a percentage of roughly 60 % male. This result is based on the online customer survey.

Potential customers of the company are young people under 40 years and wealthy customers who prefer premium brands. Those types of customer's need to be addressed in the strategy development.

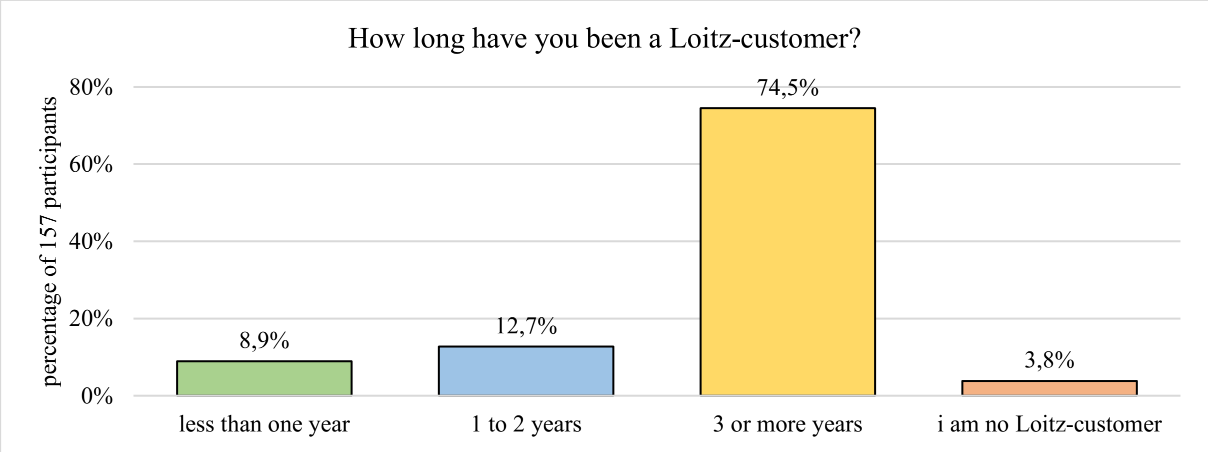

Figure 2.32: Loitz-customers. Summary for D04.

2.1.3.2.3 Customer Satisfaction

This was the first question group of the survey asking the participants about their satisfaction in general and with the different business areas of the company. This part tries to solve the question how to get customers in the first place and keep them. Additionally, two questions regarding the customer loyalty are analysed. Figure 2.33 shows a screenshot of the layout of the online survey. The general and the specific satisfaction considering the business areas was asked in this matrix. The language of the screenshot is German. The following charts showing the results and evaluation are held in English.

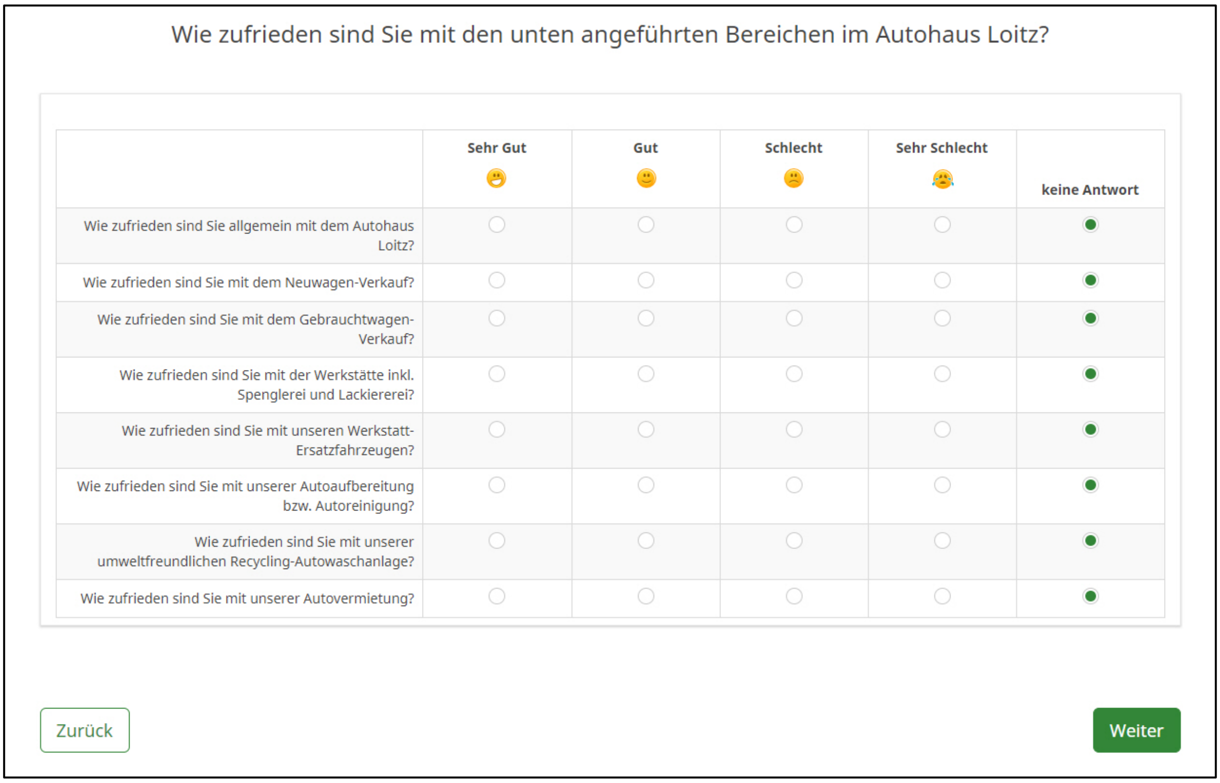

Figure 2.33: Screenshot of the first question group (A1) of the online customer survey in German language.

The summary of the first question (SQ001) of matrix (A1) can be seen in figure 2.34. The general satisfaction with Autohaus Loitz was asked. 177 participants gave a clear answer, 13 participants gave no answer and 19 participants only started the survey but did not even complete the first question. Further analysis in this chapter does not include “not completed or not displayed” participants.

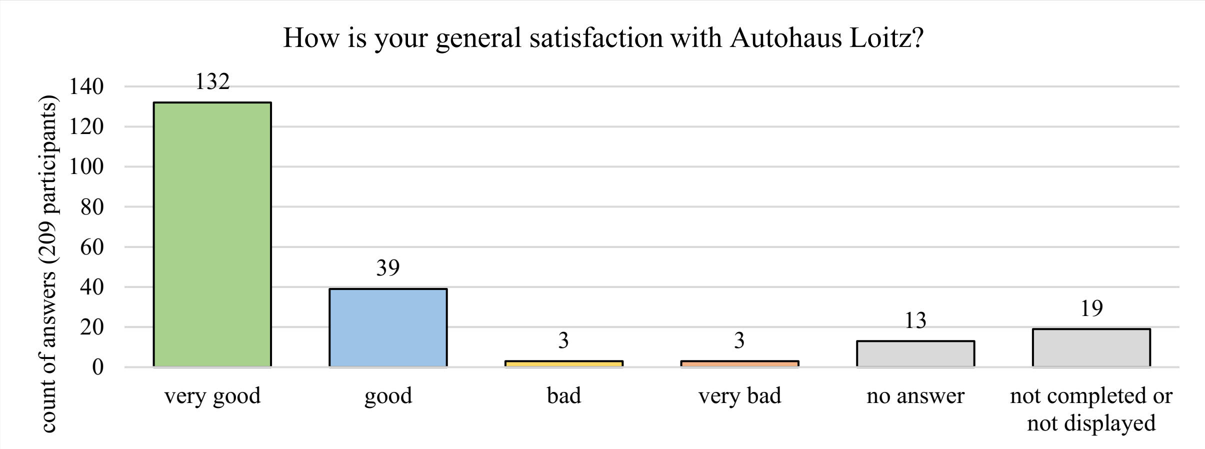

Figure 2.34: General satisfaction with Autohaus Loitz including “not completed or not displayed” answers. Summary for A1(SQ001).

Participants who gave a clear answer are considered as important source of data for the evaluation of the customer survey. Additionally, the amount of people who gave “no answer” can be important for some use-cases as well. One use-case is the evaluation of the different business areas. Customers of a specific business area are not able to evaluate a business are they do not know. This was an important reason to add the “no answer”- checkbox. Another reason for adding the checkbox was the ability to rate the different market segments against each other. A market-segment with a high percentage of “no answers” is not known or not used by the participants of the survey. Those points lead to the standard-layout (see figure 2.35) used for most of the evaluation conducted in this chapter.

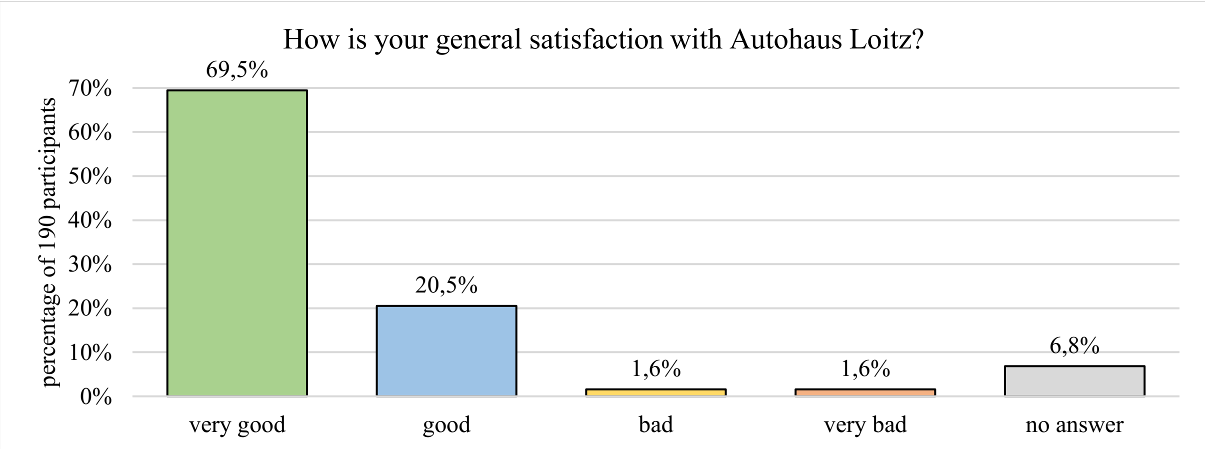

Figure 2.35: General customer satisfaction with the company. Summary for A1(SQ001)

Figure 2.35 shows the evaluation of the first question (A1-SQ001). 90 percent of the participants rated their general satisfaction with the company as “very good” or “good”. Only 6 participants in total, counting for 3.2 percent, rated the general satisfaction “bad” or “very bad”. This means the overall satisfaction customers have with Autohaus Loitz is very high to high.

The following questions were dealing with the customer satisfaction in some of the relevant markets the company is operating in. Figure 2.36 shows five relevant markets of the company. Those markets are the new vehicle sales, used vehicle sales, after-sales, car-rental service and car-care market.

In the survey questions were asked regarding the relevant markets of the company. The first market asked in the survey was the new vehicle sales market. Therefore, the specific satisfaction with new vehicle sales was asked. The result indicates that 45.8 % of the participants who did the survey didn't share their opinion about their satisfaction with the company's new vehicle sales. The reason could be that those customers have not been in touch with this department yet. There is not a single "bad" or "very bad" vote. 100 % of the participants who answered this question voted for "very good" and "good". This indicates that the satisfaction of customers concerning the new vehicle sales is excellent and can therefore be considered as a strength of the company.

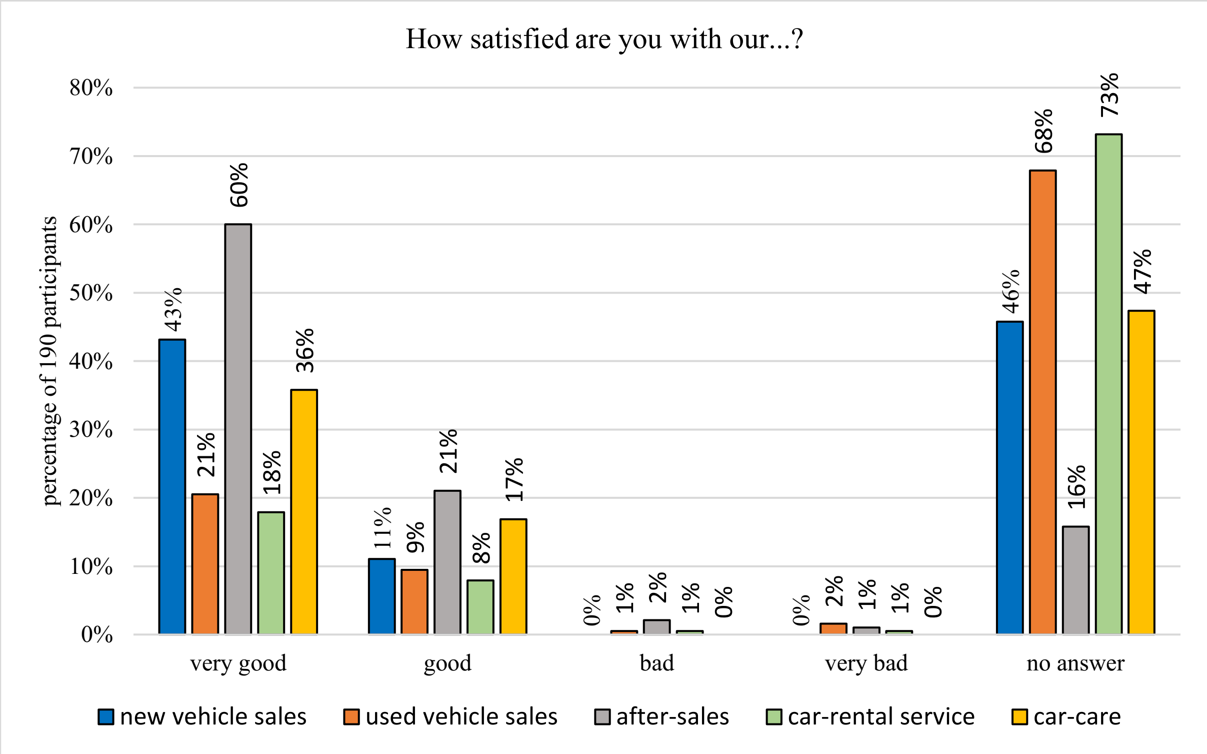

Figure 2.36: How satisfied are customers with...? Summary for A1(SQ002, SQ003, SQ004, SQ008, SQ006).

The second relevant market analysed was the used vehicle sales market. The outcome was similar to the new vehicle sales market. The difference was that a higher percentage (67.9 % of the participants) gave no answer which indicates that they were not in contact with the used vehicle sales department and therefore not able to rate it.

The after-market is the next relevant market evaluated. 84.2 % of the customers who participated in the survey gave an answer. This indicates that a high number of participants used the after sales provided by the company. The company's after-sales comprises of the workshop and the paintshop. Customer satisfaction results are very good. If only the answers are considered 96.2 % of the participants choose "very good" and "good". Only 6 participants (3.8 %) choose "bad" or "very bad.

The next market to be discussed is the car rental market. Figure 2.36 shows that a high number of participants chose not to give an answer concerning the car rental market. There can be many reasons for this result. Customers do not know about the car-rental service of the company, they know about it but never made use of it or they already used it but cannot or do not want to rate it. The participants who rated it were overall satisfied with the car-rental service provided by the company. 66.7 % rated the car-rental service as "very good" and 29.4 % as "good". This makes a total of 96.1 % who are satisfied with the service. In this market-segment work needs to be done so that more customers are aware of the car-rental service of the company. A better marketing strategy could help to make this service more popular in the region.

The last analysed market-segment deals with the car-care market. A subpart of this market is new for the company. Autohaus Loitz has been offering professional car wash for 25 years, but only for one year the company has been additionally offering professional car-care services for the car interior. So far, the interior cleaning was only provided after repair work free of charge by individual mechanics who did the repair. Now the cleaning is done by a separate person specialised in cleaning cars. This is a new market the company is participating in. The high percentage of “no answers” at 47 % (see figure 2.36) leads to the conclusion that many customers are not aware of the company offering this new service. More marketing should be done for car-care to make it more known in the region.

The satisfaction of customers regarding the financial and insurance service was not asked in the survey.

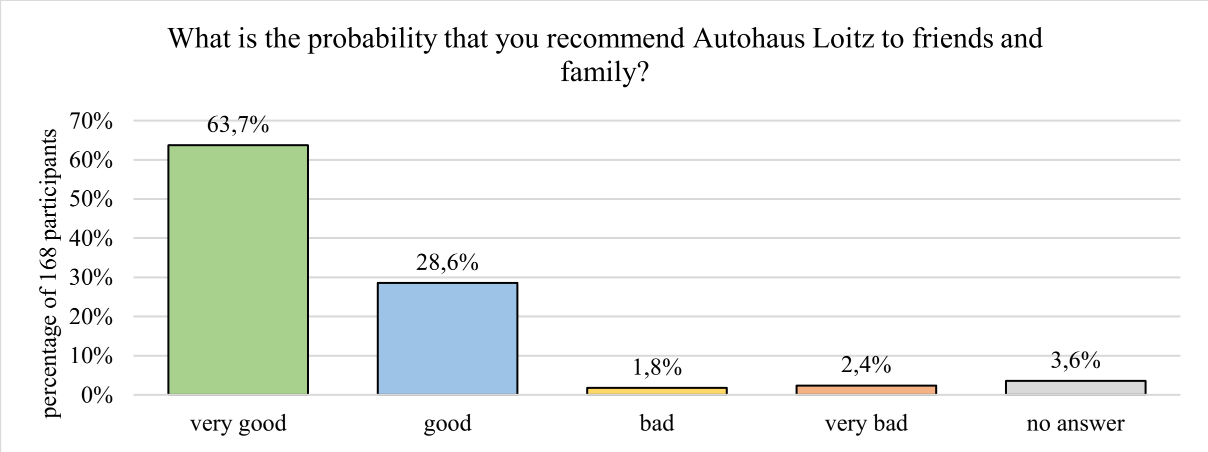

Figure 2.37: Probability to recommend the company to friends and family. Summary for F1(SQ001).

The following question asked the participants how high the probability is that he or she recommends the company to friends and family (see figure 2.37). This question shows the loyalty of the customers. If the results of the survey are trustworthy the likelihood that customers recommend Autohaus Loitz to friends and family is “very high” with a percentage of 63.7 %. Only 6 people refused the answer.

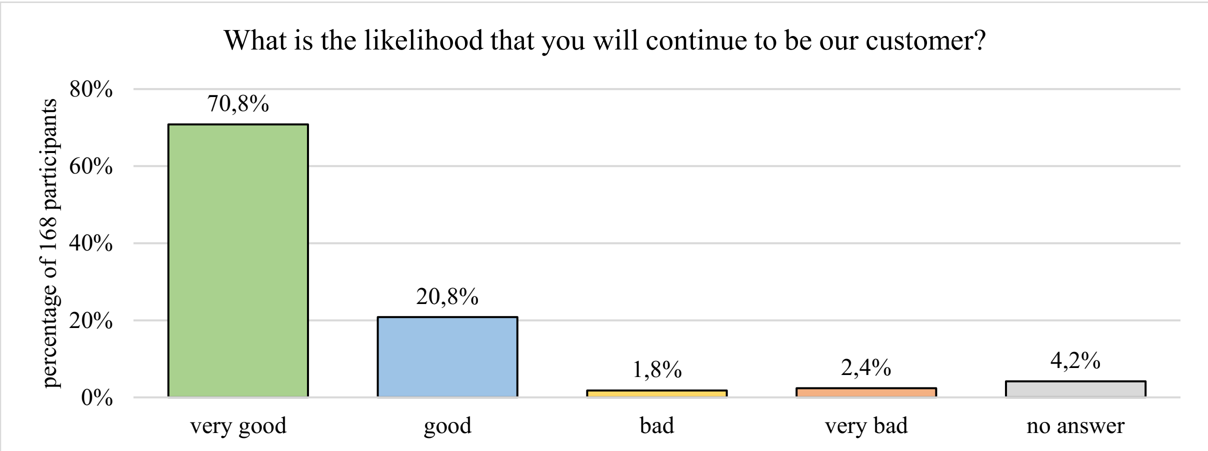

Figure 2.38: Likelihood that participants will continue to be customers of the company. Summary for F1(SQ002).

A question about the likelihood of participants to continue being customers of the company is the last question asked in this chapter. The results are similar to the last question about the recommendation (see figure 2.38). The loyalty of customers is very important for keeping them. Figure 2.38 shows that over 90 % of the customers rated the likelihood of being a customer “very high” to high”. This results in a high customer loyalty.

As a conclusion the overall satisfaction with the company can be considered “very high” to “high” and the customer loyalty can also be considered “very high” to “high”. The fact that a high percentage of the customers (75.5 %) are customers of the company for more than 3 years speaks for a high customer loyalty and satisfaction. Getting customers in the first place is not part of this thesis and needs to be investigated by the company itself. The high overall satisfaction and customer loyalty can be considered as a strength of the company.

2.1.3.2.4 Possible Competencies

Section "C1" of the online survey had the objective to identify possible competencies of Autohaus Loitz. Therefore 14 questions were asked (SQ001 to SQ014) where the customers had to rate possible competences of the company. 10 of the questions are analysed in this chapter.

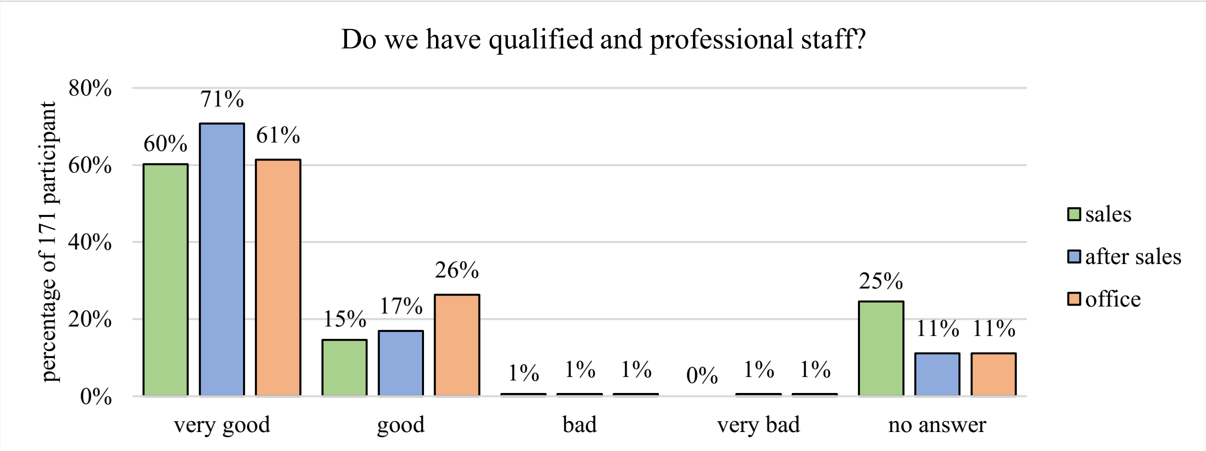

Figure 2.39: Qualification and professionality of the staff/employees. Summary for C1(SQ003, SQ004, SQ005).

The first question series in the section "C1" of the survey analysed what customers think about the company's staff. The staff was divided into three groups. Those groups were sales, after-sales and office. The results of the three questions are displayed in figure 2.39. Overall the evaluation is very promising. Nearly 100 % of the participants who answered the question rated the qualification and professionality of the staff as "very good" or "good". The highest rated group was after-sales. Comparing the amount of "no answers" for "after-sales" and "sales" of figure 2.36 on page 61 with those two sectors in figure 2.39 the results are tendentially the same. Most of the customers know after-sales and the office. If "no answers" are not considered for the calculation of the percentage, sales department ranks higher than after-sales. The qualified and professional staff can be considered as an important competence of the company. This result is additionally used for analysing the competences in chapter 2.2.1 on page 74.

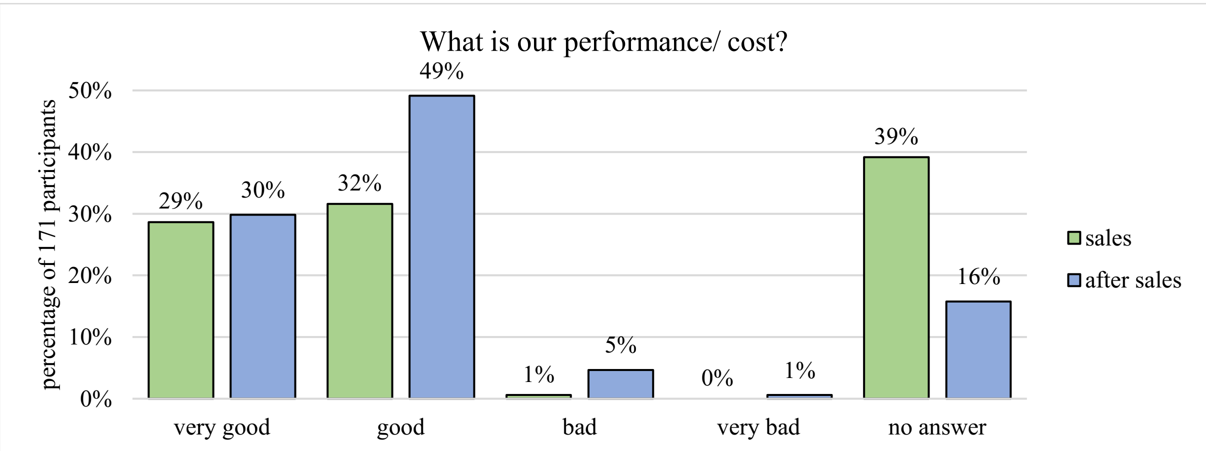

Figure 2.40: How the performance per cost has been rated by the participants of the customer survey. Summary for C1(SQ006, SQ007).

Figure 2.40 compares the performance per cost of the sales and after-sales department. 50 % of the customers think that the performance per cost of the after-sales is "good". If the high amount of 39 %

giving no answers is not used for the calculation of the percentages, sales would have a better performance per cost ratio than after-sales from the perspective of the customers.

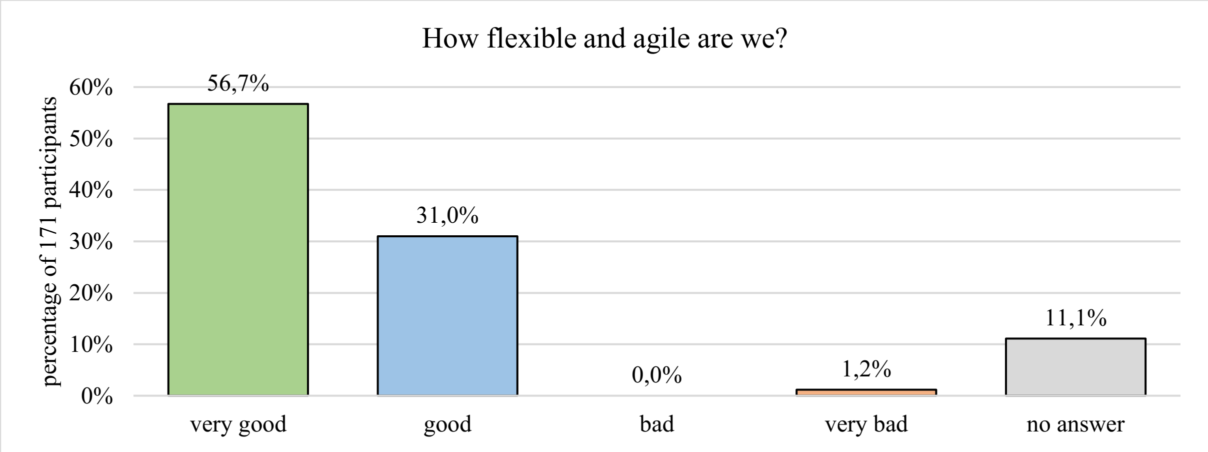

Figure 2.41: Flexibility and agility of the company. Summary for C1(SQ001).

Flexibility/ agility is the next possible competence of the company. The evaluation in figure 2.41 shows the results. Flexibility and agility can be added to the competences of the company in chapter 2.2.1.

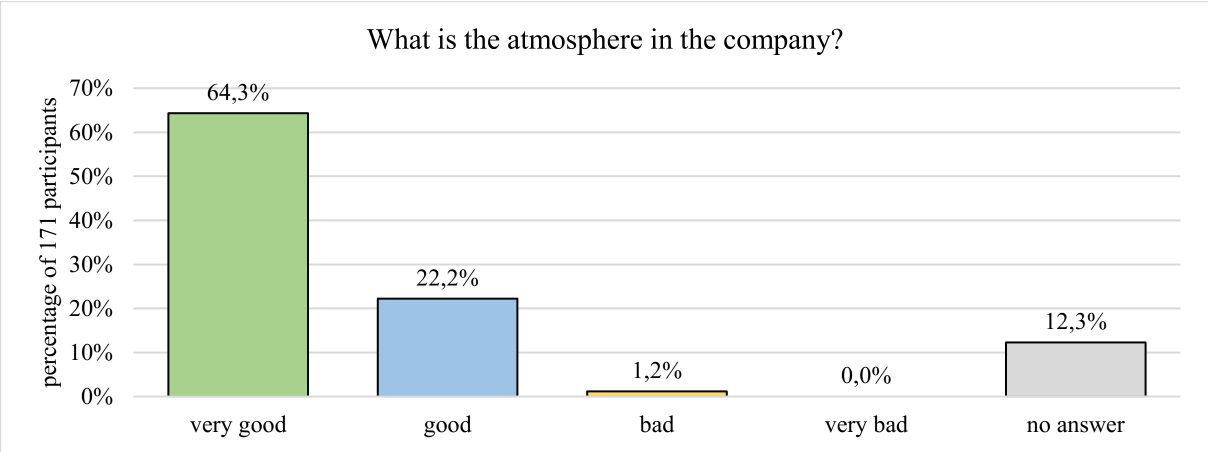

Figure 2.42: Atmosphere in the company. Summary for C1(SQ008).

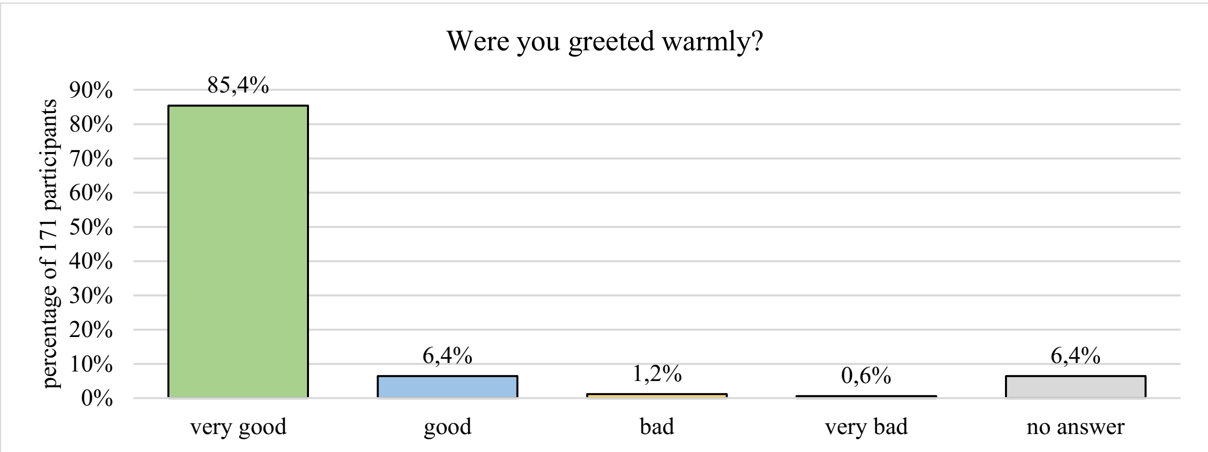

Figure 2.43: Evaluation if customers have been greeted warmly when they entered the company building. Summary for C1(SQ011).

The evaluation of the atmosphere in the company which is "very good" to "good" is shown in figure 2.42.

It is very important for the CEO of the company that every customer is greeted warmly when she or he enters the building. Therefore, that question was asked in the customer survey. The results show that the dedication of the CEO together with the engagement of the employees lead to very good results (see figure 2.43). The customer satisfaction shows similar results.

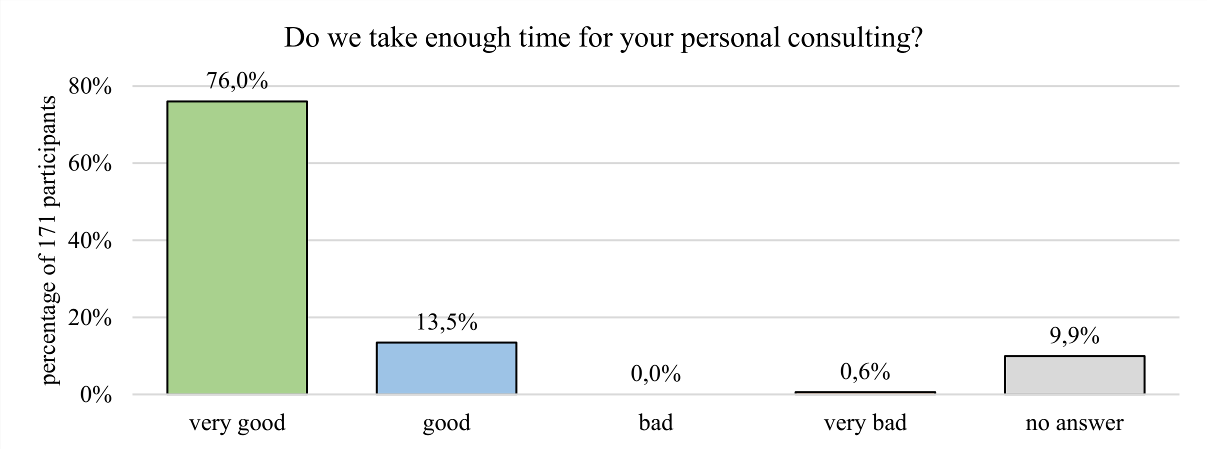

Figure 2.44: Personal consulting of customers. Summary for C1(SQ002).

According to the research of chapter 2.1.2.4 on page 43 personal consulting or consulting service is a very important factor for new car customers. Figure 2.44 shows the evaluation of the online survey regarding the personal consulting of customers. A majority of 76 % votes for "very good". Personal consulting should be considered as a competence of the company.

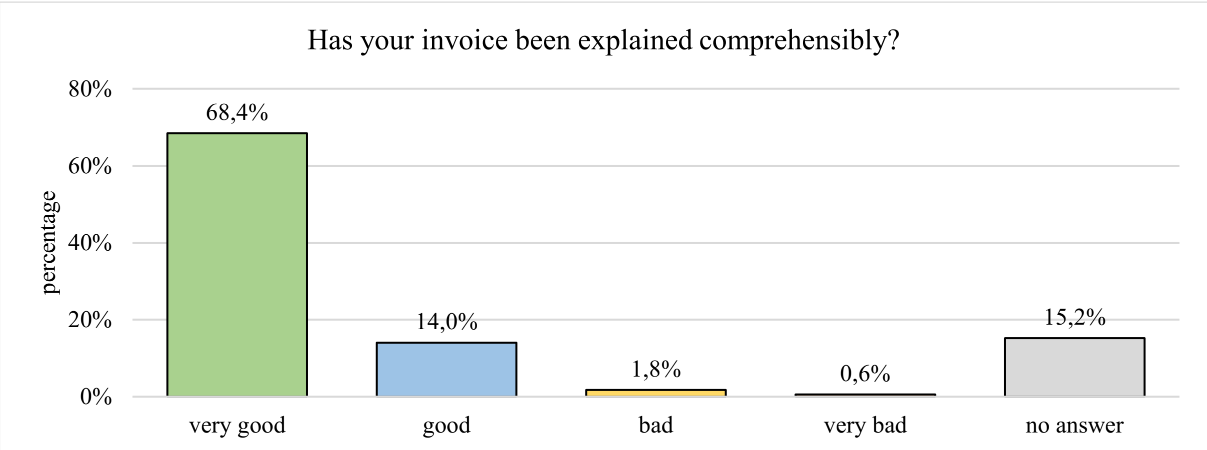

Figure 2.45: Explanation of the invoices to the customers (171 participants). Summary for C1(SQ014).

Customers want to know the precise services, tasks and parts they pay for. Therefore, every invoice is explained in detail by the office employees. If the know-how is not enough the after-sales manager explains the invoice. However, usually this is not necessary. The CEO of the company wanted to know this statistic, therefore it was added to the survey. The results can be seen in figure 2.45.

Concluding, three competencies were identified:

- qualified and professional staff
- flexibility and agility
- personal consulting

Those competences are strengths of the company.

2.1.3.2.5 Customer Requirements

Important customer requirements for automotive retail companies have been analysed in chapter 2.1.2.4 above. Result of the analysed study was that new vehicle customer requirements are (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1193):

- Price
- Consulting service
- Test drive
- After Sales / Workshop
- Vehicles on display
- Variant selection
- Additional services
- Model selection
- Supplementary program
- Brand selection
- Atmosphere

The relative importance of those factors can be seen in figure 2.46. A more detailed graph (see figure 2.27) considering the expense readiness of customers can be seen on page 47.

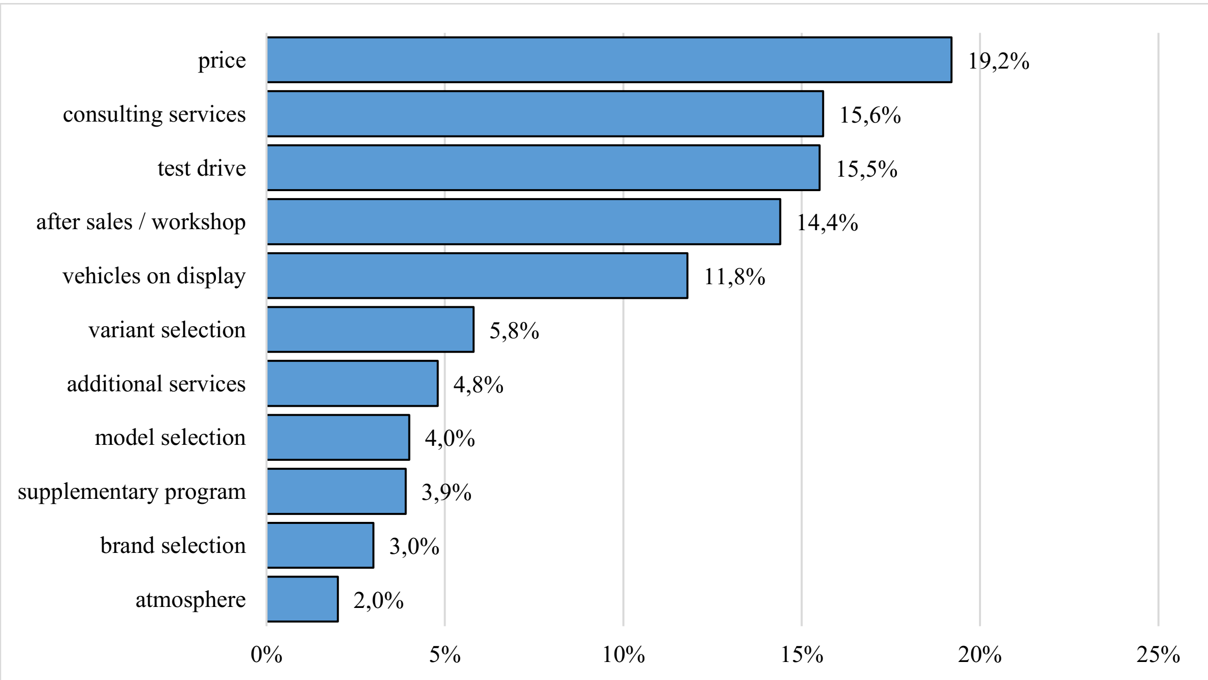

Figure 2.46: Relative importance of new car customer requirements in automotive retail (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011, p. 1193; adapted).

In the research of *Prof. Fassnacht* (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011) only new vehicle customers were asked for participation. This means those customer requirements and relative importance numbers shown in figure 2.41 are only viable for new car customers. This chapter tries to find similarities to that research.

Figure 2.47 shows the percentage of participants who are new car customers (37.3 % + 12.4 % = 49.7 %). 30.7 % bought a used car at the company (18.3 % + 12.4 %). 23.7 % are neither new- nor used car customers. They use other services from the company.

The next question asked if the customer bought his or her current car that he or she is personally driving from Autohaus Loitz. 55 percent of the participants drive a car of the company. This correlates with the question asked in figure 2.47. 62.1 % bought a new or used car at the company and 55 % are currently driving it.

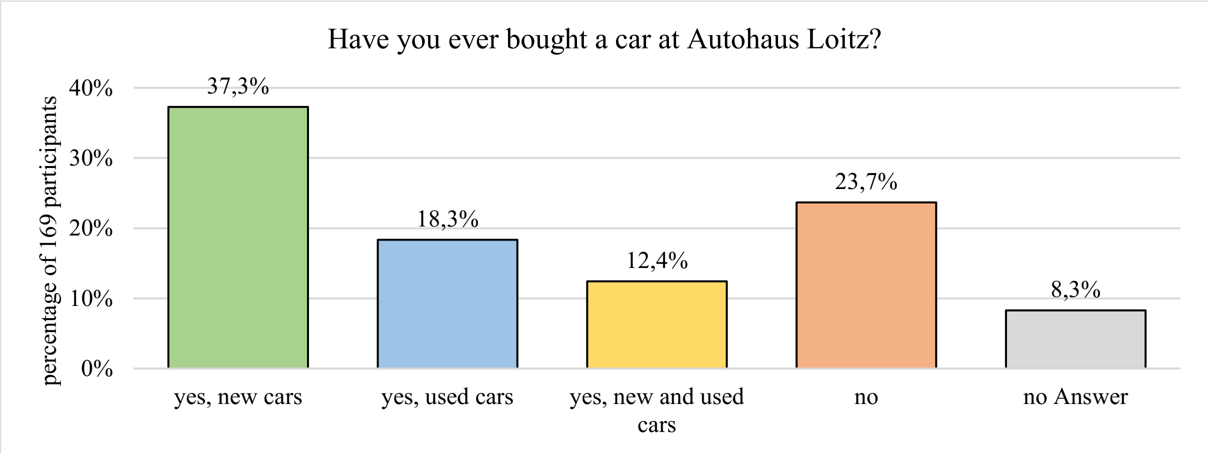

Figure 2.47: Percentage of customers who bought a new or used car at the company. Summary for D05.

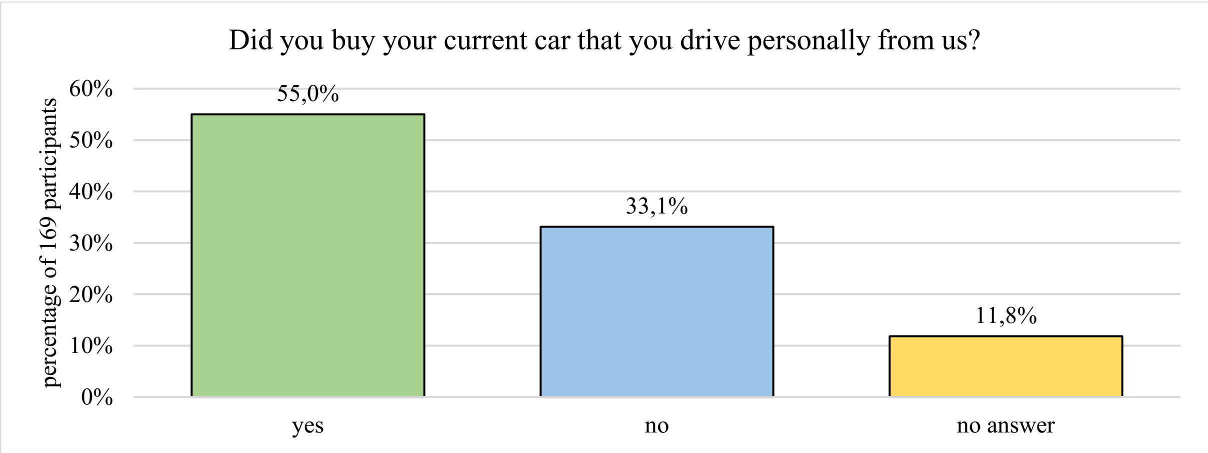

Figure 2.48: Evaluation of whether the customer is currently and personally driving a car from the firm. Summary for D06.

If the question shown in figure 2.48 was answered with yes, the follow-up question D06ja (see figure 2.49) was asked. If the answer was no, D06nein (see figure 2.50) was asked. The reasons why customers bought a car at the company can be seen in figure 2.49. This was an open question. There was no restriction in the length of the answers. Some participants wrote more factors and others only one. Those six answers displayed in the chart had the most counts. Number one reason for customers to buy a car from the company is that Autohaus Loitz is a regional retailer with after-sales. The second reason was the price. Number three was competent consulting. Trust in the company could also be considered as consulting, anyways in this chart, it is an own factor. The two answers “generally very satisfied with everything” and “long-term satisfied customer” are not considered in the evaluation. The information of those answers was too general to be useful. They could be interpreted in many ways.

Text-answers were analysed and clustered to groups. The conclusion of the evaluation of the first open question is that new- and used-car customers buy mainly due to these reasons:

- regional dealer with after-sales (location)
- price
- competent customer consulting
- generally, very satisfied with everything
- trust in the staff
- long-term satisfied customer

Those reasons are sorted by the amount of answers from top to bottom as figure 2.49 shows. There is a similarity to the new car customer requirements in figure 2.46 on page 66. If only the top four factors are considered which are price, consulting service, test drive and after-sales three of the four factors are similar.

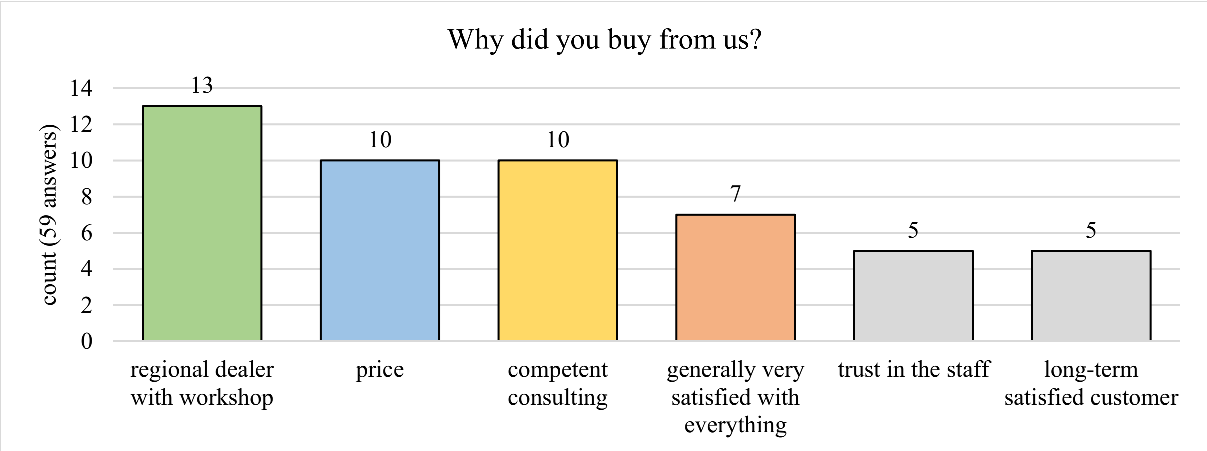

Figure 2.49: Evaluation of the reasons why the customer bought a car from the company. Summary for D06ja.

The next open question asked participants who are personally not driving a car of the company, why they did not buy their personal car from the company (see figure 2.50).

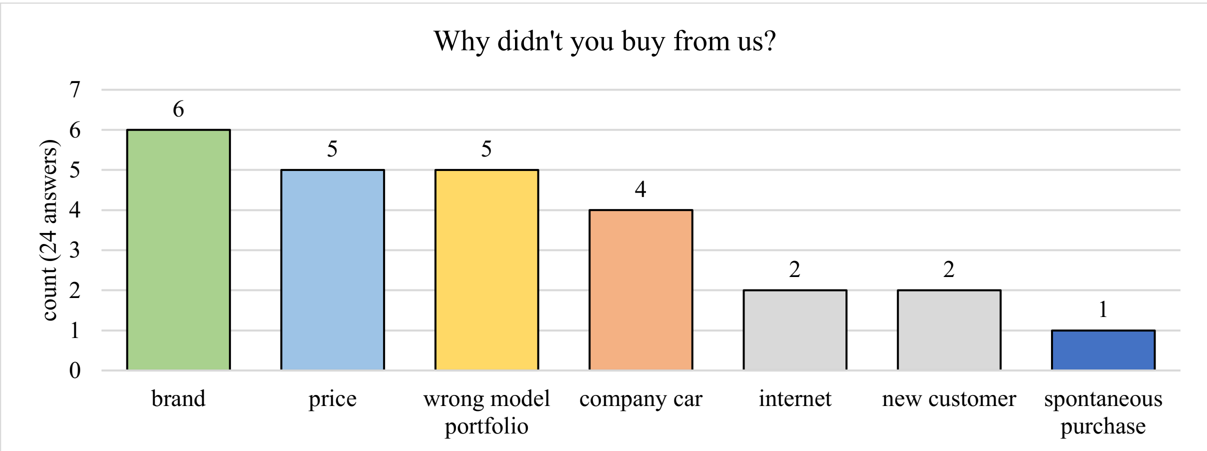

Figure 2.50: Reasons why the customers did not buy a car from Autohaus Loitz. Summary for D06nein.

The negative answers were analysed and clustered in groups using the process from before. The conclusion of the evaluation of the second open question is that new- and used-car customers did not buy mainly due to these reasons:

- brand
- price
- wrong model portfolio
- company car
- internet
- new customer
- spontaneous purchase

The “brand” was number one reason for customers not to buy from the company. Number three was “wrong model portfolio” which is highly dependent on the brand itself. Therefore, those two factors are considered as the same. This means many after-sales customers would buy new cars at the company if the brand was different.

Number two was the price. This was a reason for many customers to buy from the company. Price is very important for customers (Fassnacht *et al.*, 2011).

Other potential new- and used-vehicle customers drive a company car or are new customers to the company or bought spontaneously at another dealer.

The conclusion of the second open question is that brand, price and owning a company-car are the most counted reasons for not buying a car from Autohaus Loitz. Customers like to have a regional dealer with after-sales, a good price, competent consulting and trust in the staff.

2.1.3.2.6 Strengths and Weaknesses

This chapter evaluates the results of two open questions and summarises the strengths and weaknesses of the other parts of the customer survey. In section B, which was the second question group of the survey, two open questions were asked:

- What is the one thing we should not change in any case?
- If you could change one thing at Autohaus Loitz, what would that be?

Those two open questions tried to identify strengths and weaknesses of the company. The first question tried to identify strengths of the company. For this question 91 valid answers were given. Figure 2.51 shows the things the company should not change from the perspective of customers who participated in the survey. Similar answers were grouped and the seven groups with the most answers are shown in the chart.

54 answers included the word friendliness. The result of the customer satisfaction evaluation on page 59 also showed that the staff of the company is considered very friendly. Four participants wrote to never change the family-atmosphere and family business management. Since the establishment of the company the CEO has always been a family member. The question is what are the factors that make the customer believe a company has family-atmosphere? Friendliness can be considered as an important factor enhancing the family-atmosphere of a company. An additional factor is that most of the time two to three family-members are in the company.

For 9 customers the excellent customer service is the thing the company should never change with 5 out of the 9 specifically mentioning Hubert W. as an excellent manager of after-sales and after-sales service. Two participants wrote that the company should not change taking the customers seriously which can also be considered as good customer service. A good customer service always takes the customer serious. The excellent customer service can be considered as a strength and a competence of the company.

Three participants mentioned the car-wash and car-care services. There is only one competitor in the close region around Gallneukirchen who offers a car-wash. This competitor is the “OMV Station Engerwitzdorf” which is located directly after the Gallneukirchen-exit at the motorway.

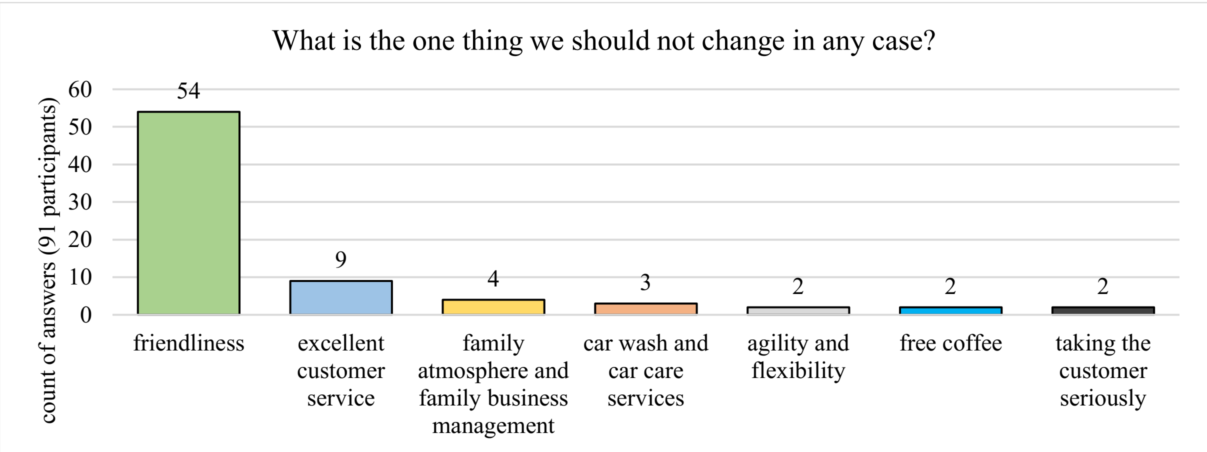

Figure 2.51: Things the company should not change from the perspective of customers who participated in the survey. Summary for B1.

Two participants mentioned the agility and flexibility of the company as a thing the company should not change in any case. Flexibility/ agility has been listed as a possible competence in the last section. Customers rated it as “very high” to “high” and was therefore considered as competence (see Figure 2.41 on page 64). To be agile and flexible can also be considered a strength of the company.

Free coffee which is provided for customers of the company was mentioned by two participants.

The second question in section B tried to identify weaknesses of the firm (see figure 2.52). Therefore, the participants were asked to change one thing in the company. 58 valid answers have been counted. 15 participants answered that “nothing should be changed”. This is in line with the overall high satisfaction of respondents.

Nine participants would change the parking situation and the accessibility of the company. This fact is known by the employees and management of the company. At the current company-location more space for parking and access is not possible. This is a major weakness of the company.

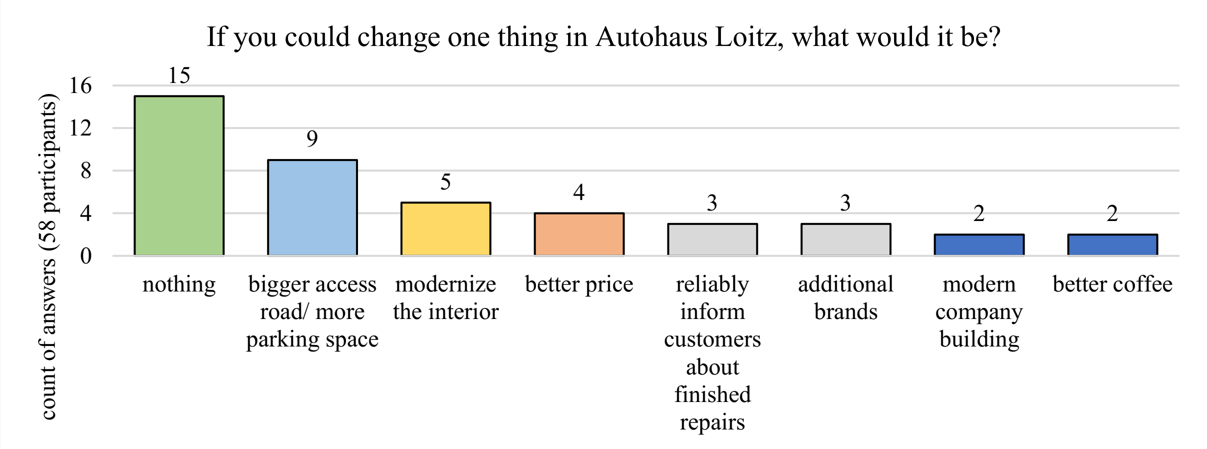

Figure 2.52: Things the company should change from the perspective of customers who participated in the survey. Summary for B2.

Modernization of the interior was asked by 5 participants. They want a modern reception and customer space where customers can relax during waiting periods. Two people want a modern company building.

Three people want additional brands but did not suggest specific brands.

Interesting information is that three people want reliable information about finished repairs. This could indicate that they have had a bad experience getting informed in time about their finished repair. The CEO of the company was informed. Following this result, the issue had been addressed internally.

Further, two people want better coffee.

As a conclusion some strengths and weaknesses were identified by the participating customers in the online survey:

- Strengths:
  - excellent customer service
  - agility and flexibility
- Weakness:
  - not enough space at the current location (customer parking, sales)

2.1.3.3 Opportunities and Threats

Table 2.13 summarises opportunities and threats coming from the competitive arena investigated with the help of the tools used in this chapter. Some factors come from the competition and some from the customer analysis. In this table the opportunities and threats are not sorted. Those factors are input-data for the SWOT-Analysis and are summarised in chapter 2.1.4 on page 73.

Opportunities	Threats
• specialisation in customers with higher age • addressing new customers • additional marketing for car-care • selling more premium used cars	• high number of competitors • high rivalry among existing competitors • vertical integration of OEMs possible (e.g. VW) • small percentage of young customers (23.2 % under 40; 6.7 % under 30 years)

Table 2.13: Opportunities and threats coming from the competitive arena.

2.1.3.4 Strengths and Weaknesses

In literature strengths and weaknesses are not included in the environmental analysis. Nevertheless, there have been strengths and weaknesses identified due to the structure of the survey. For reasons of clarity it makes sense to mention those factors in this chapter. A strict separation of those findings is difficult to perform. The strategy formulation merges those strengths and weaknesses with the ones of chapter 2.2.

Table 2.14 summarises strengths and weaknesses coming from the competitive arena investigated with the help of the tools used in this chapter. In this table the strengths and weaknesses are not sorted. Those factors are input-data for the SWOT-Analysis and are summarised in chapter 2.1.4 on page 73.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• excellent customer service • agility and flexibility • qualified and professional staff • high customer satisfaction and loyalty • regional dealer with after-sales (location) • competent customer consulting • high trust in the staff	• brand • model portfolio • not enough space at the current location (customer parking, sales) • too little differentiation to competition

Table 2.14: Strengths and weaknesses coming from the competitive arena.

The customers rated the staff of the company as very highly qualified and professional. This was the finding of the possible competencies section on page 63. Figure 2.39 shows the evaluation about the qualification and professionality of the staff. The high overall customer satisfaction and loyalty was the result of the customer satisfaction part (see chapter 2.1.3.2.3). The other strengths and weaknesses were identified in the open questions at the customer requirements. It was asked why people bought their car at the company or why they did not buy at the company. Price was the reason for many people to buy a car and for many people to buy no car, therefore the factor price is not included as a strength or weakness.

2.1.4 Summary of Opportunities and Threats

Table 2.15 summarises the opportunities and threats the environment exerts on the company. The factors of this table are used for the prioritisation-part of the SWOT-Framework in chapter 4.1 on page 102.

	Opportunities	Threats
Macroenvironment (chapter 2.1.1)	• electrification • connectivity • demographic change • autonomous driving • car-sharing • strong economy • aesthetics • cryptocurrency • big data & predictive analytics • diverse mobility	• shortage of skilled workers • global warming • share economy • strict EU-emission laws • change in buying behaviour • increased social and ecological awareness (LOHAS) • change in values of employees • artificial intelligence AI
Industry (chapter 2.1.2)	• very large market size • establishing a larger dealership • additional core-services • premium car market (sales and after-sales) • car-sharing market • expanding the car-care business • smartphone app (customer loyalty)	• mature industry • high number of competitors • car-sales strongly dependent on good economic situation • high threat of new entrants • price pressure by large retailers • high bargaining power of the OEMs • very low switching costs
Competitive Arena (chapter 2.1.3)	• specialisation in customers with higher age • addressing new customers • additional marketing for car-care • selling more premium used cars	• high number of competitors • high rivalry among existing competitors • vertical integration of OEMs possible (e.g. VW) • small percentage of young customers (23.2 % under 40; 6.7 % under 30 years)

Table 2.15: Summary of opportunities and threats due to the company environment.

2.2 Company Analysis

The first step was to investigate the environment of the company. The next step is to analyse key internal factors that affect performance. Figure 2.1 on page 6 shows the layers of strategic analysis with the company in its centre. This chapter shifts the perspective from the company's external environment and its impact on performance to its internal environment and its strengths and weaknesses. A "fit" between a firm's resources, capabilities, and core competencies needs to be created by the company. For a better preparation towards the future, an adaption of those three elements should be considered. (Wunder, 2016, p. 113)

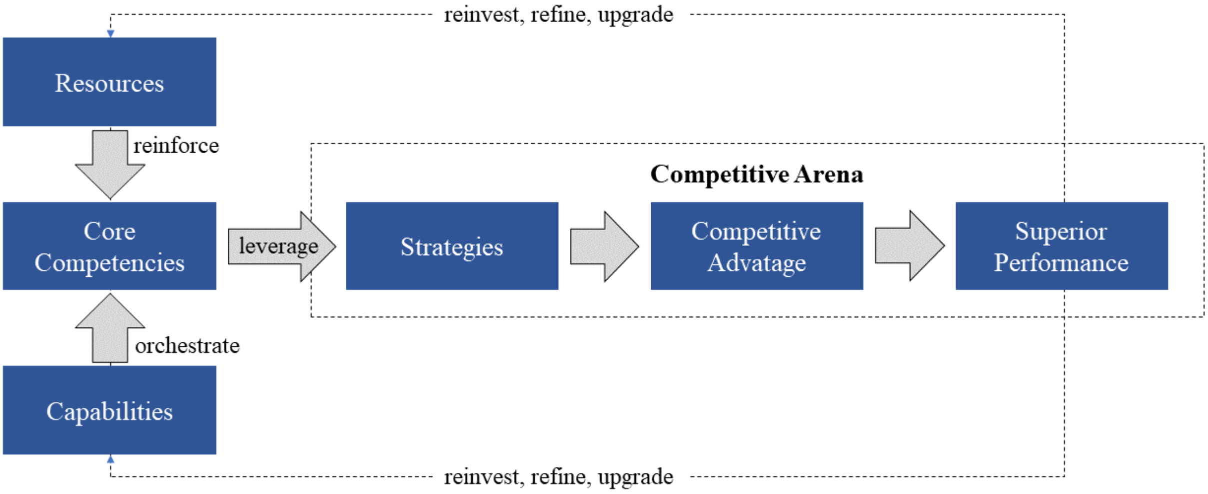

Figure 2.53: Principle of the resource-based view of strategy (Wunder, 2016, p. 113; adapted)

Figure 2.53 shows the relationship of core competencies, resources, capabilities, and strategy which is considered as the foundation of the resource-based approach. The right-hand side of the illustration describes that a strategy leads to a competitive advantage which will create superior performance. It also implicates that strategy is about gaining, sustaining, and renewing competitive advantage. Key ingredients of a strategy in the resource-based view are the resources and capabilities of a company that are evaluated as to the firm's strengths, weaknesses, and impact. If certain requirements are fulfilled those strengths can be expressed as core competencies. (Wunder, 2016, p. 113 f)

2.2.1 Analysing Resources, Capabilities and Competencies

Resources are assets a firm can draw upon when developing and executing strategy. There are two categories of resources. On the one hand, there are tangible resources which are assets having physical attributes and are typically visible. Examples for tangible resources are land, labour, capital, human resources, plant facilities, equipment, buildings, supplies, finances, IT-related software, hardware and networks. On the other hand, intangible resources as assets with no physical attributes and are thus not visible. Intangible resources could be intellectual properties such as patents or copyrights, reputation, brand equity, knowledge, organisational culture, trust, capacity to innovate, organisational structure and managerial capacity. Those intangible resources are strongly affecting a firm's performance. (Wunder, 2016, p. 114)

Capabilities are intangible organisational and managerial skills built over a large timespan that allows a firm to organise, exploit and strategically deploy its valuable resources. Those capabilities consist of organisational and process routines. Capabilities describe how well a company is managing their resources to solve problems turning inputs into outputs. Specific groups in the company have specific knowledge. Examples are marketing capabilities, supply chain capabilities, research and development capabilities or human resource management capabilities. (Wunder, 2016, p. 114)

Resources and capabilities are both strongly related to specific areas within a company. What makes a company successful is typically not based on individual capabilities but on a cross-functional integration and coordination of capabilities. This will be referred as organisational **competencies**. (Wunder, 2016, p. 114)

There are different approaches for analysing internal factors (i.e. its resources, capabilities and competences) of a company. The first approach used in this thesis is the Strengths and Weaknesses Profile. "The big advantages of developing strengths and weaknesses profiles are the systematic and intuitively understandable procedure as well as the comprehensive, yet customised development of evaluation criteria." (Wunder, 2016, p. 116)

According to Thomas Wunder the "Strengths and Weaknesses Profile" consists of four major steps: (Wunder, 2016, p. 115 f)

- Identification and selection of relevant evaluation criteria
- Definition of evaluation process
- Evaluation of success factors
- Consolidation of strengths and weaknesses

2.2.1.1 Relevant Evaluation Criteria

The first step in conducting a Strengths and Weaknesses Profile is to identify and select strategic success factors that are likely to have an impact on the company's performance. One approach for identifying and selecting those success factors is to use a generic checklist from which each factor is evaluated regarding its success-relevancy for Autohaus Loitz. Only the highly relevant success factors should be selected for the Strengths and Weaknesses Profile. (Wunder, 2016, p. 115)

Potential Areas	**Potential Success Factors**
Marketing	branding, advertising, innovation, market share, differentiation, customer satisfaction, brand awareness
Sales	distribution channels, sales development, sales network, pricing, customer structure and retention, product portfolio, quality, image, cooperation's and strategic alliances, efficiency
After Market	workshop and equipment, service quality, image, value adding services, know-how, fulfilment of customer requirements, agility, flexibility, productivity, cost structure, capacity utilisation, lead time, efficiency, economy
Procurement	supplier structure and dependencies, stock-holding and control, stock turnover, stock system, needs-oriented, efficiency
Human Resources	qualified personal, age structure, talent pool, payment, motivation, willingness to learn, employee fluctuation, working atmosphere, employer image, employee-oriented, respect, teamwork, employee training
Organisation	organisational structure, operational structure, adaptability/agility, knowledge management, customer focus, information management, efficiency, fair rewards, outsourcing,
Leadership	quality of decisions, leadership style, goals, inspiration, motivation, transparency, detailed delegation, goals, authentic leader

Finance	Equity base, leverage, financial power, liquidity, profit development, profitability,
Accounting	cost allocation, cost control, cost planning, profit and sales planning, efficiency of repetitive work, early-warning system, controlling

Table 2.16: Areas and potential success factors for analysing strengths and weaknesses (Wunder, 2016, p. 116; adapted).

For the evaluation of the success factors a generic checklist with all the factors of table 2.16 was created. This checklist was handed out to five employees in leading positions and the CEO of Autohaus Loitz. The goal of this checklist was to get rid of factors which are not leading to success for the company. After comparing and evaluating the completed checklists of the participants it was observed that the results were very similar. The evaluation of the survey can be seen in appendix-3. Table 2.17 shows an excerpt of the summarised checklist for the area marketing. This checklist was done in German, but the results will be presented in English. For example, advertising was the only factor rated as neutral in table 2.17. Only success factors considered having a strong impact on the company are used for the employee survey. Therefore, the factor advertising was not included in the employee survey.

Areas	**Success Factors**	**Rating of the Factors**																		
		small impact						neutral							strong impact					
		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Marketing	branding																	X		
	advertising												X							
	innovation															X				
	[redacted]																			
	differentiation																		X	
	customer satisfaction																	X		
	brand awareness														X					

Table 2.17: Excerpt from the summarised checklist of possible company specific success factors.

After the evaluation was finished a discussion between the participants took place. In that discussion redundant factors of the generic checklist were identified and erased. For example, the conclusion was made that the areas finance and accounting are not important for this specific task. The reason is that not all employees have good enough insight to evaluate finance and accounting in a satisfying manner. Another example can be seen in table 2.17 where the market-share was considered unimportant as success factor for the company. Other unimportant factors of the generic checklist were deleted as well. There were new success factors discovered in the discussion, which have been included in the resulting survey.

The most important success factors for the company are summarised in table 2.18. Factors which had been rated as weak or neutral are not included in table 2.18.

Area	**Success Factors for Autohaus Loitz**
Marketing	branding, innovation, differentiation, brand awareness
Sales	distribution channels, customer retention in sales, customer satisfaction in sales, product portfolio, sales quality, sales image, cooperation’s and strategic alliances, sales efficiency, brand awareness
After Market	service quality, after-market image, know-how, fulfilment of customer requirements, agility/flexibility, productivity/efficiency, after market customer retention, after market customer satisfaction
Procurement	supplier-structures, needs-oriented products, efficiency in procurement
Human Resources	qualified personal, balanced age structure, motivation, willingness to learn, working atmosphere, employer image, respectful social interaction, teamwork, employee training, loyalty to the company
Organisation	organisational structure / detailed distribution of responsibilities, operational structure, adaptability/agility, customer focus, knowledge management, fair distribution of rewards
Leadership	quality of decisions, leadership style, goals, authentic leader

Table 2.18: Areas and success factors for Autohaus Loitz.

2.2.1.2 Definition of Evaluation Process

With the results shown in table 2.18 the basic procedure for conducting the analysis needs to be determined. To analyse how good the company performs at specific success-factors the employees of the company were invited to complete a survey based on the potential success-factors of table 2.18.

The survey contains all the potential success-factors shown in table 2.18 with additional explanations. With those explanations all the participants should be able to understand the success-factors in the way they were meant to be understood by the creator. The explanations can be found in appendix-4 at the end of the thesis which shows the used employee survey.

Each success-factor can be evaluated with four selection options. The answers are represented by smileys. Those smileys mean very good, good, bad or very bad. The reason for choosing four and not five selection options was to lower the tendency of choosing the neutral middle. This way the participants had to choose a clear tendency. The evaluation-scale is defined as follows: very good = 1, good = 2, bad = 3 and very bad = 4. Every answer of each question was added with the representing number and then divided by the amount of answers. This led to an average number between 1 and 4 where 1 is the best rating possible and 4 the worst. Basically, the same pattern as in the customer survey was used for this employee survey.

2.2.1.3 Evaluation of Success Factors

Fourteen employees participated in this survey. This survey shows the perspective of the employees of the company. Thomas Wunder writes that identifying strengths and weaknesses is always comparative and therefore it should be evaluated in comparison to key competitors (Wunder, 2016, p. 115 f). It is not possible to get this kind of information from the company's key competitors. Therefore, this analysis is not done in a comparative manner. Nevertheless, the results show several strengths and weaknesses. Figure 2.55 on page 79 shows the evaluation result.

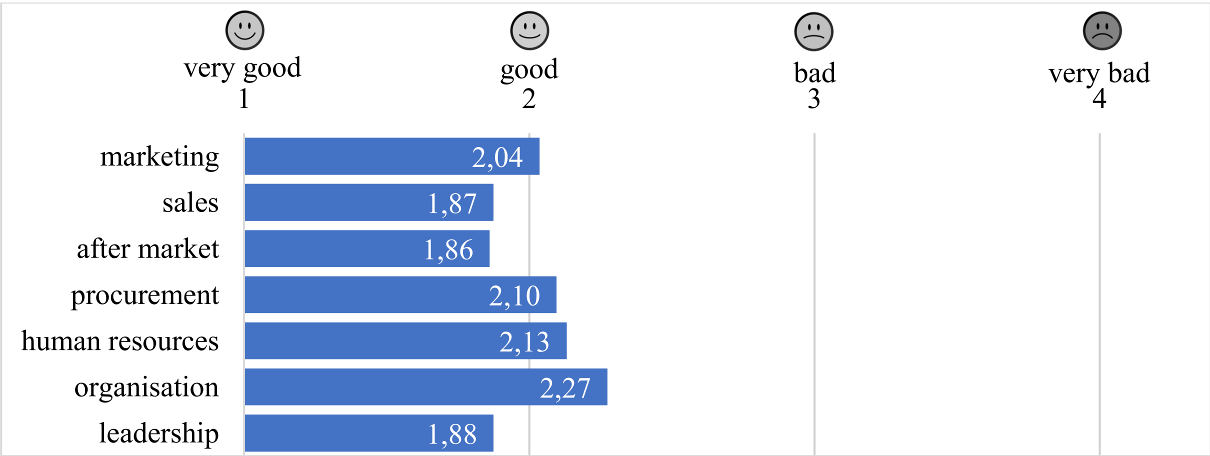

Figure 2.54: Summary of the evaluation in the 7 different areas in total.

The average of the area-specific factors leads to the result shown in figure 2.54. This is an overall interpretation of the company's strengths and weaknesses. According to figure 2.54 after market is the highest rated business area of this survey-evaluation. Sales are following very close on the second place. The third place is leadership.

No factor weights were applied. Therefore, a more meaningful conclusion can be drawn by comparing each individual factor. Figure 2.55 shows each evaluated factor with its rating.

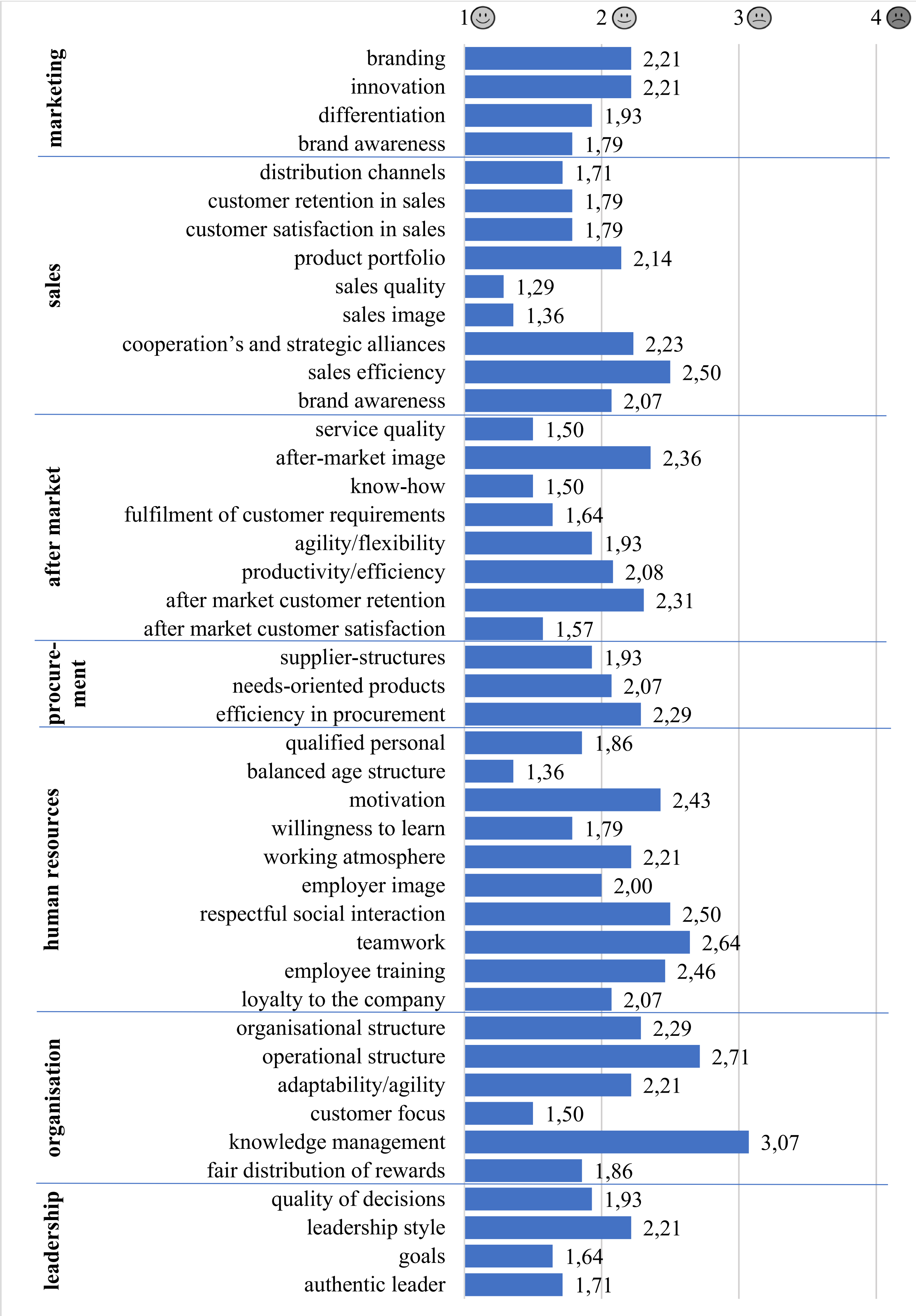

Figure 2.55: Evaluation of 44 success-factors from the employee survey.

2.2.1.4 Consolidation of Strengths and Weaknesses

Figure 2.56 shows the six highest rated success-factors of the employee survey. The first two factors are sales-related. Our employees rate the quality and image of our new- and used car sales very good. The third highest rated factor is the balanced age-structure of the employees. The service quality, the know-how and the customer orientation are positioned between very good and good. Those six factors can be interpreted as the top success-factors of the company rated by the employees.

Figure 2.56: Top 6 success-factors of the employee survey.

The six factors lead to five strengths of the company:

- quality and image of sales
- balanced age-structure of employees
- high service quality
- know-how
- customer focus

This research additionally showed weaknesses which must be addressed by the company. The six possible success-factors with the worst rating can be seen in figure 2.57.

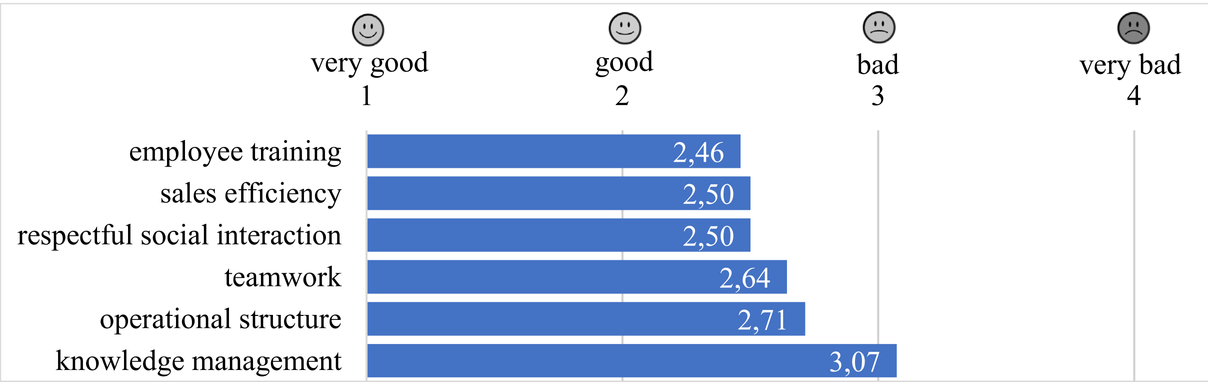

Figure 2.57: Weaknesses of Autohaus Loitz.

Weaknesses can be defined:

- information and knowledge management
- operational structure
- teamwork
- respectful social interaction
- sales efficiency
- employee training

Those results are summarised at the end of this chapter and are candidates for being included in the final SWOT consolidation in chapter 4 on page 99.

2.2.2 Identifying Core Competencies

Strengths are desirable for any company but might not be enough for gaining and sustaining advantages against other companies with similar strengths. A different perspective on a company's strengths and weaknesses can be achieved by applying the concept of core competencies. Core competencies are competencies a company has, which are superior to comparable competencies of the competition. As Thomas Wunder cites (Wunder, 2016, p. 123), core competencies are "unique strengths, embedded deep within a firm, that allow a firm to differentiate its products and services from those of its rivals, creating higher value for the customer or offering products and services of comparable value at lower cost." (Rothaermel, 2013, p. 86) Additionally to unique and rare a core competence needs to be difficult for competitors to imitate or substitute. (Wunder, 2016, p. 122 f)

The VRIO model provides a framework to analyse if competencies are core competencies. Those core competencies need to provide an advantage in competition. According to figure 2.58 a competency needs to be assessed with a set of essential criteria. (Wunder, 2016, p. 124)

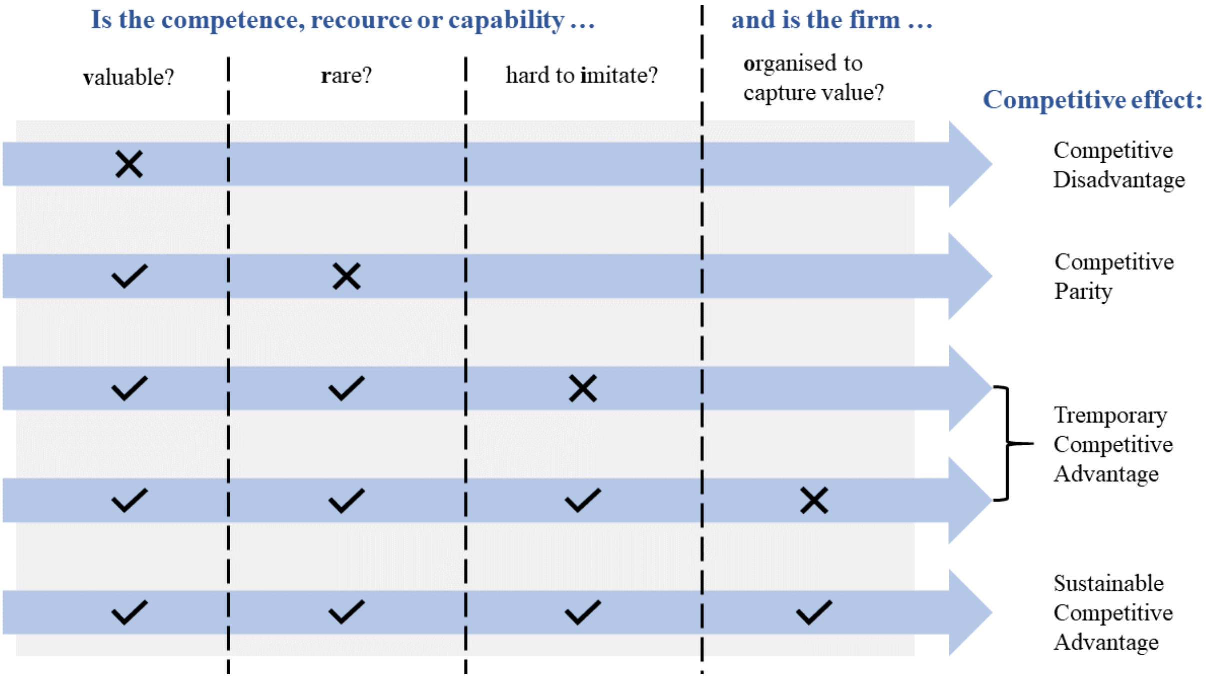

Figure 2.58: Evaluating competencies for their competitive implications (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 286; adapted; Wunder, 2016, p. 125; adapted).

Those questions are formed out of the essential criteria (Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 286; Wunder, 2016, p. 124; Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 393 f):

- **The Question of Value**: Do a firm's resources and capabilities enable the firm to respond to environmental threats or opportunities? The competence needs a strategic value. That means that the competence needs to significantly and sustainably increase the competitive position and the efficiency of the firm. Additionally, a valuable competence can help a company to increase the perceived value of their products and services in the eyes of the customers.
- **The Question of Rareness**: How many competing firms already possess valuable resources and capabilities? Rare means that the competence is unique and there are only a few or no firms having this competence. From a strategic point of view, the routines, skills and tangible assets that companies possess do not create any differentiation advantages, but only a competitive

equality. However, competencies shared by several companies are by no means considered worthless.

- **The Question of Imitability**: Do firms without a resource or capability face a cost disadvantage in obtaining it compared to firms that already possess it? A competence is hard to imitate when it cannot be developed or bought easily by other companies. This also includes substitute products that provide similar value to the customer. It should only be possible by competitors to copy a core competence at high costs.
- **The Question of Organization**: Is a firm organised to exploit the full competitive potential of its resources and capabilities? Organised to capture value means that the company's organisation is designed to fully exploit the competence's value (e. g. organisational structures, organisational culture, business processes, managerial infrastructure). Therefore, core competences arise only from the interaction of abilities, routines and material assets with the supportive structures, processes and systems of the company.

Answering these four questions allows a preliminary assessment of whether the company's resources are core competencies, generating returns and competitive advantages, or more akin to basic skills across the industry (Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 395).

A competence should only be named a "core-competency" if it fulfils all criteria in the VRIO model.

Interpreting the answers of the VRIO framework additionally generates strengths and weaknesses for the SWOT-analysis. Figure 2.59 shows the relationship between the VRIO framework and the SWOT analysis. This is another way of interpreting the VRIO framework. If a competence is not valuable it is considered as a weakness. Every competence which is valuable is a strength of the company regarding the SWOT analysis.

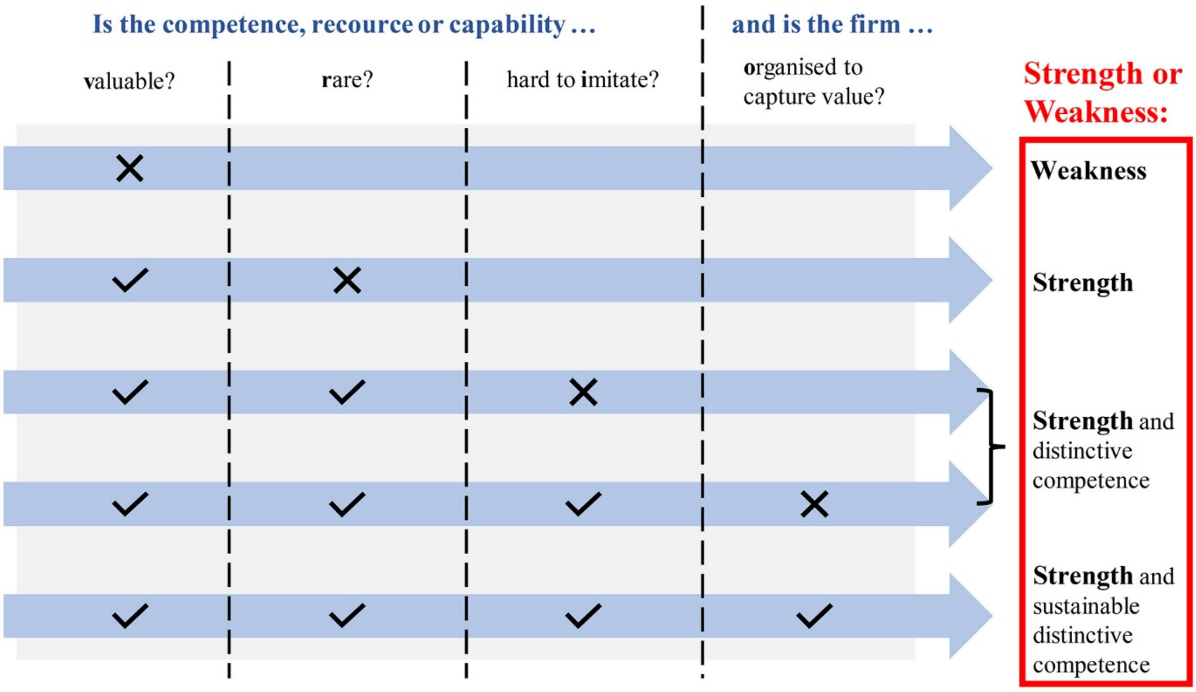

Figure 2.59: The relationship between the VRIO framework and the traditional SWOT analysis of strengths and weaknesses (Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 395; adapted).

The most promising and best rated success-factors of figure 2.55 are used as resources and capabilities for conducting the VRIO analysis. Additionally, the competences identified at the evaluation of the customer survey (chapter 2.1.3.2.4 on page 63) are added to the VRIO analysis.

The evaluation of table 2.19 was obtained by a meeting with key employees of the company. The results show that the company only has three core competencies. Those core competencies are “agility and flexibility”, “the overall company image”, and “the company location”. Agility and flexibility describe the ability of the company to quickly adapt to changes in the business. If the CEO wants to give employees new information about something, all employees are gathered in approximately 10 minutes. This is possible due to the small number of twenty-two employees. Nevertheless, the company has difficulties in the process organisation and information flow. This was a finding of the last chapter. This problem can also be recognised in this chapter. There are several competencies which are not considered as core-competencies because of the poor internal processes. Those competencies are “high sales image´”, “technical know-how”, “after-market customer satisfaction”, “corporate social responsibility”, and “authentic leader”. For example, the after-market customer satisfaction is one of those capabilities which is valuable, rare and hard to imitate but the company’s process organisation is not supporting it to its full capabilities. Another example is the social responsibility. Loitz GmbH takes actions regarding corporate social responsibility but the organisational processes could do more to promote it in public. The full potential of this capability is not exploited.

Resource or capability	Valuable?	Rare?	Hard to imitate?	Organised to capture value?	Competitive effect
high sales quality	✓	✓	✗		temp. comp. adv.
high sales image	✓	✓	✓	✗	temp. comp. adv.
high service quality	✓	✓	✗		temp. comp. adv.
technical know-how	✓	✓	✓	✗	temp. comp. adv.
agility and flexibility	✓	✓	✓	✓	sustain. comp. adv
after market customer satisfaction	✓	✓	✓	✗	temp. comp. adv.
qualified and professional staff	✓	✗			competitive parity
corporate social responsibility	✓	✓	✓	✗	temp. comp. adv.
customer experience	✓	✗			competitive parity
competent customer consulting	✓	✓	✗		temp. comp. adv.
car care	✓	✗			competitive parity
authentic leader	✓	✓	✓	✗	temp. comp. adv.
overall company image	✓	✓	✓	✓	sustain. comp. adv
company location	✓	✓	✓	✓	sustain. comp. adv
insurance service	✓	✗			competitive parity

Table 2.19: VRIO framework of the company.

To ensure sustainable success in the future the leadership of the company must rethink its strategy. Additional organisational processes supporting possible core competences need to be developed.

The core competency “company location” needs further explanation. One reason of this thesis is the circumstance that the current location is too small for further growth as outlined in the abstract and in the beginning of chapter 1. The location mentioned here as a core-competency is the region the company is located. Gallneukirchen has 6199 inhabitants (counted in 2014, Statistic Austria) and the only automotive retailer company is Autohaus Loitz. The regions around Gallneukirchen has many small car dealers as described in the competitor analysis in chapter 2.1.3.1. Nevertheless, the number of potential customers in the region around the company is very high.

“Agility and flexibility” are very important core competencies of the company. Autohaus Loitz tries to be flexible and agile whenever it is needed. As mentioned on the last page, agility and flexibility describe the ability of the company to quickly adapt to all sorts of changes. The PESTEL analysis in chapter 2.1.1 showed that this competence is mandatory for companies working in the automotive retail sector.

The company image is the last identified core-competency in the VRIO framework. The company has a well-known reputation in the region and the company image is very good. It is very hard to build a high amount of trust in the customer-base. This often takes many years. The result of the customer survey in chapter 2.1.3.2 was that that the company image overall is very good.

The current core competencies of Loitz GmbH are shown in figure 2.60:

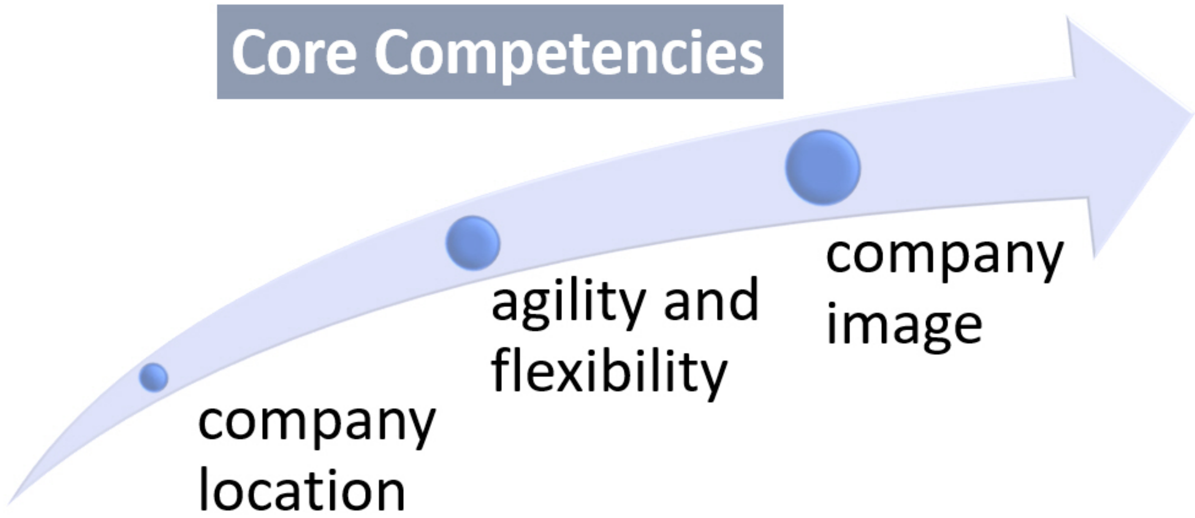

Figure 2.60: Core competencies Loitz GmbH.

2.2.3 Financial Analysis

This chapter tries to identify facts about the company from the success comparison and company performance comparison (balance). The information comes from the balance of the year 2017 of the company (Loitz GmbH, 2018a). The first part is a company-intern success comparison while the second part is an industry comparison. The industry comparison compares the company with a benchmark of similar companies in the same industry. The analysis of the figures in this chapter was done qualitative in a discussion with the chartered public accountant and tax consultant (Wirtschaftstreuhänder) Günter M. and the CEO of Autohaus Loitz Anton Loitz. The goal of this chapter is to identify strengths and weaknesses of the company by analysing the basic financial structures.

2.2.3.1 Success Comparison

The first part is the success comparison of the company. The illustrated years in the following tables reach from 2015 to 2017. The first table shows the total revenue for each the business unit used by the bookkeeping in the company (see table 2.20). Additionally, it shows the break-even point (BEP) and the cashflow point (CFP) for the specific years. There is the group of demonstration car sales additionally listed in this chapter. This classification is not used in other parts of the thesis.

	2015 annual accounts in EUR	%	2016 annual accounts in EUR	%	2017 annual accounts in EUR	%
after-sales	1.132.982	23.8%	1.221.483	21.8%	1.334.522	19.8%
used car sales	866.468	18.2%	1.048.264	18.7%	1.091.788	16.2%
demonstration car sales	240.096	5.0%	162.888	2.9%	392.303	5.8%
new car sales	2.472.430	51.9%	3.147.955	56.1%	3.902.377	57.8%
light vehicles and bikes	48.868	1%	26.000	0.5%	32.718	0.5%
total revenue	**4.760.844**	**100%**	**5.606.590**	**100%**	**6.753.708**	**100%**
break-even point (BEP)	**4.570.527**	**96%**	**5.332.259**	**95.1%**	**6.261.885**	**92.7%**
cashflow point (CFP)	**4.360.452**	**91.6%**	**5.007.681**	**89.3%**	**5.699.910**	**84.4%**

Table 2.20: Summary of the total revenue, the break-even point and the cashflow point from 2015 to 2017 (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 12).

The revenue is divided into after-sales, used car sales, demonstration car sales, new car sales and light vehicles and bikes. As an industry value the percentage of the after-sales sector compared to the total revenue should always be above 20 % Günter M. stated as an expert in this field. This rule of thumb is for automotive retail companies under 10 million total revenue. In the years 2015 and 2016 a percentage higher than 20 % was reached. In 2017 the percentage of after-sales in comparison to the total revenue was only 19.8 %. This was due to the very good performance of the new car sales in 2017. Overall the revenue of all sectors except light vehicles and bikes has been rising from year to year.

The margins in new vehicle sales are very low. They usually range from 1-2 % dependent on the individual OEM. The margins in used car sales are 10-15 % on average. In contrast to that, the margins in after-sales are very high. The distribution of spare parts has an average margin of 28 to 35 %. Every sold working hour in after-sales is directly contributing to the result of the company. Nevertheless, the after-sales utilisation rate is strongly dependent on new- and used-car sales. If there is a bad year in new-and used-car sales, after-sales experiences the effects usually after three years. It is important for automotive retailers to keep pushing new car sales for a good utilisation of the after-sales business.

The break-even point (BEP) is the point at which total cost and total revenue are equal (Weber, 2018). There is no net loss or gain. All costs that must be paid are paid, and there is neither profit nor loss. Table 2.20 shows the BEP for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017. The total revenue was rising in all those years, but the break-even point was rising as well which means that more money had to be earned to be able to make profit.

Another important factor is the cashflow point (CFP). This factor is calculated together with the break-even point with the difference that the cashflow point is not considering imputed depreciation. In the long term, however, only looking at the CFP will lead to difficulties. Only with the determination of the BEP (cash point plus the imputed depreciation) it is ensured that the required reserves for necessary renewal of the operating resources were formed. (Weber, 2018)

Figure 2.61 shows the total revenue, BEP and CFP for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017 in a chart.

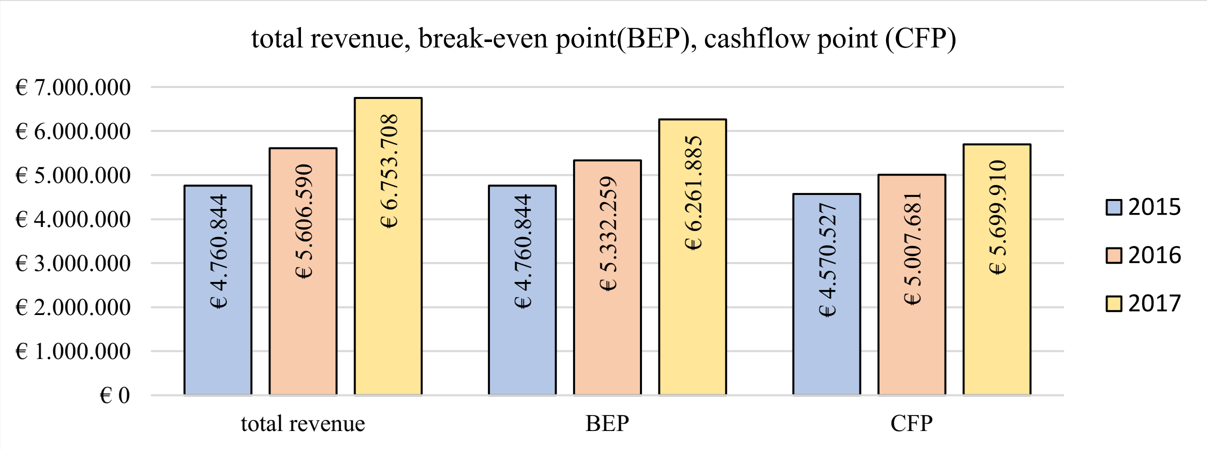

Figure 2.61: Total revenue, BEP and CFP from 2015 to 2017 (Bilanz Loitz GmbH, 2018, p. 12).

The values that can be seen in table 2.21 are values for potential cashflow points and break-even-points for the year 2017. The average contribution margin in 2017 was 17 %. This matrix indicates the change in CFP and BEP if the contribution margin is increasing or dropping slightly. By just increasing the contribution margin by 2 % the BEP can be lowered from €6.261.885 to €5.610.995. The conclusion is that every single donated percent at new- and used-car sales produces a massive cut in overall profit. The high price pressure of the automotive retail industry in general makes it very difficult for companies to generate profits.

	average contribution margin 2017 in %				
*amounts in EUR	13 %	15 %	**17 %**	19 %	21 %
CFP	7.421.811	6.447.882	**5.699.910**	5.107.434	4.626.530
BEP	8.153.555	7.083.603	**6.261.885**	5.610.995	5.082.677

Table 2.21: Changes in CFP and BEP induced by a minor change in contribution margin (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 35).

		2015 annual accounts in EUR	%	2016 annual accounts in EUR	%	2017 annual accounts in EUR	%	2017 benchmark %
	total revenue	4.760.844	100%	5.606.590	100%	6.753.708	100%	100.95%
-	revenue adjustments	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1.06%
=	**net revenue**	**4.760.844**	**100%**	**5.606.590**	**100%**	**6.753.708**	**100%**	**99.89%**
±	change in inventory	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.11%
+	capitalised own work	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
=	**operating performance**	**4.760.844**	**100%**	**5.606.590**	**100%**	**6.753.708**	**100%**	**100%**
-	material usage	410.896	8.6%	438.891	7.8%	460.515	6.8%	-
-	cost of goods	3.358.292	70.5%	4.153.212	74.1%	5.126.987	75.9%	73.18%
-	external services	1.549	0.0%	4.987	0.1%	1.801	0%	1.72%
-	other variable costs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
=	**gross profit**	**990.107**	**20.8%**	**1.009.500**	**18.0%**	**1.164.405**	**17.2%**	**25.10%**
+	other income	70.999	1.5%	72.404	1.3%	76.967	1.1%	2.96%
-	personal expenses	759.168	15.9%	774.243	13.8%	862.660	12.8%	14.45%
-	depreciations	31.534	0.7%	25.295	0.5%	30.690	0.5%	1.85%
-	other expenses	231.691	4.9%	234.555	4.2%	265.787	3.9%	8.12%
=	**overall expenses**	**1.022.393**	**21.5%**	**1.034.093**	**18.4%**	**1.159.137**	**17.2%**	**24.42%**
=	**operating result**	**38.713**	**0.8%**	**47.811**	**0.9%**	**82.235**	**1.2%**	**3.62%**
+	financial income	867	0.0%	1.584	0.0%	2.578	0.0%	0.18%
-	financial expenses	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	18	0.0%	0.55%
=	**financial result**	**867**	**0.0%**	**1.584**	**0.0%**	**2.560**	**0.0%**	**-0.48%**
=	**res. o. ord. bus. act. (EGT)**	**39.580**	**0.8%**	**49.395**	**0.9%**	**84.795**	**1.3%**	**-**
±	extraordinary result	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
=	**profit before taxes**	**39.580**	**0.8%**	**49.395**	**0.9%**	**84.795**	**1.3%**	**3.14%**
-	taxes of income & revenues	8.648	0.2%	14.844	0.3%	32.414	0.5%	0.74%
=	**annual net profit/loss**	**30.932**	**0.6%**	**34.551**	**0.6%**	**52.381**	**0.8%**	**2.40%**
+	release of reverses	47	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.1%
-	creation of reverses	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
=	**result of fiscal year**	**30.979**	**0.7%**	**34.551**	**0.6%**	**52.381**	**0.8%**	**3.86%**

Table 2.22: Company performance comparison from 2015 to 2017 (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 5).

The company performance comparison can be seen in table 2.22. The new vehicle sales were rising constantly from 2015 to 2017 (see table 2.20). As a result, the share of the after-sales revenue from the total revenue was shrinking. This resulted in a fall of the gross profit from 15.9 % in 2015 to 12.8 % in the year 2017. At the same time the personal expenses were shrinking drastically from 15.9 % in the year 2015 to 12.8 % in 2017. In the same period the other expenses were falling from 4.9 % to 3.9 %. As a result, it was possible to raise the result of the ordinary business activity (EGT) from 0.8 % in 2015 to 1.3 % in the year 2017. In a general view, the company result could be increased nominally and proportionally. Despite the difficult market environment, the company result has developed positively in the last 3 years.

Figure 2.62, figure 2.63 and figure 2.64 visualise important factors of the company performance comparison from 2015 to 2017.

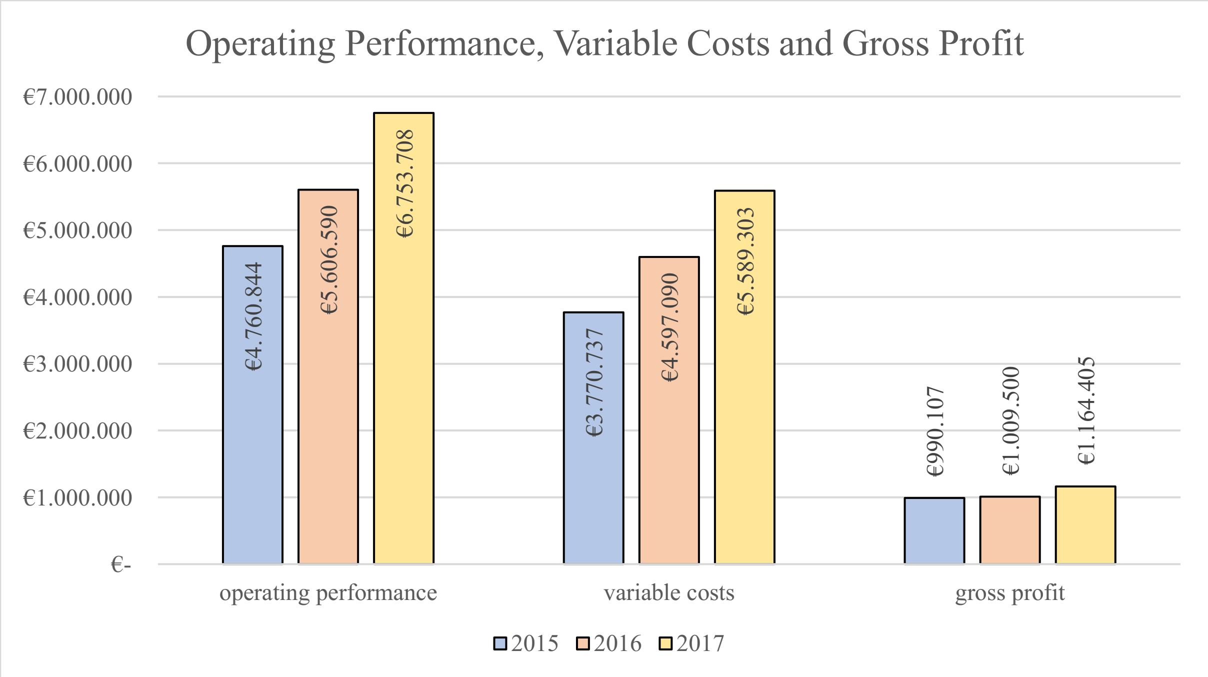

Figure 2.62: Visualisation of the gross profit of the company performance comparison for the years 2015 to 2017 (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 5).

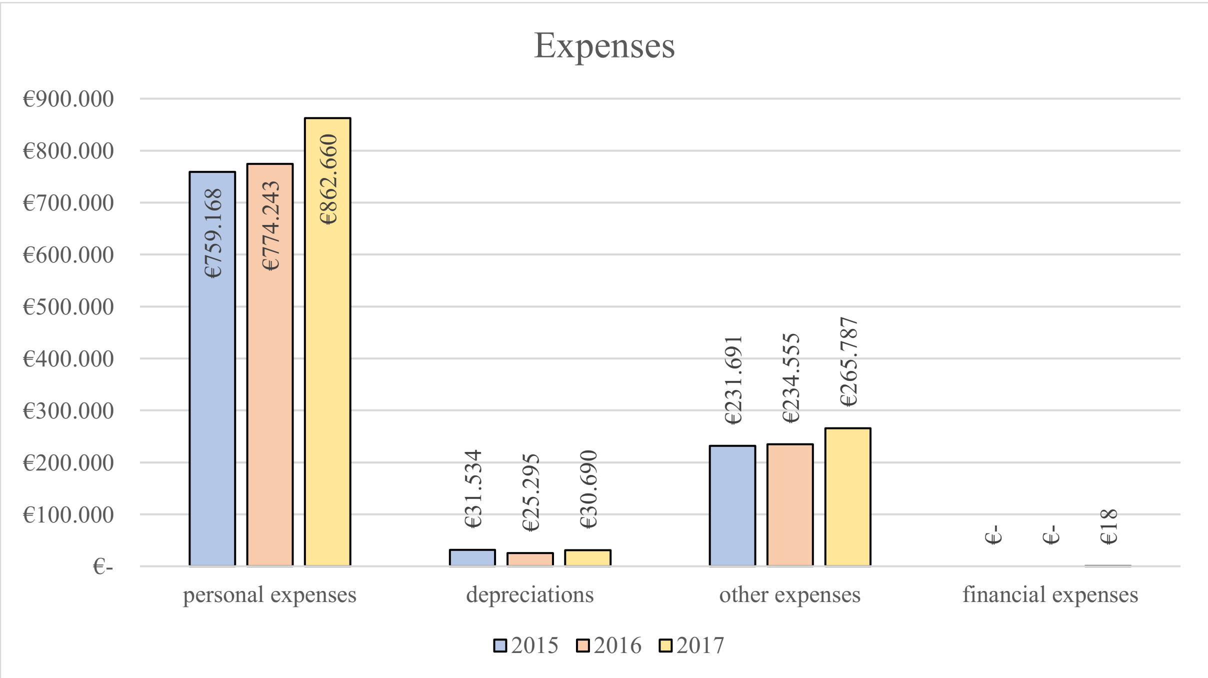

Figure 2.63: Visualisation of the expenses of the company performance comparison for the years 2015 to 2017 (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 6).

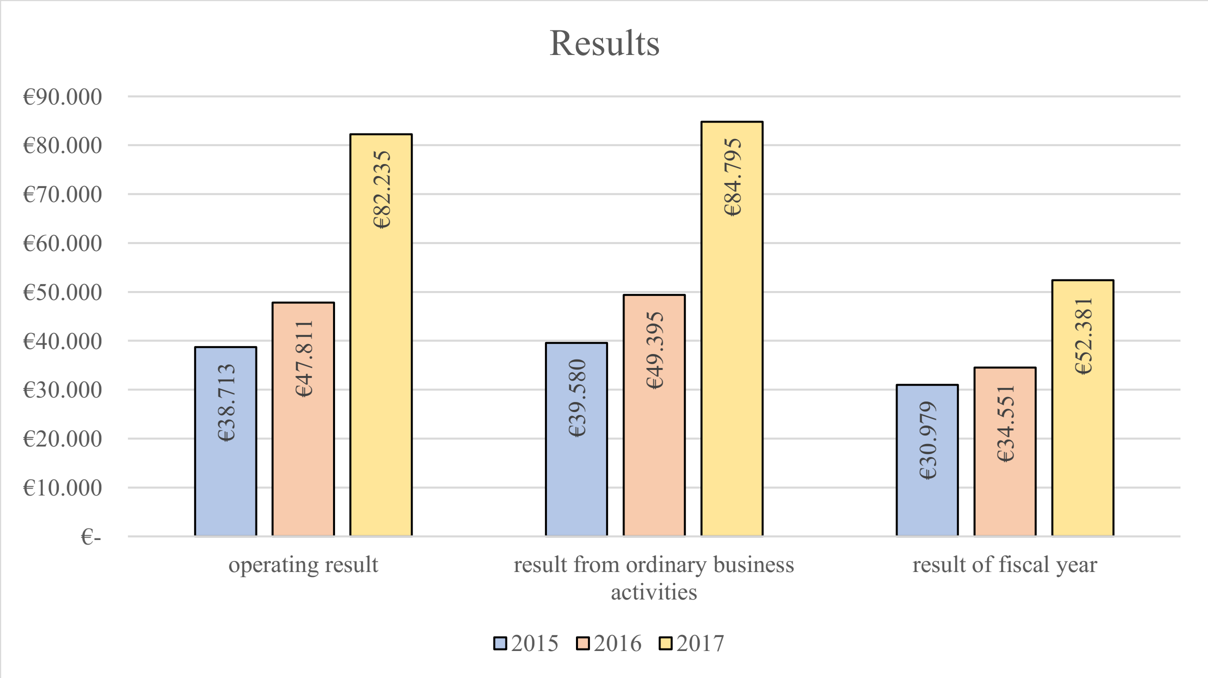

Figure 2.64: Visualisation of the results of the company performance comparison for the years 2015 to 2017 (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 6).

2.2.3.2 Industry Comparison

In this section an industry-comparison between Autohaus Loitz and similar companies is conducted. The data for the benchmark-companies was provided by the Austrian Institute for Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SME) Research (Austrian Institute for SME Research, 2018). The data can be seen in appendix-5. The companies included in the benchmark have a total revenue between 4 and 7 million Euro which fits the revenue of Autohaus Loitz. 295 companies in this revenue range were chosen for the benchmark. The exact branch of the companies was the branch G45. Branch G45 embraces the trade with motor vehicles and the repair of motor vehicles. The used balances of the companies are from 01.07.2016 to 30.06.2017. The companies in the benchmark are all operating as a GmbH.

ASSETS (AKTIVA)	2016 annual accounts in EUR	%	2017 annual accounts in EUR	%	benchmark
fixed assets (Anlagevermögen)	**226.694**	**17.0%**	**264.617**	**17.8%**	**37.9%**
inventories (Vorräte)	587.750	44.0%	618.511	41.7%	33.8%
customer receivables (Kundenforderungen)	27.458	2.1%	93.821	6.3%	9.2%
other receivables (sonst. Forderungen, ARA)	82.767	6.2%	62.805	4.2%	11.5%
cash and cash equivalents (Kassa, Bank)	411.973	30.8%	443.929	29.9%	7.4%
current assets (Umlaufvermögen)	**1.109.948**	**83.0%**	**1.219.066**	**82.2%**	**62.0%**
total assets (Summe Aktiva)	**1.336.642**	**100.0%**	**1.483.683**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 2.23: Assets in industry comparison (part 1) (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 59).

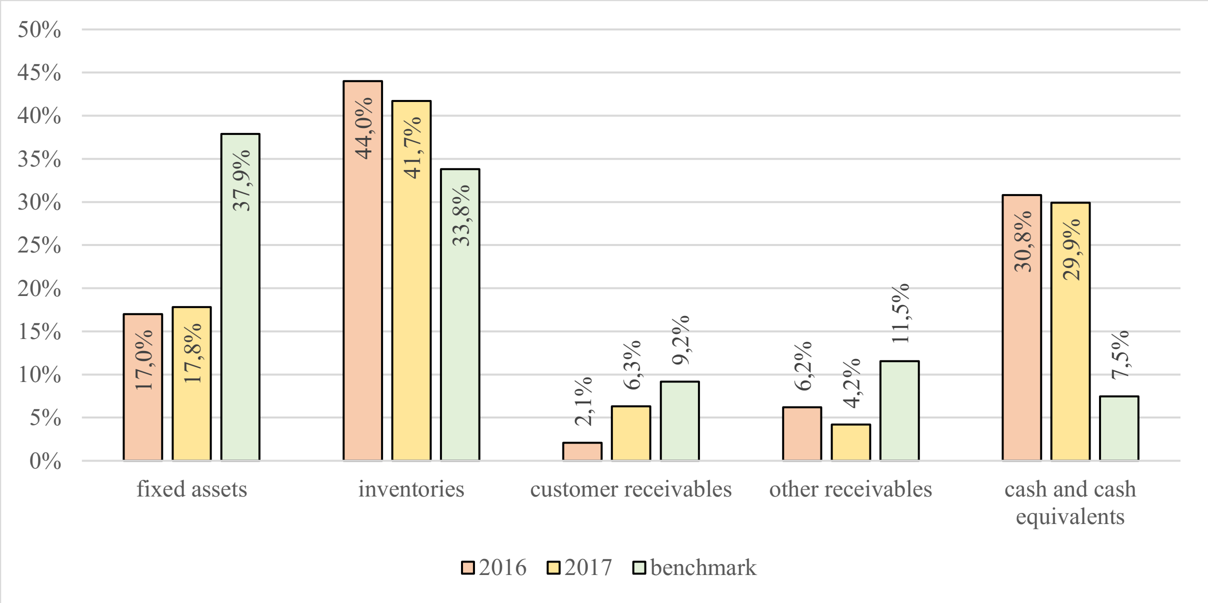

Figure 2.65: Assets in industry comparison (part 2) (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 59).

Figure 2.65 and figure 2.66 visually display assets and liabilities in industry comparison.

The company has an above-average book value of equity compared to the benchmark (see table 2.23 and table 2.24). Due to this equity ratio, the company can finance the high working-capital in the automotive industry from the current cash-flow. One of the positive consequences of this is that the company does not have to use external financing.

A key reason for the above-average equity ratio is the fact that the company has not been distributing profits for many years but has retained them.

This balance-structure provides the company with appropriate stability even in the case of poor industry-specific and macroeconomic conditions.

LIABILITIES (PASSIVA)	2016 annual accounts in EUR	%	2017 annual accounts in EUR	%	benchmark
equity capital (Eigenkapital einschl. RL)	**638.035**	**47.7%**	**690.416**	**46.5%**	**33.8%**
provisions (Rückstellungen)	455.225	34.1%	550.358	37.1%	3.72%
delivery liabilities (Lieferantenverb.)	97.749	7.3%	170.275	11.5%	19.6%
other liabilities (Sonst. Verb., PRA, Anz.)	145.633	10.9%	72.634	4.9%	15%
bank liabilities (Bank)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	27.2%
liabilities (Verbindlichkeiten)	243.382	18.2%	242.909	16.4%	61.8%
borrowed capital (Fremdkapital)	**698.607**	**52.3%**	**793.267**	**53.5%**	**62.4%**
total liabilities (Summe Passiva)	**1.336.642**	**100.0%**	**1.483.683**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 2.24: Liabilities in industry comparison (part 1) (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 59).

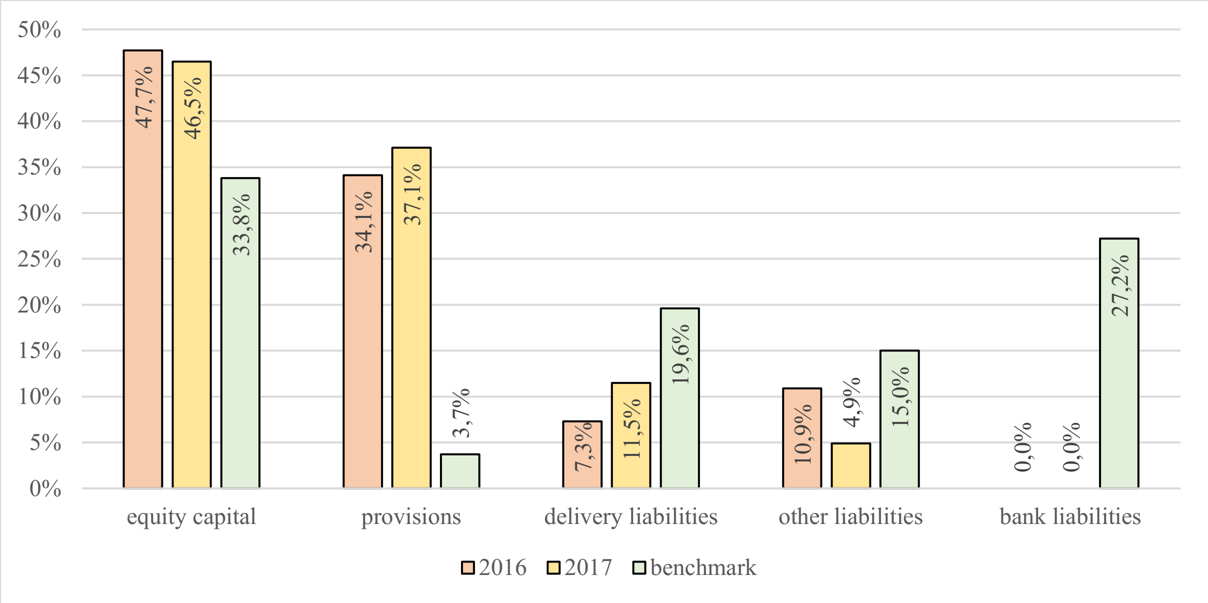

Figure 2.66: Liabilities in industry comparison (part 2) (Loitz GmbH, 2018a, p. 59).

Three strengths of the company can be identified:

- Strengths:
    - no interest charges that reduce the result
    - no liquidity burden through loan repayments
    - better stability in poor economic conditions due to zero bank liabilities

2.2.4 Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses

The summary of strengths and weaknesses can be seen in table 2.25. Usually the company analysis provides all the strengths and weaknesses for this analysis. However, the customer survey done in chapter 2.1.3.2 additionally delivers strengths and weaknesses from a company-external point of view. Where the strengths and weaknesses researched in the company analysis resulted from company internal surveys, the customer analysis gave a customer-based view of those factors. To get a more general view, external judgment makes sense. The factors of this table are used for the prioritisation-part of the SWOT-Framework in chapter 4.1 on page 102.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Customer Analysis (chapter 2.1.3.2)	• excellent customer service • agility and flexibility • qualified and professional staff • high customer satisfaction and loyalty • regional dealer with after-sales (location) • competent customer consulting • high trust in the staff	• offered brands • model portfolio • not enough space at the current location (customer parking, sales) • too little differentiation to competition
Analysing Resources, Capabilities and Competences (chapter 2.2.1) and Identifying Core Competencies (chapter 2.2.2)	• high quality and image of sales • balanced age-structure of employees • high service quality • know-how • customer focus	• information management • organisational structure • teamwork • respect • efficiency in sales • employee training
Financial Analysis (chapter 2.2.3)	• no interest charges that reduce the result • no liquidity burden through loan repayments • stability in poor economic conditions	

Table 2.25: Summary of strengths and weaknesses due to internal company analysis and the customer survey.

3 Strategic Guideposts

“Only those who have clear values can shape the future.” -Robert Bosch

The goal of the strategic analysis was to establish a clear understanding where the firm strategically stands today. After analysing strengths, weaknesses and core competences as well as opportunities and threats the company must decide if and how it wants to change its strategic position. The majority of literature puts the development of strategic guideposts at the pole-position of the strategic management process in front of the strategic analysis (Vorbach, 2015, p. 145; Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 62; Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 199). The approach of *Thomas Wunder* is pursued, which places the strategic guideposts after the strategic analysis (Wunder, 2016, p. 145). The first step in this approach is to identify the company’s fundamental strategic intent and identity which will be referred as strategic guideposts. Clarifying strategic guideposts essentially comes down to three questions (Wunder, 2016, p. 145):

- What is our purpose or raison d´être (mission)?
- What do we want to be or have accomplished in the future (vision)?
- What are our behavioural principles for interaction (values)?

A strategy represents the approach of pattern of how a company wants to make its vision come true. The vision is framed by the strategic guideposts. To form a strategy is almost impossible if the organisation’s mission and vision as well as the behavioural principles and rules remain unclear. (Wunder, 2016, p. 145 f)

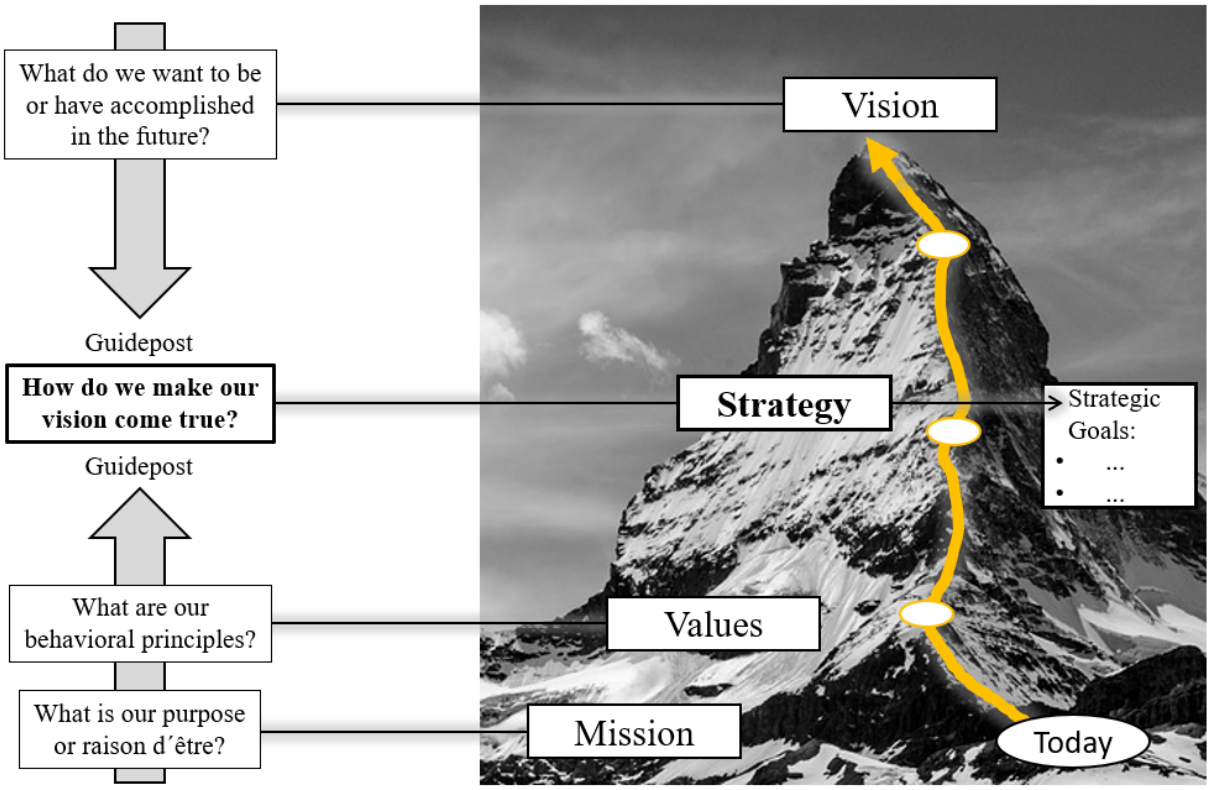

Figure 3.1: Illustrative relationship between vision, mission, values, and strategy (Wunder, 2016, p. 146; adapted).

The analogy of climbing a mountain is often used to illustrate the relationship between vision, mission, values, and strategy. Figure 3.1 shows this relationship. Extreme sportsmen want to climb the Matter-horn. Their team-mission is to search for athletic limit experiences. Their vision is to reach the peak of one of the highest mountains in the world by a certain time in the near future. Their planned strategy is to accomplish their vision by climbing a certain route with some base camps based on the analysis of their resources and capabilities. An emergent strategy will be pursued in the case of unforeseen weather change with the same vision to reach the peak. Their values include not to leave any garbage behind on the mountain. (Wunder, 2016, p. 146)

Unfortunately, mission, values, vision and strategy have become some of the most overused and confused terms in corporate practice. Firms mix up and skip back and forth between messages related to mission, values, vision, strategy, goals and other concepts in their written strategy documents. More confusion than orientation is the result. The applied terminology needs to be very explicit to create clear strategic guideposts (Wunder, 2016, p. 147)

3.1 Vision

An imaginative future picture of what the company wants to accomplish in the long run is the company vision. It is the description of the desired future state of the organisation. Often the company leader or founder has a concrete picture of the company vision which may survive those persons. There are many examples of successful companies with a great vision, but there is no incontestable proof that companies with a vision are more successful that companies without. The key idea of a vision is about providing direction and sense in a way that releases the energy of the employees towards a shared future aspiration. A vision portrays a future state, a hope or dream that is not yet realised. Additionally, it needs to be specific enough to provide enough clarity about the pursued direction and transport a sense of inspirational concreteness and commitment. Firms who define their visions are always facing tension between specificity and generalness. (Wunder, 2016, p. 148)

There are many ways for creating a vision for a company. Six fundamental types of visions can be distinguished (Müller-Stewens and Lechner, 2011, p. 226 f; Wunder, 2016, p. 148):

- Goal- or competition-oriented visions
- Enemy- or rival-oriented visions
- Role-oriented visions
- Transformation-oriented visions
- Customer- or need-oriented visions
- Organisation-oriented visions

At least the four key benefits illustrated in the outer circle of figure 3.2 should be delivered by an effectively formulated and implemented vision. (Wunder, 2016, p. 150)

A vision is supposed to provide **orientation** for all people in the organisation and external stakeholders. By implementing a good vision in a company everyone in the organisation who is supposed to contribute to the organisation's desired future knows what she or he can do to accomplish it. A vision can provide meaning to employees that goes beyond job security, payment and other factors. (Wunder, 2016, p. 150)

The second benefit of a vision is to create **enthusiasm** amongst the employees. It drives team spirit and makes the different departments work together. (Wunder, 2016, p. 150)

The next benefit is that an effectively formulated vision provides **stimulation** for pro-active entrepreneurial behaviour at all levels in the organisation. This may result in employees who are willing to improve their workspace and bring fresh bottom-up strategy suggestions to the management. (Wunder, 2016, p. 150)

Visions create **security**. In turbulent times and highly dynamic markets it is of major importance to have a robust and commonly shared vision. (Wunder, 2016, p. 150 f)

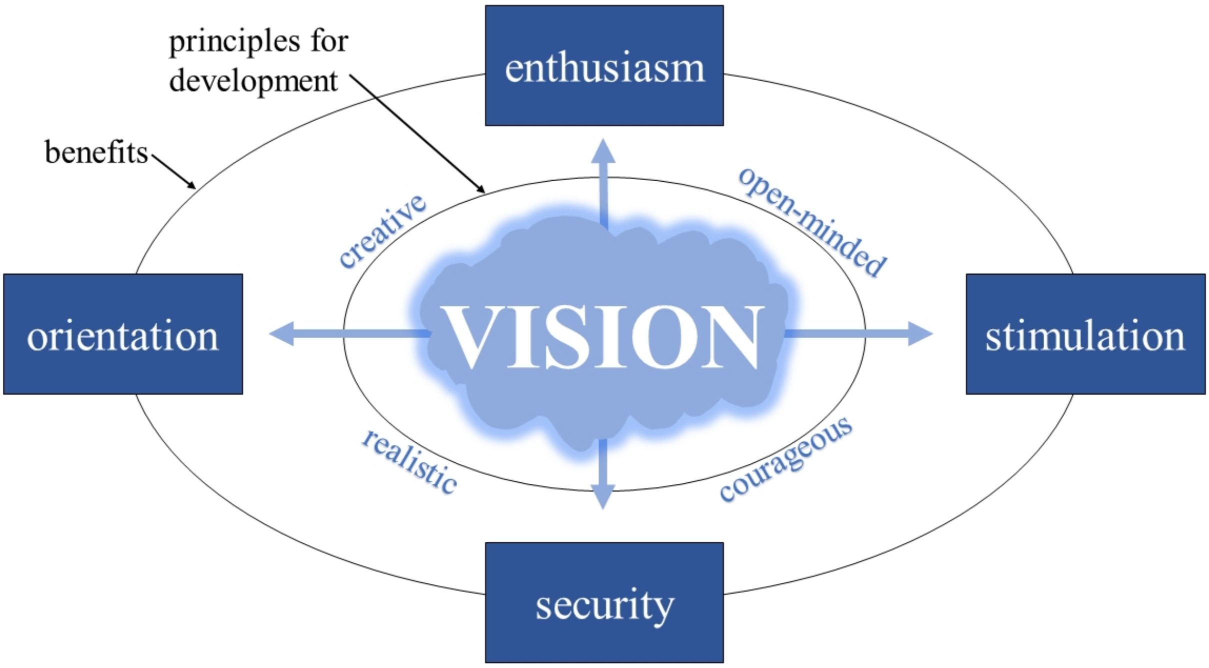

Figure 3.2: Benefits of a vision and principles for its development (Wunder, 2016, p. 151; adapted).

Four key principles (see the inner circle of figure 3.2) help develop an effective vision (Wunder, 2016, p. 151 f):

- **Open-minded** regarding changes in the broad external company environment which includes the pro-active search for different strategic perspectives and opinions. The ability to empathize with different views and the ability for anticipative thinking is very important.
- **Courageous** in terms of willingness to define a vision even if it breaks conservative thinking.
- **Realistic** regarding its basic achievability in a certain time frame, which requires a good sense of reality. Utopian visions which are unlikely to be achieved can even harm the company.
- **Creative** in terms of articulating an aspirational future that is open-minded, courageous and still realistic. Creating such a vision requires creativity.

The CEO of Autohaus Loitz chooses to make the company vision goal oriented. In consolidation with management three options for possible visions were discovered:

- To be the number one provider of mobility and car sales in the Mühlviertel by 2030.
- Visiting Autohaus Loitz in person or online is the first thought that comes to mind if somebody in the Mühlviertel wants to buy a car or a mobility solution.
- To be the number one automotive retailer and customer’s first choice in the region by 2030.

The selected vision is:

“to be the number one automotive retailer and customer’s first choice in the region by 2030”

3.2 Mission

The purpose or reason of the company's existence is articulated by the mission. A mission relates to the company's present purpose and typically has no due date. The mission provides identification to employees as it defines the purpose of the business, and thus, also the greater purpose of the individual work of the employees. The purpose of a company in terms of the value it creates for selected stakeholder groups and the legitimisation of its existence in society is declared by the mission (Müller-Stewens and Lechner, 2011, p. 229). (Wunder, 2016, p. 152)

A business purpose is not just a description of the company's existing product or service lines and customer segments. Changes in the external environment of a company can lead to the situation that products and services as well as the targeted customer base might not exist anymore. Therefore, it might be more appropriate to disconnect the company's mission from the currently offered products and services and focus on the fulfilment of customer needs and wants. Customer-oriented missions tend to provide greater flexibility and more strategic options when adapting to a changing environment than product-oriented missions (Rothaermel, 2013, pp. 34–36). (Wunder, 2016, p. 153)

Some examples of mission statements and claims are (Wunder, 2016, p. 153 f):

- SAP in 2015: "to help every customer become a best-run business"
- Google in 2015: "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful"
- Walt Disney: "to make people happy"
- Merck: "to preserve and improve human life"
- McKinsey: "to help leading corporations and governments be more successful"

There is a similarity between mission statements and brand-claims (Wunder, 2016, p. 154).

There are several aspects that the company wants to include in the mission statement. The first aspect is that the mobility the company provides should be affordable for most of the Austrian population. The second aspect is that everybody has different desires regarding mobility, which the firm's mission is to fulfil. Those two aspects are combined in the following mission statement:

"to help every customer achieve personal mobility"

3.3 Values

Essential and enduring standards and norms of social behaviour that are collectively held by members inside the company are called organisational values. Those values are an important guideline when executing strategy in the quest for achieving the company's vision. Defining values is a highly company-specific task. Every company decides for itself which behaviour is considered desirable and which is not. Usually there as five to six behavioural principles that are supposed to be applied in all possible situations. Articulating core values in a company is supposed to deliver a number of benefits (Müller-Stewens and Lechner, 2011, pp. 233–235; Wunder, 2016, p. 156):

- **Clarity:** Organisational values are supposed to provide clarity about the core behavioural principles the firm stands for.
- **Reference point:** Employees are provided with reliable and predictable information about what is considered as good or bad behaviour. The published organisational values can be used as a reference point for one's own or other's practices.
- **Organisational design and development:** Values are supposed to have a positive influence on the long-term economic and social performance of the firm as they are the core foundation of a corporate culture.
- **Integrating different perspectives:** Clarity about core values is the foundation for aligning company priorities with perspectives of different stakeholder groups.

Often companies announce their values internally and publicly. Independent of the type of value statement, there is always a risk that announced values might not be lived up to in the actual nonverbal behaviour of employees in a company. Therefore, it is very important that the announced values are practised and lived with integrity by the executives who tend to be role models for the individuals in a firm. There needs to be a clear commitment of the leaders of the company. If the leaders do not follow the proclaimed values, the value statements may easily become a meaningless public relation exercise (Rothaermel, 2013, p. 38). (Wunder, 2016, p. 158)

Thomas Wunder added a quote in his book Essentials of strategic management (Wunder, 2016, p. 156): "A company should not change its core values in response to market changes; rather, it should change markets – if necessary – in order to remain true to its core values." According to this quote a company should always remain true to its core values. This makes a company authentic and trustworthy.

Autohaus Loitz has specified core values which can be applied in every business situation in the company. Those core values are:

- **Respect colleagues, customers and their products:** This is the most important core value of the company. Respect is the foundation for dealing with other people. The company includes good behaviour, social competence, cleanliness and conveying good values. Additionally, harassment in the workplace can be avoided when colleagues respect each other.
- **Solution-oriented thinking:** Autohaus Loitz wants an atmosphere where people have a solution-oriented mindset. Employees should not complain about problems, they should think about possible solutions. If they have found a solution for a possible problem they are welcome to communicate it to the CEO. Every problem can be solved. Everything is possible.
- **Critical faculties:** Employees must be able to deal with positive criticism. The company wants employees who learn from mistakes and are therefore able to improve their abilities. Criticism must always be well-intentioned and fair and must not be formulated maliciously.
- **Thirsty for knowledge:** Thirsty for knowledge means that employees of Autohaus Loitz want to be the best in their field or profession. Employees need to show interest in their work.
- **Take customers and tasks very seriously:** If a customer comes to the company with a problem he must be taken seriously. It does not matter if the customer is 18 or 80 years old. To always take customers seriously is a crucial core value of the company. There are situations where the

technicians think to know that the customer is wrong, but employees must always take the problems of customers very seriously. This behaviour can be interpreted as arrogant. Additionally, employees must take tasks seriously. The type of task does not matter.

- **Living the team-spirit:** Every department of the company works to achieve the same goals. People need a team-mindset.
- **Full attention during work:** It is a requirement of all employees to always know what is happening next to them. In case of emergency there must always be somebody there to help a colleague. There are other situations where somebody may need a helping hand. If an employee sees somebody needing help, the employee is supposed to help and not to look away. This can also be interpreted as team-spirit.

As a summary the core values of Autohaus Loitz are:

respect colleagues, customers and their products

solution-oriented thinking

critical faculties

thirsty for knowledge

take customers and tasks very seriously

living the team-spirit

full attention during work

4 Strategy Formulation using the SWOT-Analysis

"The purpose of a strategy is to ensure the viability and success of a company."
-Prof. Dr. Fredmund Malik

The synthesis of strategic analysis is ultimately done in this chapter by using the key findings from the strategic analysis in the SWOT-Framework (Wunder, 2016, p. 127). The SWOT-Framework combines the opportunities and threats of the environmental analysis and the strengths and weaknesses of the company analysis (Vorbach, 2015, p. 148 f; Wunder, 2016, p. 71 f). The results of a strategic analysis are typically many factors that determine strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats of a firm. To be able to get a comprehensive and actionable understanding of the company's current strategic situation the high amount of collected information needs to be consolidated. The insights of the strategic analysis need to be summarised. A good tool for prioritising and condensing information down to a few strategic key insights is the SWOT-based strategic analysis summary. This insight is used for strategy formulation. (Wunder, 2016, p. 126)

The environmental analysis conducted in chapter 2.1 where macroenvironment, industry and the competitive arena were investigated had the goal to identify opportunities and threats affecting the company. The company analysis (see chapter 2.2) revealed the company's strengths and weaknesses. The following step was to conduct the SWOT-analysis combining previous results to pin out possible strategic directions. Figure 4.1 displays the flow of information from the strategic analysis into the SWOT approach.

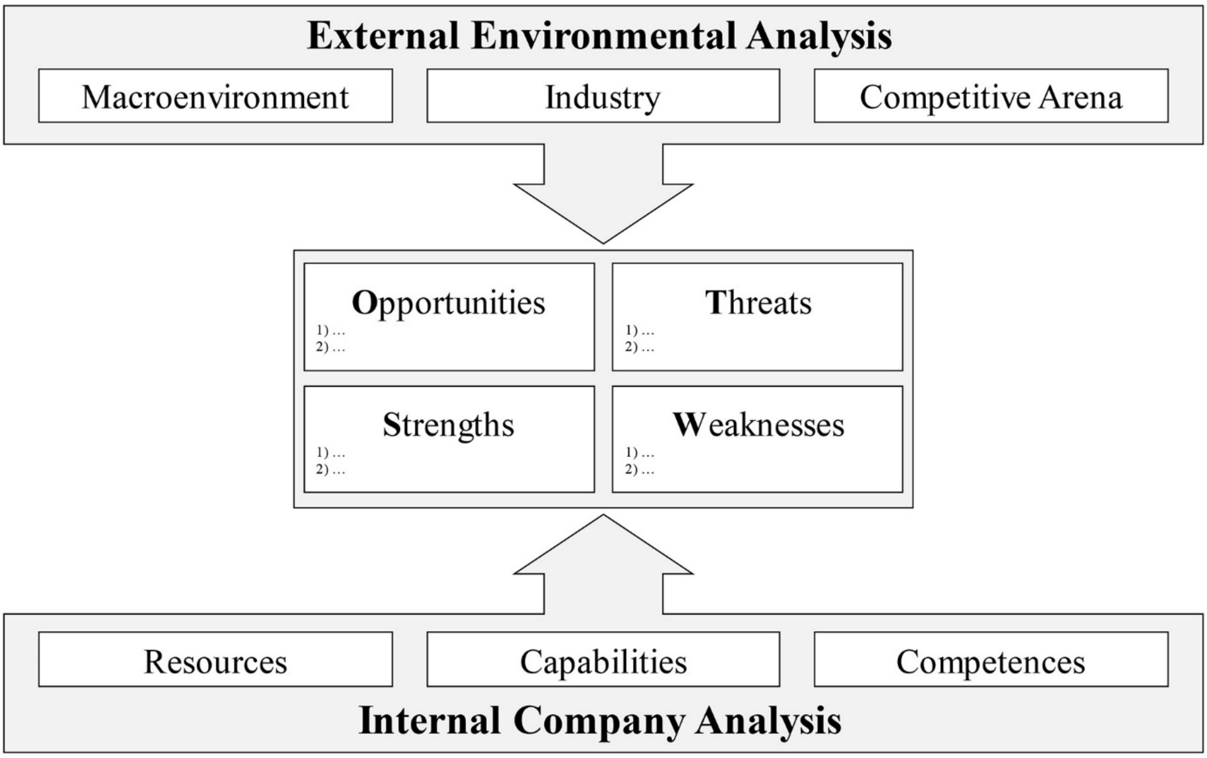

Figure 4.1: Integrating strategic analysis results with the SWOT approach (Wunder, 2016, p. 127; adapted)

The SWOT-analysis is typically done in the following five steps (Vorbach, 2015, p. 174 ff; Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 288; Wunder, 2016, pp. 126–130):

1) **Summary of opportunities and threats:** The developments and influencing factors that have been assessed as opportunities and threats in the environmental analysis are summarised. Some opportunities and risks can only be identified by combining the results, getting an overall picture of the strategic starting position. For example, if new competition is buying lots of necessary

materials, it is getting more expensive which leads to a cost-risk for the company. This summary has been done at the end of chapter 2.1 on page 73.

2) **Summary of strengths and weaknesses:** The strengths and weaknesses of the company analysis are usually summarized in a strengths and weaknesses profile which has been done at the end of chapter 2.2 on page 92. The strengths-weaknesses profile is used to objectify subjective evaluations of the company analysis and to make the results obtained transparent and comparable. Examples of strengths can be high qualified employees, international market places or a leading technology position. Slow decision processes or missing cooperation's could be weaknesses of the company.
3) **Prioritisation:** The opportunities and risks as well as the strengths and weaknesses are ranked to focus on the key challenges for the company. Additional influencing factors can be integrated later. The factors of table 2.15 on page 73 and table 2.25 on page 92 are used for this prioritisation.
4) **Comparison:** In this step, the strengths and weaknesses are compared to the opportunities and risks. In this thesis this step is included into the last step of the derivation of standard strategies.
5) **Derivation of standard strategies:** Standard strategies can be derived with the help of the created portfolio. Strengths are emphasised, and weaknesses are avoided. They are combined with the opportunities and risks of the company. This results in four fields that show the most important strategic requirements for action.

The comparison between the company's external and internal factors is done with the matrix shown in figure 4.2. Out of those possible actions displayed in the matrix an overall strategy can be created (Vorbach, 2015, p. 175; Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 288). The approach shown in figure 4.2 leads to four elemental strategic principles (Vorbach, 2015, p. 175 f; Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 289; Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 461):

1) **SO-Strategies:** Strategies following the strengths-opportunities-principle are based on the present strengths of the company with the goal to adapt the opportunities of the environment. This type of strategy describes the ideal case of strategy formulation, namely the existence of strong internal strengths on the one hand and high environmental opportunities on the other.
2) **WO-Strategies:** Strategies following the weaknesses-opportunities-principle have the goal to eliminate the internal weaknesses to be able to perceive the opportunities of the environment. The company tries to transform their weaknesses into strengths to be able to get to the SO-position.
3) **ST-Strategies:** Strategies following the strengths-threats-principle are trying to use the strengths of the company to minimise the risks and threats of the environment. If the potentials for success of the company's branch are threatened by governmental regulations a possible strategy following the ST-principle would be to consider entering a similar branch which is not affected by governmental regulations.
4) **WT-Strategies:** Strategies following the weaknesses-threats-principle are based on defensive policies. Objectives are to minimise the internal weaknesses and dodge the threats of the environment. If, for example, the risk of a bottleneck exists for necessary raw materials for production and, in addition, there is a weakness in the purchasing and logistics department, this circumstance must be countered by a WT-strategy. "A company faced with external threats and internal weaknesses may indeed be in a precarious position. In fact, such a firm may have to fight for its survival or may even have to choose liquidation. But there are, of course, other choices. For example, such a firm may prefer a merger on may cut back its operations, with the intent of either overcoming the weakness or hoping that the threat will diminish over time." (Weihrich, 1990, p. 28)

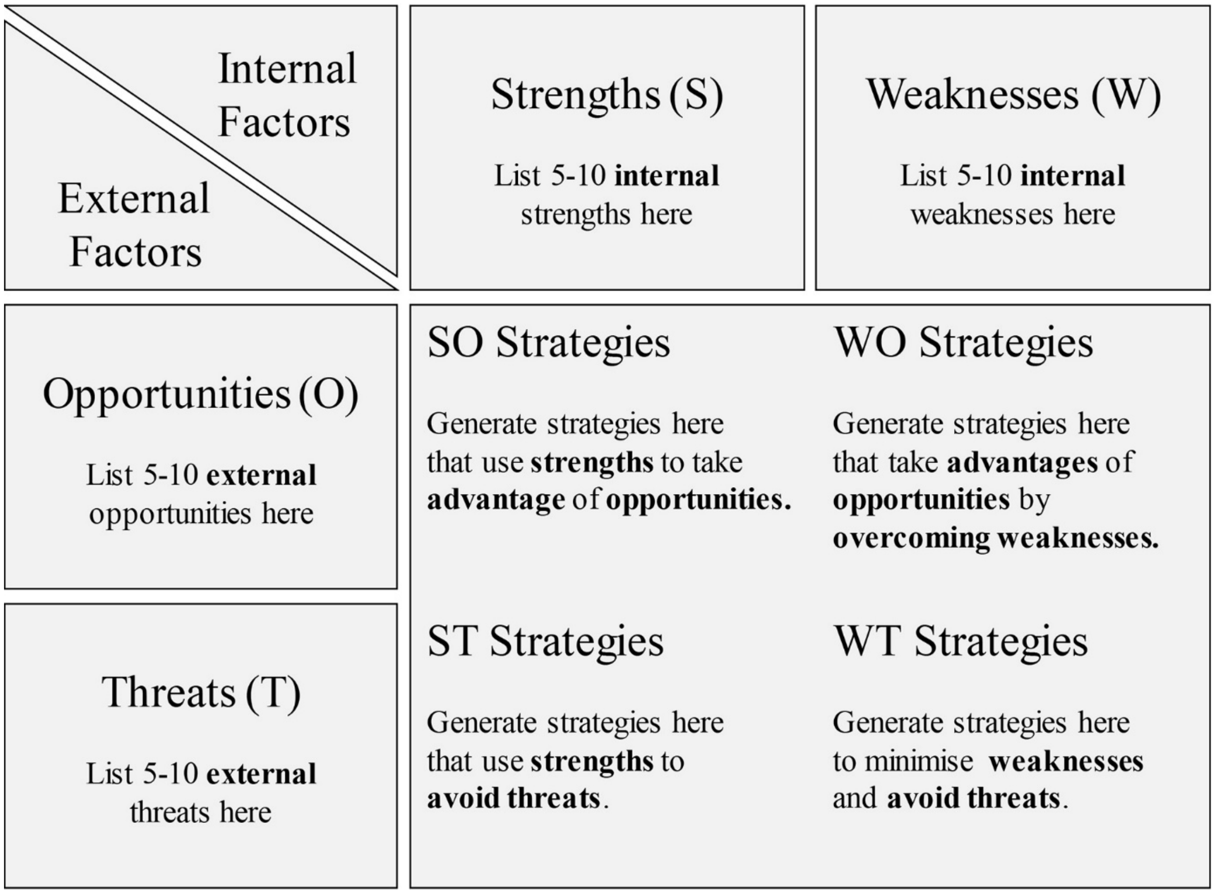

Figure 4.2: Identifying focal points for strategy formulation with the SWOT-Matrix (Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017, p. 460; adapted).

One disadvantage of the SWOT-Analysis is the subjective assessment of the ranking of the individual factors as well as the lack of operationalisation of the criteria. There is also a tendency to create long lists of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, thus losing sight of significant and less significant issues. (Johnson *et al.*, 2011, p. 158; Vorbach, 2015, p. 176; Dillerup and Stoi, 2016, p. 289)

4.1 Prioritisation

In a meeting, the management and several employees of Autohaus Loitz discussed the opportunities and threats as well as the strengths and weaknesses and ranked them. Out of the high number of factors, the most important ones were selected. The factors were added to a SWOT-Matrix as you can see in figure 4.3. The five to seven most important factors in each bracket were sorted according to their relevance rated by the management of the company. The rating was done qualitatively during discussion in the meeting mentioned earlier. There were no additional factors added during discussion which have not been listed before in table 2.14 on page 72 and table 2.25 on page 92 above.

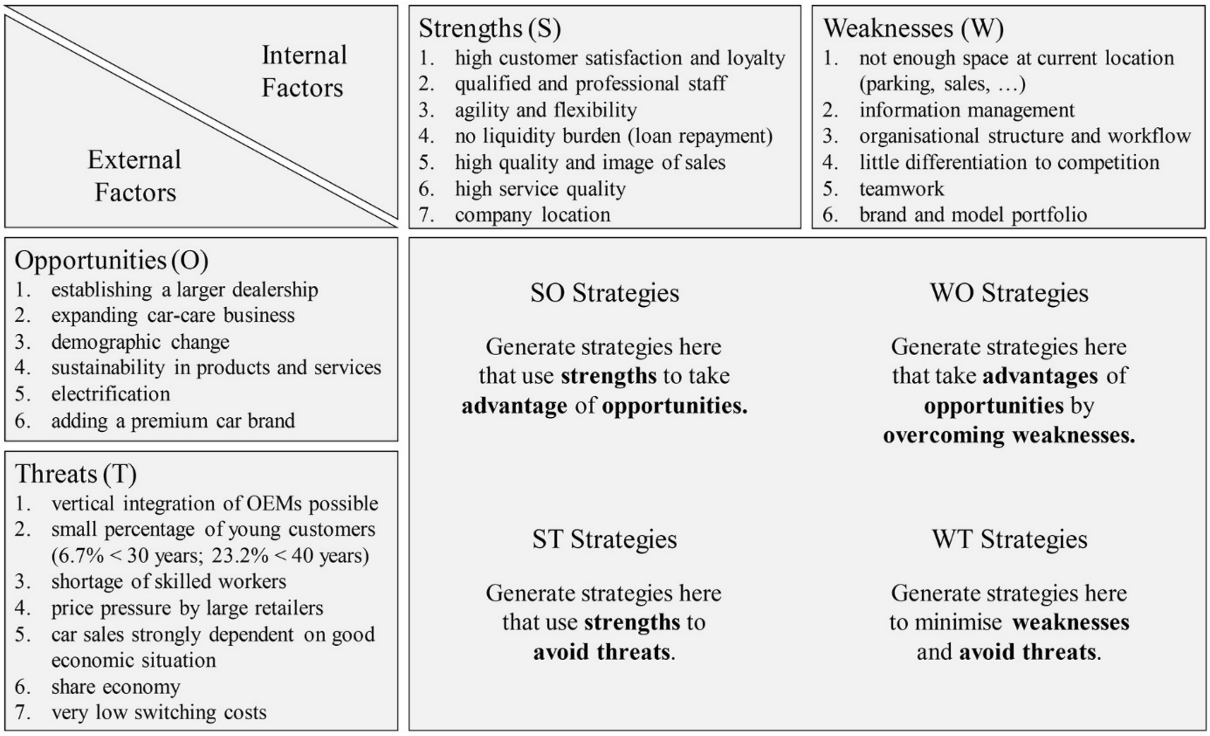

Figure 4.3: Prioritisation of the relevant factors in a SWOT-Matrix.

4.1.1 Strengths

- The most important strength for the company is the **high customer satisfaction and loyalty**. This factor was chosen because the high customer focus, which this factor implies, is a key to long lasting customer relationships. The high customer satisfaction and loyalty is a major part of the company’s core values.
- **Qualified and professional staff** is mandatory for many factors of table 2.25. The qualified and professional staff is combining the following factors: excellent customer service, competent customer consulting, high trust in the staff and know-how. Therefore, this factor was ranked as second most important strength.
- To be **agile and flexible** are important strengths a company should have. The ability to quickly adapt to changes (e.g. opportunities or threats) in macroenvironment, industry or competitive arena is of major importance. Companies who can adapt to those changes quickly have an advantage over the ones who cannot.
- Autohaus Loitz has **no liquidity burdens through loan repayments**. This gives the company a big financial advantage in bad economic situations. Only a small percentage of automotive retail companies manage to have no liquidity burdens according to the data in chapter 2.2.3.2.
- The **high quality and image of the sales** department is a very important strength of Autohaus Loitz. The more cars are sold the better the utilisation of the workshop gets. The evaluations of

customer survey and employee survey rated the quality and image of new and used car sales as very high.

- A **high after-sales service quality** is of major importance for automotive retailers. This was a result of the evaluation of the company analysis. Service quality was rated on the sixth place because ensuring an exceptionally good after-sales service quality was a must-have for the employees and leadership of the company who participated in the meeting.
- The last factor who made it into the SWOT-Analysis as a strength of the company is the **company location**. The first reason for it being a strength is the central location on a high frequented road passing the middle of the city Gallneukirchen. This circumstance leads to free advertisement every day to thousands of people passing the company location with their vehicles. The second reason for the location being a strength is the company's proximity to the city centre where customers have many possibilities to spend quality time. Customers who want to visit the city centre do not need a replacement vehicle. A 60 seconds walk is enough to reach the middle of the city. This factor additionally saves the company money for replacement vehicles. The third reason is that it is very hard to acquire an appropriate property for building an automotive retail company in the region in and around Gallneukirchen. The CEO of Autohaus Loitz has been looking for a suitable property for more than six years. The CEO Anton L. can be considered as an insider in the regional development as he is the chairman of the "Wirtschaftsbund" of Gallneukirchen. Additionally, Gallneukirchen is an ambitious location, which due to its proximity to Linz provides a high number of potential customers.

4.1.2 Weaknesses

- The major weakness has a connection to a strength of the company. The **current company location** is not offering enough space for daily business. Customers have not enough space for parking. The sales-team has not enough space available to buy the number of cars the company would be able to sell. Parts of the workshop are not fulfilling the required height to be able to completely lift new generations of light commercial vehicles.
- Internal **information-management** is a major weakness of the company. There is no structured way to share information between employees and leadership of the company. An additional weakness is the communication and information-flow between employees. A high percentage of part-time employees in the office makes it difficult to organise a successful information-flow.
- The **organisational structure and the workflow** of the company is not well organised. There is no clear organisational structure for employees. The management of the departments do not exactly know their specific competencies and the employees are not precisely sure what tasks they must do. The competencies are orally assigned to employees by the CEO but there is no written composition explaining competencies. This leads to a high amount of uncertainty amongst the employees. This was a result of the evaluation of the employee survey of chapter 2.2.1.
- The **differentiation to competitors** is missing. All the participants of the meeting realised the high importance of differentiation in a market where the products and services allow the customer to switch with zero switching costs. A strategy must be developed which enables the company to differentiate from competitors.
- Bad **teamwork** was a result of the company analysis in chapter 2.2.1. This needs to be fixed as fast as possible. A good teamwork is a major part of the core values of Autohaus Loitz.
- Number one reason why participants of the customer survey in chapter 2.1.3.2 did not buy a car at the company was the **brand and the wrong model portfolio** which is dependent on the brand. If a customer wants to own a specific vehicle of a specific brand the company is not offering, it becomes nearly impossible for the salesperson to sell the customer a different car. It is realistically not possible for the company, and any other company, to have all cars of all brands available. Nevertheless, Autohaus Loitz is not offering a premium brand. Adding the

premium car submarket to the sales and after-sales market additional customers groups can be targeted by the company. However, it has to be mentioned that the brand will always be a reason why people are not buying cars from the company. There is no automotive company offering all existing brands.

4.1.3 Opportunities

- **Establishing a larger dealership** is one opportunity to maintain strong in business. According to chapter 2.1.2.4, where retail formats in automotive business were analysed, establishing larger retail formats is one of five central approaches for a possible strategy. According to the analysed study, companies with a larger number of available exhibition vehicles and vehicles for test drives are preferred by customers.
- **Expanding the car care business** is a major opportunity for the current business of the company. The car-care business is neither dependent on the car type, nor on the brand. In the competitor analysis (see chapter 2.1.3.1) the conclusion was made that there is no specialised car-care company in the region in and around Gallneukirchen. This is a market with a high growth potential for the company. For one year the company is offering an interior car-care service additional to the car-wash service. One employee is currently employed as a full-time car-care specialist.
- The **demographic change** is a synonym for a macroenvironmental development where the population is aging. This means that the amount of high aged persons in Austria is rising. This leads to an opportunity for the company addressing this new high aged customer-base.
- Adding **sustainability to products and services** is a possible way to increase the revenue of the company. The sustainability of the products is dependent on the OEMs the company has contracts with. Nevertheless, the sustainability of the offered services is controlled by the company. According to the macroenvironmental analysis (see chapter 2.1.1) there is a trend in Austria where more people want to contribute to a green and responsible use of the natural ecosystem we are living in. The increase of ecological and social awareness which is a change in lifestyle of the Austrians is happening. Providing sustainable services for the company's customers is an opportunity.
- **Electrification** enables new strategies a company can pursue. Drivetrains will shift towards hybrid-electric, electric, and fuel-cell technologies as they mature and become cheaper. Electrification is considered as a sustainable solution for mobility.
- **Adding a premium car brand** to the existing brands is an opportunity to increase the market share of the company and to increase the customer-base by the adding the customer segment of wealthy customers.

4.1.4 Threats

- A major threat the automotive retail business is facing is the **possibility for OEMs to vertically integrate** into the retail business. For example, the OEM Volkswagen (VW) is trying to acquire as many VW retailers as possible to be able to expand their relevant market by owning car dealerships. Brands want to maximise their revenue and are therefore investigating new possible ways of distribution.
- A **small percentage of young customers** is threatening the company. Only 23.2 % of the participants of the customer survey were aged under 40 years. This is a good representation of the overall customer-base of the company.
- **Shortage of skilled workers** is a threat the company is facing right now. The company is not able to find qualified workers for after-sales.
- Large retailers put the company under **price pressure**. Larger dealerships can buy more cars and therefore get better conditions from the OEMs. In this price-sensitive automotive market

offering a better price often leads to sales. It is hard for dealerships of the size of Autohaus Loitz to compete against the large retailers who dampen sales prices.

- Car **sales are strongly dependent on a good economic** situation. In times where the economic situation is good, customers tend to more frequently change cars. Where in times of bad economic situations customers tend to use their car longer. A company must prepare for years with bad economics.
- Alternative mobility concepts are a threat to automotive retail. The **share-economy** enables those alternative mobility concepts. Out of different reasons (oil, ecology, emissions, noise, …) combustion engines loose popularity. Other mobility concepts promise enhancements over the conventional combustion engines which are 99 % of the current cars sold by Autohaus Loitz. Alternative mobility concepts are car-sharing, bus, taxi, renting a car, cycling, train and many more. The development of alternative mobility concepts needs to be monitored closely by the company.
- A major threat of automotive retail are **very low switching costs**. This enables customers to easily switch from one company to another without having any negative consequence.

4.2 Comparison and Derivation of Standard Strategies

The final part of the SWOT-Analysis tries to develop standard strategies. There are four different types of developed strategies. The first step is to compare all the factors. Strengths and opportunities form the SO-strategies. Weaknesses and opportunities lead to the so-called WO-strategies. The strengths and threats yield the ST-strategies and at last the weaknesses are compared with the threats forming the WT-strategies. An illustration can be seen in figure 4.4 below.

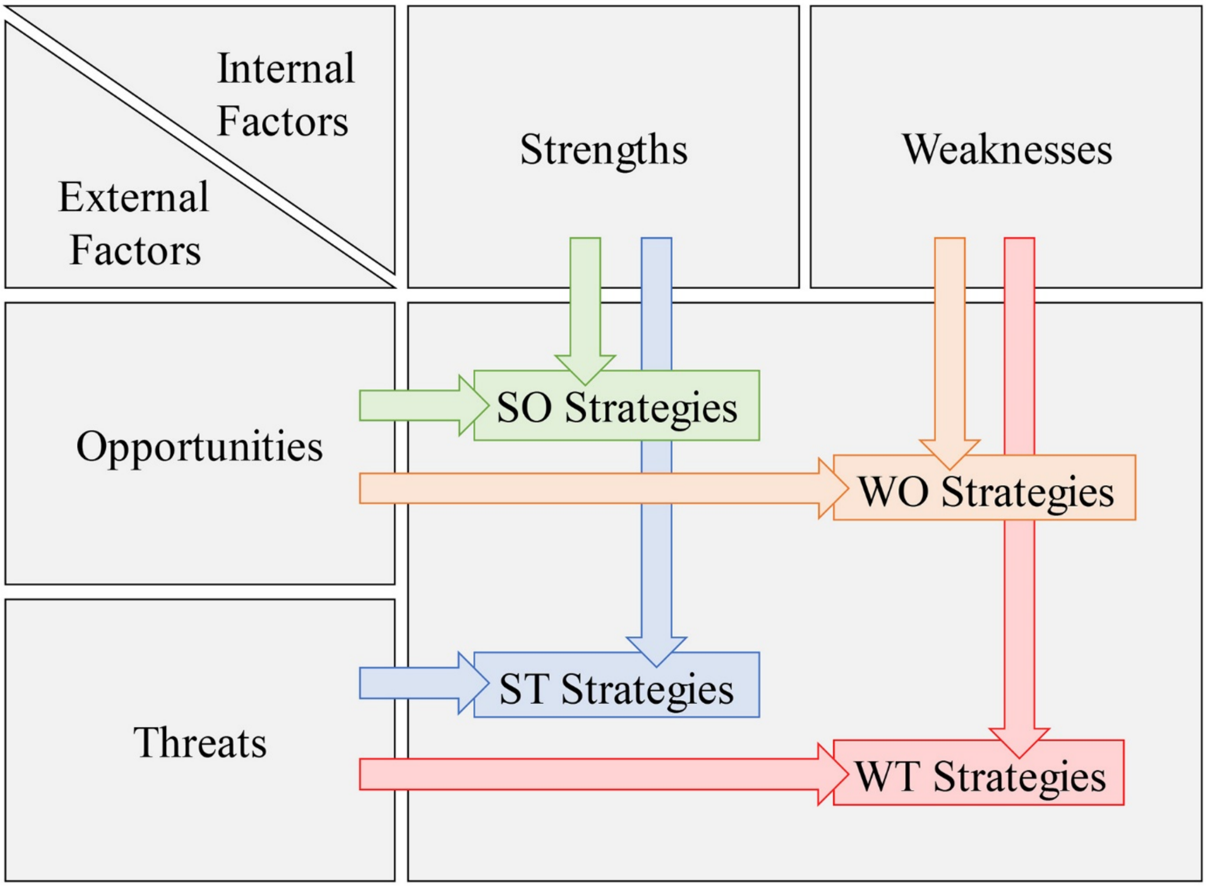

Figure 4.4: Comparison of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

This chapter gives possible ideas for strategies that can be developed in detail by the company.

4.2.1 SO-Strategies

Strategies that use strengths to take advantage of opportunities are called SO-Strategies and are generated in this part of the thesis. The approach is to look at the opportunities one by one and try to find strengths that can take advantage of the specific opportunity shown in figure 4.5.

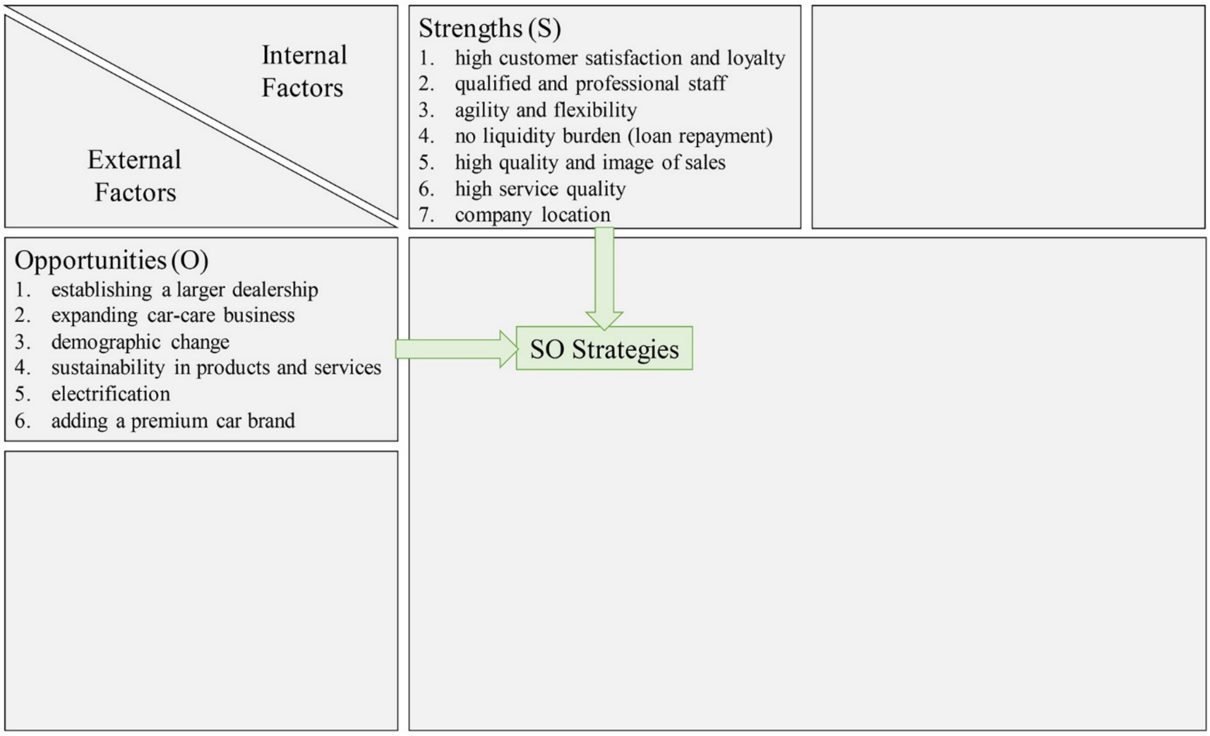

Figure 4.5: SO-Strategies.

The first opportunity for the company is to establish a larger dealership. This can be achieved by acquiring a new location and building a new company-building. The strength that the company has no liquidity burdens is helping this process. The strategy is to acquire a new company-location and build a modern company-building.

Expanding the car-care business is an important opportunity. The high agility and flexibility of the company makes it possible to quickly ramp up the car-care business. Currently there is only one trained full-time professional who is cleaning cars. Most of the equipment needed for a second cleaning workplace can be shared with the existing workplace. The needed space is also available. The strategy would be to set up a second workplace and hire a second person who is trained by our car-care professional to be able to clean cars professionally.

The demographic change needs to be considered for possible strategies. High flexibility and agility enable the company to take advantage of the demographic change. There can be specific services designed for high aged customers. An example of a possible strategy would be to offer specific seminars for older people in order to familiarise them with the complicated operation of modern systems in new vehicles. That could be a service for which the customers would have to pay. This could possibly bring older people into the dealership and build up a trust base for future business dealings.

There is no strength that directly helps enabling or inventing sustainability in products and services. A possible strategy is to make the offered services sustainable. This could be achieved by detailed investigation of each service offered. Every part of the process needs to be rated if it is sustainable. If a part of the service process is not sustainable it should be investigated to see if there is a possible solution to make it sustainable. There is the possibility of extensive marketing if it is possible to make the services sustainable.

Electrification enables possible strategy changes for the company. The qualified and professional staff who are trained for working on electric vehicles and the agility and flexibility of the company are strengths allowing the company to change strategy towards electrification. A possible strategy would be to build up an additional team in the company which works on different projects concerning electrification. One project could be to investigate the used car market for electrified vehicles. The goal would be to find good used products and resell them with a profit and to build up professional electrification market knowledge.

Adding a premium brand to the existing brand portfolio is an opportunity for increasing the sale numbers and increase the customer-base by adding premium customers. This strategy is interesting for the company because of the plans for building a new company building. When building a new company building the costs for each brand corporate identity are comparable. A possible strategy would be to offer an additional premium brand.

4.2.2 WO-Strategies

Strategies that take advantage of opportunities by overcoming weaknesses are developed in this part. Figure 4.6 shows the internal weaknesses and external opportunities and how they are combined in the WO-Strategies.

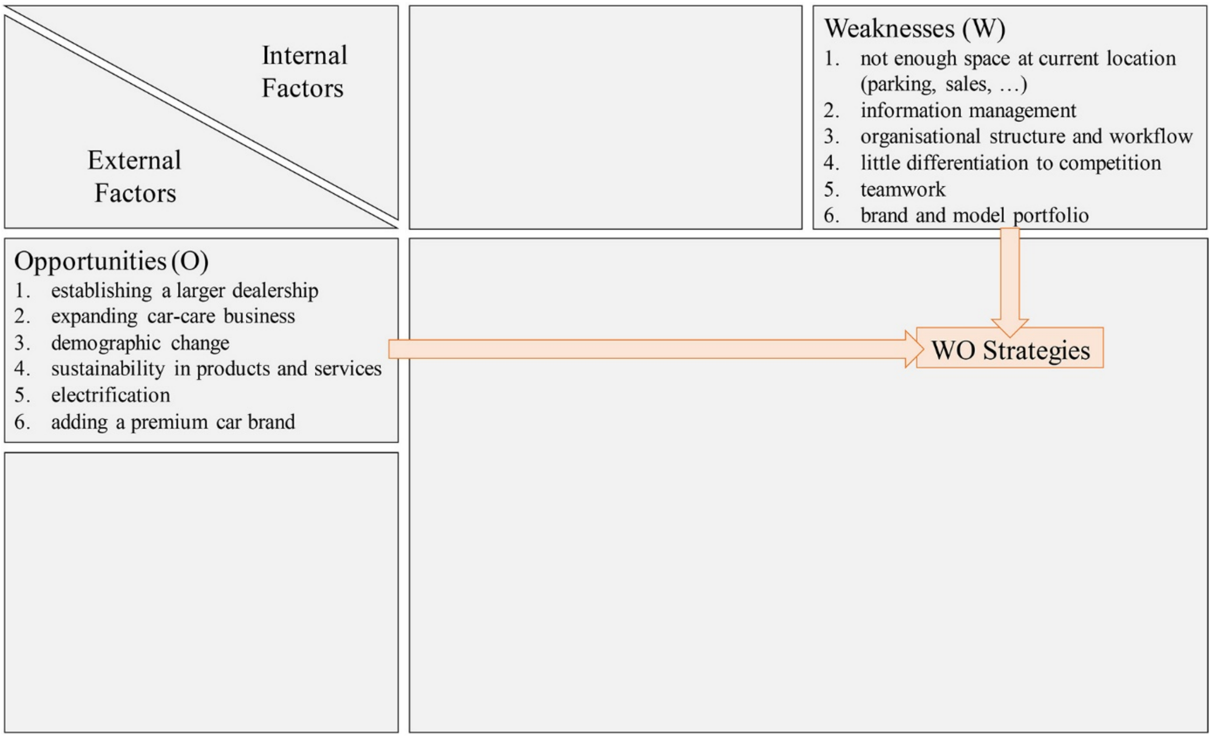

Figure 4.6: WO-Strategies.

The number one weakness of the company is the insufficient space at the current location. This weakness massively limits the growth of the company. Establishing a larger dealership would eliminate this weakness. A larger dealership is only possible on a new company location. This leads to the possible strategy to acquire a new company-location and build a modern company-building.

There are no opportunities that eliminate the weak information management, the organisational structure and workflow and the teamwork. Those are internal factors which must be solved by the leadership. A strategy option would be to rework the internal organisational structures and to implement a working tool for information management. Additionally, the company needs to develop methods to foster teamwork.

There is only little differentiation to the competition. Differentiation could be achieved by taking a closer look at the demographic change and design specific products and services for higher-aged people as mentioned in chapter 4.2.1.

The brand and model portfolio can be increased by adding an additional brand. There must be an evaluation done of the possible brands and their electrification strategies. Brands who have developed good strategies for electrification should be in favour. The chosen brand should offer cars considered as premium to be able to serve a broader customer base. The first steps in this strategy are to evaluate possible brands and open a dialogue between the possible OEMs and Autohaus Loitz.

4.2.3 ST-Strategies

ST-Strategies are strategies that use strengths to avoid threats. Figure 4.7 shows the internal strengths and external threats of the company sorted by their relevancy to the company.

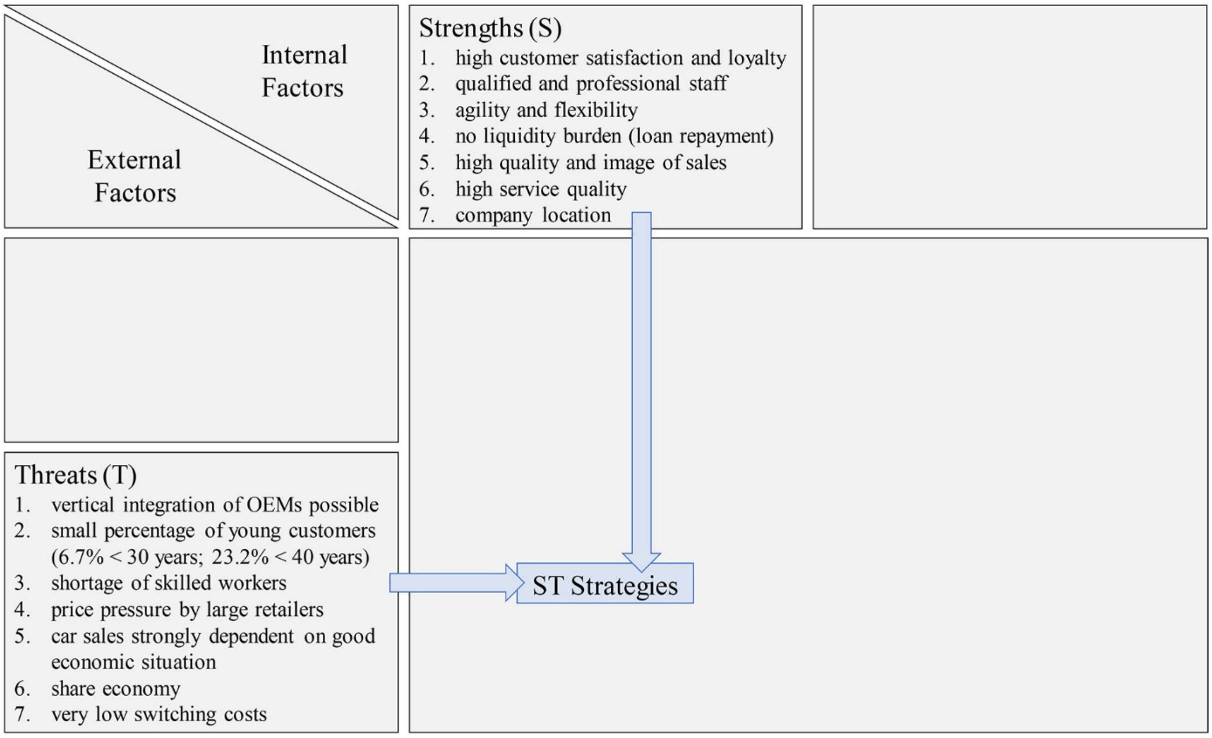

Figure 4.7: ST-Strategies.

A countermeasure to the vertical integration of OEMs is high customer loyalty and high service quality. These factors make it complicated for OEMs to vertically integrate into the retail business. A possible strategy is to further raise customer loyalty by adding services or products that differ from the competition or add services that bind customers to the company. By increasing the number of sold insurances and leased cars more customers are forced to visit the company. This is a strategy that can be executed by the sales department. The strategy would be to sell more cars with leasing to increase the switching costs.

The threat of a small percentage of young customers and the shortage of skilled workers cannot be avoided by a strength listed in the matrix. A special strategy that tries to attract young people could be a possible solution. A possible strategy would be to develop a new professional web presence. This needs to be understood as a change in marketing. Developing a new homepage is only the first step in this strategy. An all-new internet presence needs to be created.

Another strategy to get more young people to the company would be to team up with the local driving school. Every person passing the driving license gets a free car-wash at Autohaus Loitz. This could generate a high number of possible new customers getting in touch with the company for the first time.

The high quality and image of our sales department counters the threat of price pressure by large retailers to a large extent.

Car sales is strongly dependent on a good economic situation. The good financial situation of the company is helping in times of bad economics.

The threat generated by the share economy must be considered as massive. The agility and flexibility of the company can be used to counter this threat. A special strategy could be developed to be able to quickly transform to a car sharing company if the car retail market crashes. Therefore, the market needs to be monitored on a regular basis.

There are very low switching costs in the automotive retail business. The high customer satisfaction and loyalty helps keep customers but more aggressive strategies binding customers to the company need to be developed.

4.2.4 WT-Strategies

This part tries to develop strategies to minimise weaknesses and avoid threats. Figure 4.8 shows the factors which are needed to develop the WT-Strategies.

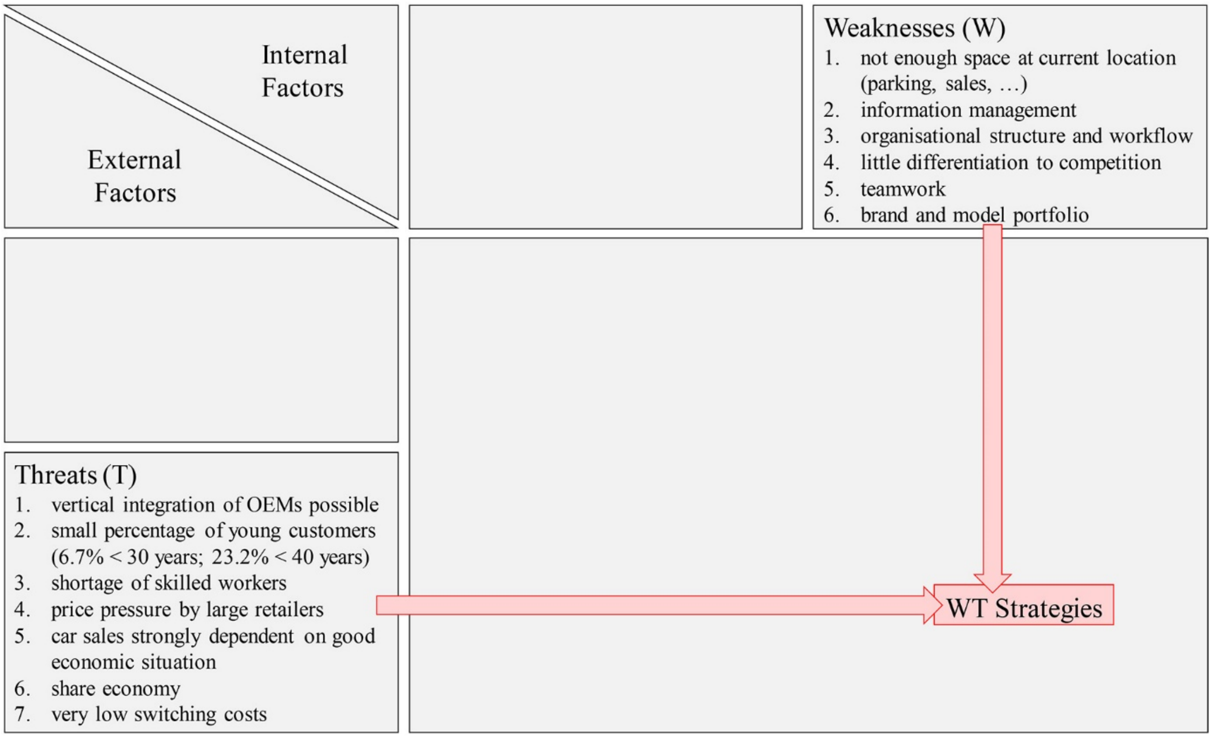

Figure 4.8: WT-Strategies.

A strategy that eliminates the weakness of having not enough space at the current location and the threat of price pressure by large retailers is establishing a new company location. By building a new company location the weakness of little differentiation to competition can be solved.

Information management, organisational structure and workflow, and teamwork must be solved company-internally by the leadership. Those factors are not directly linked to threats.

4.3 SWOT-Matrix

The most important possible strategy options are summarised in the final SWOT-Matrix shown in figure 4.9.This figure shows possible strategy-directions that the company can investigate in more detail. This should give a good overview about the internal factors, external factors and possible strategies. More details regarding the specific strategy directions of figure 4.9 can be found in chapter 4.2.

Internal Factors / External Factors	Strengths (S) 1. high customer satisfaction and loyalty 2. qualified and professional staff 3. agility and flexibility 4. no liquidity burden (loan repayment) 5. high quality and image of sales 6. high service quality 7. company location	Weaknesses (W) 1. not enough space at current location (parking, sales, …) 2. information management 3. organisational structure and workflow 4. little differentiation to competition 5. teamwork 6. brand and model portfolio
Opportunities (O) 1. establishing a larger dealership 2. expanding car-care business 3. demographic change 4. sustainability in products and services 5. electrification 6. adding a premium car brand	SO Strategies o acquire a new company-location and build a modern company-building o ramp up the car-care business o build up e-mobility knowledge concerning e-car sales and repairs o investigation of offered services in terms of sustainability o add a premium brand	WO Strategies o acquire a new company-location and build a modern company-building o offer specific product seminars for higher-aged people o add a premium brand o rework organizational structures and implement a working tool for information management
Threats (T) 1. vertical integration of OEMs possible 2. small percentage of young customers (6.7% < 30 years; 23.2% < 40 years) 3. shortage of skilled workers 4. price pressure by large retailers 5. car sales strongly dependent on good economic situation 6. share economy 7. very low switching costs	ST Strategies o increased use of leasing in car sales o develop a new professional web-presence with a new marketing strategy o cooperate with the local driving school regarding a free carwash for everybody who passed the driving test	WT Strategies o acquire a new company-location and build a modern company-building o rework organizational structures and implement a working tool for information management

Figure 4.9: Final SWOT-Matrix with possible strategies.

5 Conclusion

To follow in my father's footsteps as CEO of Autohaus Loitz and play a major role as a mobility supplier in the region is my personal motivation. Therefore, the main task of this thesis was to identify environmental and company internal factors that influence possible strategies of automotive retail companies. The most important factors have been discovered in the chapter strategic analysis and have been summarised by a SWOT-based approach in the chapter strategy formulation.

The starting point for strategy development is a deep insight into a company's environment. This insight has been gained by the macroenvironmental analysis, the industry analysis, a competition analysis, and a customer analysis. The result of these chapters was an identification of opportunities and threats caused by the company-environment. Some technology-driven opportunities that have been discovered are electrification, connectivity, autonomous driving, car-sharing, cryptocurrency, big data and predictive analytics. The research showed that the innovations and inventions in technology are evolving rapidly. Additionally, there are social factors which have an impact on automotive retail. Examples of social factors are the demographic change, the change in mindset of the youth and the desire for aesthetics. Due to the demographic change the average age of Austrians is increasing. This is a possible business-opportunity. Some threats affecting the automotive retail business are global warming, the share economy, strict EU-emission laws, the increasing social and ecological awareness, artificial intelligence, the high number of competitors, the low switching costs and the possible vertical integration of OEMs. A company that wants to stay competitive needs to be very agile and flexible. It needs the ability to react to changes in business very quickly.

To identify the strengths and weaknesses of Autohaus Loitz a company analysis was conducted. Strengths and weaknesses were additionally revealed with the help of a customer survey. Flexibility and agility had been discovered by the company analysis as a core-competence of Autohaus Loitz. In addition to that the company image and the location were also identified as core competences. For clarification it needs to be mentioned that location in this context means the region where the company is located, not the location where the actual company is built. Some identified strengths of the company are the excellent customer service, the high customer satisfaction and loyalty, the competent customer consulting, the high quality and image of sales and the balanced age-structure of employees. It was discovered that the company is highly customer-oriented. Weaknesses have been identified as well. An example is the insufficient space at the current company-location for customer parking and sales of new and used cars. There is too little differentiation to competitors which is another weakness of the firm. The employee survey showed that there are major weaknesses in the information management, the organisational structure and the teamwork in the company. These internal weaknesses need to be fixed as quickly as possible.

The goal of the chapter strategic analysis was to establish a clear understanding where the firm stands today in terms of strategy. To identify the company's fundamental strategic intent and identity strategic guideposts have been formulated. The vision of the company is to be the number one automotive retailer and customer's first choice in the region until 2030. Therefore, the company's mission is to help every customer achieve personal mobility. Autohaus Loitz defined seven core values which must be applied in every situation by every employee. Those core values are: respect, solution-oriented thinking, critical faculties, to be thirsty for knowledge, to take customers and tasks very seriously, to live the team-spirit and full attention during worktime. Those factors are of major importance to the CEO of the company.

In the final part of the thesis the key-findings of the strategic analysis have been summarised into a matrix called the SWOT-Framework. The Matrix gives possible strategic choices which can be developed in more detail by the company. Possible strategic choices are to acquire a new company-location and build a modern company-building. This strategy solves the main weakness of the company which is the insufficient space. Additionally, the opportunities to establish a larger dealership and to expand the car-care business are enabled by this strategy. Another example of a possible strategy is to develop a new professional web-presence and a new marketing strategy. There is only a small percentage of young customers which is a threat to the company. This strategy tries to avoid this threat. To bind customers to the company, leasing should be the favoured way to sell cars in the organisation. If a car is sold via leasing the customer must visit the dealer he made the leasing contract with. This is a good tool to bind customers to the company and should be included in a strategy.

The size of the market the automotive retail business is operating in is massive. There is a very high intensity of rivalry among existing competitors. Additionally, the technological developments in this sector are rapidly changing and evolving. A company that wants to ensure its viability and success in the future needs to stay hungry identifying new market trends and implement them as quickly and professionally as possible.

5.1 Outlook

The next logical step for Autohaus Loitz is to choose a strategy direction it wants to follow. Possible strategies are summarised in chapter 4.3. A solid approach for choosing the right strategy to follow is to compare the strategies. Good guidelines therefore can be found in the following literature (Vorbach, 2015; Dillerup and Stoi, 2016; Wunder, 2016; Welge, Al-Laham and Eulerich, 2017). After the development of the specific strategy it needs to be implemented. A good implementation of the chosen strategy is of major importance. During the time this thesis was written the company acquired a new company location 220 meters away from the old one. The management of the company is currently developing a strategy based on the results of this thesis. Additionally, a plan about the layout of the new company is in development right now. Therefore, the insights of this thesis are used as a strategy foundation.

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Appendix

Appendix 1	Competitor Analysis Overview	A-8	to A-11
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Distance in km	Company	Geschäftsführer	Location	Official PKW Brands	Sector	Services (LAUT HOMEPAGE)	direct or indirect competitor	Homepage	Mitarbeiteranzahl (Homepage)
1	Reifen Wondraschek GmbH	Philipp Wondraschek (Filiale Gallneukirchen, Verkauf)	Fabrikstraße 14, 4210 Gallneukirchen	*no brands*	Service	Depot, PKW Montage, Reifen/Felgen Reparatur, Industrie Montage, Autobatterien, Traktor Montage, Motorrad Montage, LKW Montage, Spureinstellung, Klimaservice, Steinschlagreparatur, Batterien, Bremsbeläge und -scheiben, Ölwechsel, Auspuff, Scheinwerfereinstellung,	direct	http://www.reifen-wondraschek.at/	*no info*
2,1	Alois Lanzerstorfer	Alois Lanzerstorfer	Sportplatzweg 1, 4209 Engerwitzdorf	*no brands*	Service		direct	*no website*	1
2,4	Car Selection	Dominik Lenzenweger	Engerwitzdorfer Str. 37, 4209 Engerwitzdorf	*no brands*	Premium Used Cars	Reperatur, Service, Wartung, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Autoglas, Ersatzteil- und Zubehör, Versicherungsschäden, Gebrauchtfahrzeuge,	direct	https://www.car-selection.at/	3
2,6	IBM Transporte Brandstetter GMBH	Manfred Brandstetter	Langwiesen 12, 4209 Engerwitzdorf	*no brands*	Service	TRANSPORTE, HANDEL, KFZ, REIFEN, SERVICE, AUTO-AUFBEREITUNG	direct	https://www.ibm-transporte-brandstetter.at/	*no info*
2,7	Lagerhaus-Standort Engerwitzdorf		Engerwitzdorfer Str. 40, 4209 Engerwitzdorf	*no brands*	Service		direct	https://www.lagerhaus.at/	*no info*
3,8	Autohaus Schöndorfer GmbH	Ing. Peter Schöndorfer, Michael Schöndorfer	Katsdorfer Str. 3, 4209 Engerwitzdorf/Innertreffling	**VOLKSWAGEN, MICROCAR,** Seat Service	Official Retail	Reifenangebot, Ersatzwagen, Kindereinrichtungen, Hol & Bringservice, Nachtannahme, Schlepphilfe, Zertifizierung, Telefonische Reparaturannahme, Finanzierungsberatung, Schnellservice, § 57a Prüfstelle, Räder/Reifenlagerung, Zubehör-Shop, Versicherungsberatung, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Kunststoffreparatur, Glasreparatur, Pflege, Bankomatkassa, Kreditkarte, Free Wi-Fi, NORA Originalteile,	direct	https://www.schoendorfer.at/	24
4,2	Fa. Kaltenberger Robert (Mobiler Steinschlag Reparaturdienst)	Robert Kaltenberger	Klammstraße 15, 4209 Engerwitzdorf	*no brands*	Car Glas Repair	Ein Anruf genügt und Ihr Steinschlag wird sauber, rasch UND vor Ort repariert.	direct	http://members.aon.at/mobile-steinschlagreparatur.at/	1
4,3	Nirohani (Automotive Glas)	Hannes Moser	Engerwitzberg 10, 4209 Engerwitzberg	*no brands*	Car Glas Repair	Windschutzscheiben Reperatur und Tausch jeder Art (Begutachtung der Schäden, Kompetente Beratung, Kurzfristige Termine zur Sofortreparatur, Modernstes Harz & Klebeverfahren, Passende Qualitätsscheiben für jeden Fahrzeugtyp, Qualifiziertes Personal)	direct	http://www.nirohani.at/	*no info*
5,2	Autohaus Himmelbauer (HIMMELBAUER KFZ GmbH)	Martin Katterbauer, Gerhard Seyr	Betriebsstraße 2, 4210 Unterweitersdorf	**MITSUBISHI, HYUNDAI**	Official Retail	§57a Prüfstelle, Windschutzscheibenreperatur, Klimaanlagenservice, Karosserie- und Lackschädenbehebung, Achsvermessung, Abrechnung von Versicherungsschäden *(SCHADET UNSEREM VERKAUF, laut Thomas Mader)*	direct	http://www.himmelbauer.at/	13
6	Johann Keplinger GmbH & Co KG	Johannes Lackinger	Gallneukirchner Str. 9, 4203 Altenberg bei Linz	*no brands*	Service	Landmaschinen, Spenglerei, Gartengeräte, Autodienst, Überprüfungen nach §57a („Pickerl"), Ersatzteileverkauf, Lackierservice, Klimaservice, Autospenglerarbeiten, EBS, Wartung des Bordcomputers, Kunstschmied, AD-Mobilitätsgarantie, Reifenwechsel,	direct	https://www.keplinger-landmaschinen.at/	15
6,2	RR Motors GmbH & Co KG	Robert Reindl	Betriebsstraße 4, 4210 Radingdorf	*no brands*	premium Used Cars	handel mit exklusiven Automobilen	indirect (exclusive cars)	http://www.rrmotors.at/	2
6,5	Konrad Leonhartsberger Gesellschaft m.b.H.		Breitenbruck 71, 4223 Katsdorf	*no brands*	Service	24 Stunden Reparaturannahme, Direkte Versicherungsabwicklung, Freie Werkstätte, Klimaservice, Kraftfahrzeugtechnik ohne Fahrzeughandel, LKW – Technik, Oldtimer-Reparatur & Restaurierungen, Vulkaniseur und/oder Reifenhandel, Wiederkehrende Überprüfung gem. § 57a KFG ("Pickerl")	direct	*no website*	2
6,6	Hennebichler GmbH	Max Hennebichler	Betriebsstraße 1, 4210 Unterweitersdorf	*no brands*	Service	Tankstelle, Service für alle gängigen Fahrzeuge (§ 57a), Elektrik und Elektronik, Bremsen, Achsvermessung, Klimaanlage, Pannen- und Unfallhilfe vor Ort, Hotel- und Reisekostenübernahme, Abschleppen und Bergen Ihres Fahrzeugs, Rücktransport inklusive medizinischer Vermittlung, Weiter- und Rückreise, Karosseriereparaturen, Restaurierungen von Oldtimern, Karosserieaus- und -umbauten, Optische Fahrzeugvermessung, Reparaturen von Kunststoffteilen, Überprüfung nach § 57a, Unterboden- und Hohlraumschutz, Pkw-Tuning, Lackierungen von Pkw/Lkw/Bussen, Autoschiebedächer, Beschriftungen, Pkw-Dachgalerien und Spoiler, Hagelschadenreparatur, Pkw-Anhänger und Anhängekupplungen, Windschutzscheiben erneuern und reparieren, Direkte Verrechnung mit Versicherung	direct	http://www.kfz-hennebichler.at/	10
7,2	KFZ Hufnagl GmbH	Günther Hufnagl	Schlammersdorf 20, 4211 Alberndorf in der Riedmark	*no brands*	Service	Service, Karosserie, Lackierung, Oldtimer	direct	http://www.kfz-hufnagl.at/	3
7,5	Autohaus Winkler	Othmas Winkler	Hauptstraße 29, 4211 Alberndorf in der Riedmark	Toyota Service	Official Service	TradeInAppraisal, Werkstatt, YarisGRMN	direct	*no website*	*no info*
7,7	Manfred Aichinger	Manfred Aichinger	Bodendorf 39, 4223 Katsdorf	*no brands*	Service	(Er schreibt Peugeot erfahrung, viele (6) Peugeot Gebrauchtwagen), Karosserie, Glasreparatur, Service, apschleppdienst, §57a Vorbereitung, Direktverrechnung mit Versicherungen	direct	http://www.kfz-aichinger.at/	2
8,8	Autohaus Ortner GmbH		Scheiben 4, 4224 Wartberg ob der Aist	**SKODA**, Volkswagen Service, Audi Service	Official Retail	Reifenangebot, Ersatzwagen, Kindereinrichtungen, Hol & Bringservice, Nachtannahme, Schlepphilfe, Waschstraße, Restaurant und Café, Finanzierungsberatung, Schnellservice, § 57a Prüfstelle, Räder/Reifenlagerung, Zubehör-Shop, Klimaanlagen-Stützpunkt, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Fahrzeugdirektannahme, Glasreparatur, Pflege, Bankomatkassa, Kreditkarte, Free WLAN,	direct	https://www.ortner-autohaus.at/	26

9,3	Kneidinger Center GmbH		Freistädter Str. 336a, 4040 Linz	**VOLKSWAGEN, AUDI, SKODA**	Official Retail	Reifenangebot, Kindereinrichtungen,Café,Hol & Bringservice, Nachtannahme, Schlepphilfe, Waschstraße, Zertifizierung, Radio&CD&Soundsysteme, Straßenbahn, Telefonische Reparaturannahme, Finanzierungsberatung, Schnellservice, § 57a Prüfstelle, Räder/Reifenlagerung, Zubehör-Shop, Klimaanlagen-Stützpunkt, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Fahrzeugdirektannahme, Glasreparatur, Ersatzmobil, Pflege, Bankomatkassa, Free WLAN, NORA Originalteile,	direct	https://www.kneidingercenter.at/	34
9,3	ÖAMTC Urfar		Freistädter Str. 399, 4040 Linz	*no brands*	Service	kompetente Fehlersuche und Pannenbehebung, Prüfdienstleistungen wie Pickerl- und Kaufüberprüfung, Motor- und Steuergeräte-Diagnose mit modernsten Prüfgeräten, Klimaanlagen-Check, Fahrwerksvermessung und -einstellung, Windschutzscheibenreparatur (Direktabrechnung mit vielen Versicherungen), sowie viele weitere Spezialüberprüfungen - objektiv und kompetent,	direct	https://www.oeamtc.at/standorte/oberoesterreich/linz-urfahr-16192392	24
9,6	Auto Günther GmbH (Urfahr)	Ing. Hermann Schober (Leitung Urfahr)	Mostnystraße 4, 4040 Urfahr	**OPEL, KIA, PEUGEOT,**	Official Retail	Service & §57a-Überprüfung, Karosserie & Lack, Autoglas, Verschleißteil-Reparaturen, Checks und Pflegepakete, Reifenservice, Mobilität/ Fly & Check, Autovermietung, Linie-G	direct	https://www.auto-guenther.at/	26
9,6	Forstinger Österreich GmbH (Urfahr)		Mostnystraße 5, 4040 Linz	*no brands*	Service	Beispiel §57a-Überprüfung (Pickerl), Auspuff-Service, Bremsen-Service, Elektronik-Service, Fahrwerk-Service, Motor-Service, Reifen-Service, Klimaanlagen-Service, Ölwechsel sowie Windschutzscheiben-Reparaturen und –tausch	direct	https://www.forstinger.com	*no info*
9,6	Bauer Florian GmbH	Johann Bauer	Götschka 16, 4212 Neumarkt/Mühlkreis	**FORD**	Official Retail	Verkauf, KFZ-Service, Landtechnik (Landmaschinen)	direct	http://www.ford-bauer.at/	*no info*
9,7	Lietz Linz-Urfahr (Lietz GmbH)		Mostnystraße 8, 4040 Linz	**MAZDA, HYUNDAI**	Official Retail	Dialogannahme, Vorab-Preisinformationen, Einhaltung aller Herstellervorschriften, Ersatzteilgarantie, Ersatzteile, Pünktliche Fertigstellung der Arbeiten, Transparente Rechnungslegung, Offenes Ohr für Verbesserungen, §57a Überprüfung, Allmarken-Kompetenz, Lack und Karosserie (LIETZBOX), Pflege (LIETZNESS Autopflege)	direct	https://www.lietz.at/	22
9,7	Autohaus Maurer		Mostnystraße 12, 4040 Linz	*no brands*	Service	Telefonische Reperaturannahme, Reperatur&Servicepflege, §57a Prüfstelle, Reifenangebot, Räder/Reifenlagerung, Klimaanlagen-Stützpunkt, Glasreperatur	indirect (very small)	www.autohaus-maurer.at	*no info*
9,8	Autohaus Dornach (AC Auto Vertrieb und Service GmbH)		Mostnystraße 20, 4040 Linz	**FORD, FIAT**	Official Retail	Reparatur und Service aller Marken,Begutachtung lt. § 57a bis 3,5 t (Pickerl), Erinnerungsservice an alle wichtigen Termine, Schadensabwicklung mit allen Versicherungen, Windschutzscheiben-Reparatur und Tausch, Spot Repair (Ausbeulen von Dellen zum Sonderpreis), Lackierung, Achsvermessung, Klimaanlagen Service, Leihwagen, 24 Stundenannahme, Waschstraße, Reifenhotel, Versicherungsberatung in unseren hauseigenen Versicherungsbüros, Eigene Zulassungsstelle im Autohaus	direct	http://www.ford4you.at/	*no info*
11,1	Autohaus Gusenbauer GesmbH	Ing. Mag. Jörg Gusenbauer	Broschgasse 2, 4040 Linz	**MERCEDES BENZ**	Official Retail	ISO Zertifizierung 9001/14001:2015, Service, Wartung, Reparatur, Karosserie, Lackierung, Die § 57 Überprüfung, Economy Service, Hol- Und Bringservice, Fahrzeugaufbereitung, Pannenhilfe, Teile Und Zubehör,	indirect	http://www.autogusenbauer.at/	14
11,3	Kfz Bachl & Frühwirt GesmbH		Matzelsdorf 75, 4212 Neumarkt im Mühlkreis	*no brands*	Service	KFZ-Werkstatt, Handel mit Waren aller Art (insb. Reifen, Teile, Fahrzeuge), Fahrzeugvermietung	direct	*no website*	*no info*
11,3	Hess Fahrzeugtechnik GmbH	Thomas Hess	Matzelsdorf 72, 4212 Neumarkt im Mühlkreis	Mercedes Benz Service	Official Service	Autorisierter Mercedes-Benz Servicepartner und Vertragswerkstätte für PKW, Transporter, LKW und Unimog, Werkstätte für alle Fahrzeuge und Marken, Pannendienstfahrzeuge für LKW und PKW, Transport und Abschleppfahrzeuge für LKW und PKW, 18 m Montagegrube mit Bremsenprüfstand 3 m Spur und 25 t Achslast, 2 weitere Montagegruben, 12 Hebebühnen für jeden Bedarf, Sämtliche Gerätschaft für eine Komplettleistung von der Scheibenreparatur bis zum Lack,	direct	http://www.hess-fahrzeugtechnik.at/	11
11,6	Pleiner GmbH & Co KG	Anita Strasser	Luftenberg Luftenbergerstr. 26, 4222 St.Georgen/Gusen	**OPEL AOV**	Official Retail	Neu- und Gebrauchtwagenverkauf, Service und Reparaturen aller Marken, Spengler- und Lackierarbeiten (Direktverrechnung mit Versicherungen), Windschutzscheibentausch bei allen Marken, Abschleppdienst, Umfangreiches Ersatzteillager und Zubehör, § 57 a Überprüfung, Reifen- und Felgenhandel, Reifeneinlagerung, Klimaanlagenservice, Ersatzwagen während Reparaturarbeiten, Auto-Abhol- und Zustelldienst bei Reparaturen,	direct	https://www.pleiner.at/	*no info*
11,8	LIFAG Fahrzeughandels GmbH	Wolfgang Hübl	Plesching 1a, 4040 Plesching	**NISSAN, CITROEN, DAIHATSU,** Suzuki Service	Official Retail	§57a Überprüfung, Achsvermessung und Einstellung, Reparaturen aller Art für alle Marken, Klimaanlagen, Garantiereparaturen, Abschlepp- und Pannendienst, Ersatzwagen, Lack und Karosserie, Fahrzeugpflege, Versicherungsabwicklung mit allen Versicherungen, Windschutzscheibenreparatur, Hagel- bzw. Dellenservice, Spot Repair, Alufelgenreparatur, Scheinwerferreparatur, Unterboden- und Hohlraumschutz	direct	http://www.lifag.at/	26
11,8	Auto Prammer GmbH	Paul Prammer, Klaus Heiligenbrunner	Schallersdorf 5, 4212 Neumarkt im Mühlkreis	*no brands*	Service	Service Stundensatz (netto110€/h), Premium Gebrauchtwagen(Audi, Tesla)	direct	http://www.auto-prammer.at/	9
11,8	Sonnleitner GmbH & Co KG (Linz-Urfahr)	Siegfried Feizlmayr, Standortleiter	Linke Brückenstraße 60, 4040 Linz	**RENAULT, DACIA, NISSAN, ALPINE**	Official Retail	Alles	direct	https://www.sonnleitner.at/	*no info*
11,9	Autohaus Pregarten		Althauser Str. 21, 4230 Pregarten	**VOLKSWAGEN, SKODA,** Audi Service	Official Retail	Reifenangebot, Ersatzwagen, Kindereinrichtungen, Café, Hol & Bringservice, Nachtannahme, Schlepphilfe, Waschstraße, Telefonische Reparaturannahme, § 57a Prüfstelle, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Fahrzeugdirektannahme, Glasreparatur, Ersatzmobil, Bankomatkassa, Altfahrzeugrücknahme, NORA Originalteile,	direct	https://www.autohaus-pregarten.at/	29
12,1	Kfz Martin Krenn GmbH	Martin Krenn	Weignersdorf 7, 4202 Hellmonsödt	*no brands*	Very Small	Kfz-Reperatur und Wartung	direct	http://www.kfz-krenn.at/	3

12,1	Autohaus Max Voggenhuber Gesellschaft m.b.H. & Co. KG.		Reindlstraße 35, 4040 Linz	**VOLKSWAGEN**, Audi Service	Official Retail	Reifenangebot, Ersatzwagen, Shuttleservice, Tankstelle, Kindereinrichtungen, Café, Hol & Bringservice, Boutique, KFZ-Zulassung, Nachtannahme, Spezialleistungen, Schlepphilfe, Waschstraße, Zertifizierung, Radio&CD&Soundsysteme, Restaurant und Café, Straßenbahn, Taxi- und Kleintransporte, Telefonische Reparaturannahme, Finanzierungsberatung, Schnellservice, § 57a Prüfstelle, Räder/Reifenlagerung, Zubehör-Shop, Versicherungsberatung, Klimaanlagen-Stützpunkt, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Fahrwerksumbauten, Behinderten-Spezialwerkstatt, Fahrzeugdirektannahme, Kunststoffreparatur, Glasreparatur, Ersatzmobil, Pflege, ankomatkassa, Altfahrzeugrücknahme, Kreditkarte, Free Wi-Fi, Volkswagen e-mobility,	?	https://www.voggenhuber.com/	50
13,3	Autohaus Reich (OLDI DOC)	Walter Reich	Museumstraße 22, 4020 Linz	**HYUNDAI**	Official Retail	Hyundai Spezialist, Oldtimer Restaurierung, Service, Reperatur aller Marken, Motor, Elektronik, Unfallschäden, Lackier- und Spenglerarbeiten, § 57a "Pickerl"-Überprüfung, Reifenwechsel, Reifenlagerung, Klimaservice, Windschutzscheibenwechsel,	?	https://www.autowerkstatt-linz.at	3
13,8	Autohaus Mitterbauer (FilialeLinz Urfahr) (Autohaus Mitterbauer GmbH)	Ing. Markus Mitterbauer	Leonfeldner Str. 252, 4040 Linz/Urfahr	**TOYOTA**	Official Retail	Verkauf von Neu- und Gebrauchtwagen, Finanzierung (Leasing / Kredit), Geprüfte KFZ-Werkstätte, Reparaturen, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Fahrzeug-Aufbereitung,	?	http://www.toyotalinz.at/	
14,1	Mayer Linz (ZNL der Porsche Inter Auto GmbH & Co KG)	Mag. Heimo Radlmaier	Industriezeile 72, 4017 Linz	**VOLKSWAGEN, AUDI, SEAT, SKODA,**	Official Retail	Reifenangebot, Ersatzwagen, Café, Hol & Bringservice, Nachtannahme, Spezialleistungen, Schlepphilfe, Waschstraße, Zertifizierung, Radio&CD&Soundsysteme, Telefonische Reparaturannahme, Finanzierungsberatung, Schnellservice, § 57a Prüfstelle, Räder/Reifenlagerung, Zubehör-Shop, Versicherungsberatung, Klimaanlagen-Stützpunkt, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Tuning/Motor, Fahrzeugdirektannahme, Kunststoffreparatur, Glasreparatur, Pflege, Bankomatkassa, Bus, Reisemobilvermietung, Free WLAN, Volkswagen e-mobility,	?	https://www.mayerlinz.at/	80
14,2	Auto Höller (Fa. Albert Höller)	Albert Höller	Leonfeldner Str. 274, 4040 Linz-Urfahr	*no brands*		Kfz-Handel, Service, Reperatur, Leasing, Kredit, Eintausch	direct	http://www.auto-hoeller.at/	*no info*
14,3	Höglinger Denzel GmbH	Michael Höglinger, Michael Schmidt, Andrea Schmid	Estermannstraße 2-4, 4017 Linz	**BMW, BMW i, MINI,**	Official Retail	Alles	indirect (premium)	https://bmw-hoeglinger.at/	60
14,4	Autohaus Pichler Steyregg (Fritz Pichler GmbH)	Werner Grünberger	Linzer Str. 52, 4221 Steyregg	**SKODA,** Volkswagen Service	Official Retail	Reifenangebot, Ersatzwagen, Kindereinrichtungen, Café, Nachtannahme, Waschstraße, Radio&CD&Soundsysteme, Telefonische Reparaturannahme, Finanzierungsberatung, Schnellservice, § 57a Prüfstelle, Räder/Reifenlagerung, Zubehör-Shop, Versicherungsberatung, Klimaanlagen-Stützpunkt, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Fahrzeugbau, Fahrwerksumbauten, Tuning/Motor, Fahrzeugdirektannahme, Kunststoffreparatur, Glasreparatur, Ersatzmobil, Pflege, Bankomatkassa, Leihrad, Altfahrzeugrücknahme, Free WLAN,	direct	https://www.pichler-autohaus.at/	15
14,7	Autohaus Wipplinger Steyregg (Wipplinger Automobilia GmbH)	Ernest Wipplinger	Linzer Str. 39, 4221 Steyregg	**HONDA, ALFA-ROMEO, FIAT, ABARTH, LANCIA, JEEP**	Official Retail	Mechanische-Reparaturen für alle Marken, Karosserie-Reparaturen für alle Marken, §57 Pickerl und Service für alle Marken, Lackierarbeiten und Spot-Repair, Windschutzscheiben-Reparatur, Reifenservice und Einlagerung, Folierung von Autoglas, Reparatur von Sitzbezügen, ISO- und Umweltzertifiziert, DELLEN-DRÜCKEN, Lackieren, Mietwagen, Wax Unterbodenschutz,	direct	http://wipplinger.at/	26
14,9	Autohaus Holzer	Ing. Erich Holzer	Marktstraße 11, 4312 Ried in der Riedmark	Opel Service		Neu- und Gebrauchtwagenverkauf, Spenglerei und Lackiererei, Service und Reparatur, Abgas- und Bremsentest, § 57a Überprüfung bis 3,5 t, Klimaanlagenservice und Reparatur, Reifendienst und Reifeneinlagerung, Windschutzscheiben Reparatur, Autopflegeangebote,	direct	https://www.opel-holzer.at/	7
15,5	Auto Günther GmbH (Linz)	Georg Kirchberger (Leitung Linz)	Hamerlingstraße 13-15, 4020 Linz	**OPEL, KIA, PEUGEOT, CADILLAC, CORVETTE, CHEVROLET**	Official Retail	Service & §57a-Überprüfung, Karosserie & Lack, Autoglas, Verschleißteil-Reparaturen, Checks und Pflegepakete, Reifenservice, Mobilität/ Fly & Check, Autovermietung, Linie-G	direkt	https://www.auto-guenther.at/	61
20,3	Autohaus Reichhart (J. REICHHART GMBH)	Hannes Reichhart	Machlandstr. 58, 4310 Mauthausen	**VOLVO, SUZUKI**	Official Retail	Neuwagen, Gebrauchtwagen, Reperatur und Service, Teile & Zubehör, Gratis Wlan, Rädereinlagerung, Fahrzeugwäsche, Mobilitätsangebot, Performance-Optimierung, §57A ÜBERPRÜFUNG, SERVICE, REIFENREPARATUR, ABGASTEST, SCHNELLSERVICE, GLASREPARATUR, UNFALLSCHÄDEN (ABWICKLUNG VERSICHERUNG), RÄDER/ REIFENLAGERUNG, LEIHWAGEN NACH ABSPRACHE, HOL- UND BRINGSERVICE NACH ABSPRACHE, FAHRZEUG AUSSEN- UND INNENREINIGUNG,	direct (not sure)	https://www.autohaus-reichhart.at/	22
21,9	Baschinger Ges.m.b.H.	Josef Baschinger	Welser Str. 120, 4060 Leonding	**JEEP, LANCIA, FIAT, BMW, DODGE**	Official Retail	Reifenverkauf, Navigationssysteme, Ersatzteile, Zubehörverkauf, Einbau von Musikanlagen, Einbau von Telefonen, Felgenverkauf, Karosserie, Autoglaserei, Lenkgeometrie, Autoelektrik, § 57a -Kontrolle, Motorentuning, Abgastests, Wartung von Klimaanlagen, Abschleppdienst, Ersatzwagen, Finanzierung, Gebrauchtwagenverkauf, Leasing - Angebot, Neuwagenverkauf, Pannendienst, Reparaturen, Spenglereiarbeiten, Waschanlage,	indirect (premium)	http://baschinger.com/	31
22,2	Autohaus F. Reichhart GmbH	Franz Reichhart	Perger Str. 6, 4310 Mauthausen	**BMW, MINI**	Official Retail	24h Angabe Service, Ersatzwagen Service, Gratis W-Lan, Service, Reinigung & Pflege, Teile & Zubehör, Präsentation & BMW Classic, Neuwagen, Aktionen, Gebrauchtwagen,	indirect (premium)	https://bmw-reichhart-mauthausen.at/	41

22,2	Günter Braher GmbH	Günter Braher	Daimlerstraße 1, 4310 Mauthausen	**MERCEDES BENZ, SMART, RENAULT, DACIA,** Mitsubishi Service,	Official Retail	Verkauf, Service, Aufbereitung, Spenglerei, Lackiererei, Vermietung	indirect (premium)	http://www.braher.at/	31
22,8	Pappas Linz (PAPPAS AUTOMOBILVERTRIEBS GMBH)	Helmut Salinger (Geschäftsleiter Linz)	Mayrhoferstraße 36, 4030 Linz-Wegscheid	**MERCEDES BENZ, AMG, SMART, MASERATI, ALFA-ROMEO, JEEP**, Fiat Service, DAF Service, Lancia Service, Chrysler Service, Dodge Service	Official Retail	Werkstatt für Pkw, Werkstatt für Transporter, Werkstatt für Lkw, Werkstatt für Unimog & Sonderfahrzeuge, Garantieleistungen, Reparatur & Umbau, Teile & Zubehör, Accessoires, Performance & Tuning, Oldtimer - Pappas Classic, Reparatur und Wartung, Jahresservice, §57a Begutachtung, Lack- und Karosseriearbeiten in unseren Spenglereien, Ölwechsel, Zahnriemenwechsel, Wechsel Winterreifen / Sommerreifen, Windschutzscheiben- und Dellenausbesserung,	indirect (premium)	https://www.pappas.at/unternehmen/standorte/Pappas-Automobilvertriebs-GmbH~l3648	80
23,4	Autohaus Kastler GmbH	Franz Kastler	Linzer Str. 67, 4240 Freistadt	**NISSAN, RENAULT, DACIA,**	Official Retail	E-Mobilität, Servicearbeiten, Spenglerarbeiten auf einer Celette-Richtbank, Lackierarbeiten in einer umweltfreundlichen Lackierbox mit Wärmetauscher, Ersatzwagen, Finanzierung, Gebrauchtwagenverkauf, Leasing-Angebot, Neuwagenverkauf, Pannendienst, Reparaturen, Spenglereiarbeiten, Waschanlage, Karosserie, Autoglaserei, Lenkgeometrie, Autoelektrik, § 57a-Kontrolle bis 3,5 t, Abgastests, Wartung von Klimaanlagen, Reifenverkauf, Felgenverkauf, Ersatzteile, Zubehörverkauf, Navigationssysteme, Telefon-Verkauf, Verkauf von Klimaanlagen, Verkauf von Musikanlagen,	direct (little bit far)	http://www.autohaus-kastler.at/	15
25,7	Karl Pramer e.U.	Karl Pramer	Waxenberger Str. 25, 4181 Oberneukirchen	**OPEL AOV**	Official Retail	Jahres-Inspektion, §57a-Überprüfung, Klimaanlagen-Service, Saisonale Überprüfungen, Reparaturen, uvm.	indirect (far away)	https://www.opel-pramer.at/	5

Sehr geehrte Kundin, sehr geehrter Kunde,

Bitte nehmen Sie an unserer Kundenumfrage teil, denn wir im Autohaus Loitz legen großen Wert auf Ihre Meinung. Das Ziel dieser Umfrage ist es die Zufriedenheit und die Wünsche unserer Kunden zu erfahren. Das Ergebnis hilft uns dabei Ihnen ein bestmögliches Erlebnis im Autohaus Loitz bieten zu können.

Freundliche Grüße, ***Anton Loitz Jun. und das Loitz-Team***

Teil A: Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit den unten angeführten Bereichen im Autohaus Loitz?

A1.

	Sehr Gut	Gut	Schlecht	Sehr Schlecht
Wie zufrieden sind Sie allgemein mit dem Autohaus Loitz?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit dem Neuwagen-Verkauf?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit dem Gebrauchtwagen-Verkauf?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit der Werkstätte inkl. Spenglerei und Lackiererei?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit unseren Werkstatt-Ersatzfahrzeugen?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit unserer Autoaufbereitung bzw. Autoreinigung?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit unserer umweltfreundlichen Recycling-Autowaschanlage?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit unserer Autovermietung?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Teil B: Was würden Sie tun?

B1. Was ist die eine Sache die wir auf keinen Fall ändern sollten?

B2. **Wenn Sie etwas im Autohaus Loitz ändern könnten, was wäre das?**

Teil C: Wo sind wir gut und wo können wir uns noch verbessern?

C1.

	Sehr Gut	Gut	Schlecht	Sehr Schlecht
Wie flexibel sind wir?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Nehmen wir uns genügend Zeit für Ihre persönliche die Beratung?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Haben wir qualifiziertes und professionelles Personal im Verkauf?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Haben wir qualifiziertes und professionelles Personal in der Werkstatt?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Haben wir qualifiziertes und professionelles Personal im Büro?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preis/Leistung im Verkauf?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preis/Leistung der Werkstätte?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie ist die Atmosphäre im Betrieb?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wurde Ihr Termin eingehalten?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Engagement bei Garantie-Themen?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wurden Sie freundlich begrüßt?	☐	☐	☐	☐
War die Wartezeit für Sie in Ordnung?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wurde beim Service Ihr Auto außen gewaschen?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wurden Ihnen die Rechnung verständlich erklärt?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Teil D: Statistik

D1. Wie alt sind Sie?

- unter 30 Jahre ☐
- 30 bis 39 Jahre ☐
- 40 bis 49 Jahre ☐
- 50 bis 65 Jahre ☐
- über 65 Jahre ☐

D2. Welches Geschlecht haben Sie?

- weiblich ☐
- männlich ☐

D3. Wo wohnen Sie?

- Gallneukirchen ☐
- Nähere Umgebung von Gallneukirchen ☐
- Weiter als 5 km entfernt ☐

D4. Wie lange sind Sie bereits Loitz-Kunde?

- seit weniger als einem Jahr ☐
- 1 bis 2 Jahren ☐
- 3 oder mehr Jahren ☐
- Ich bin kein Kunde. ☐

D5. Haben Sie jemals im Autohaus Loitz ein Auto gekauft?

- Ja, Neuwagen ☐
- Ja, Gebrauchtwagen ☐
- Ja, Neu und Gebrauchtwagen ☐
- Nein ☐

D6. In welchem Jahr haben Sie dieses Auto gekauft?

Falls Sie mehrere Autos von uns gekauft haben, bitte das Datum des zuletzt gekauften Autos eintragen.

D7. Haben Sie Ihr aktuelles Auto (das Sie persönlich fahren) beim Loitz gekauft?

- Ja ☐
- Nein ☐

D8. **Warum haben Sie bei uns gekauft?**

D9. **Warum haben Sie nicht bei uns gekauft?**

D10. **Welche zusätzlichen Dienstleistungen vom Autohaus Loitz nutzen Sie?**

- Service und Reperatur ☐
- Ersatzfahrzeuge ☐
- Autoaufbereitung / Autoreinigung ☐
- Autowaschanlage ☐
- Autovermietung ☐
- Versicherungsdienstleistungen ☐

Teil E: Juhu, die letzten drei Fragen!

E1.

	Sehr Gut	Gut	Schlecht	Sehr Schlecht
Wie groß ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass Sie das Autohaus Loitz an Freunde und Familie weiter empfehlen?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie groß ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass Sie weiterhin unser Kunde bleiben?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wie groß sind Ihre Vorteile als unser Kunde?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Danke für Ihre wertvolle Zeit!

Freundliche Grüße, ***Anton Loitz Jun. und das gesamte Loitz-Team***

Bereiche	Erfolgsfaktoren	Einschätzung des Faktors																		
		schwach						neutral							stark					
		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Marketing	Branding																	X		
	Werbung												X							
	Innovation															X				
	~~Marktanteil~~																			
	Differenzierung																		X	
	Kundenzufriedenheit																	X		
	Markenbewusstsein														X					
Verkauf	Vertriebskanäle																		X	
	Vertriebsentwicklung																X			
	~~Vertriebsnetz~~																			
	Preisgestaltung							X												
	Kundenstruktur											X								
	Kundenbindung																			X
	Produktportfolio														X					
	Qualität der Verkäufer																			X
	Image der Verkäufer																			X
	Kooperationen und strategische Allianzen															X				
	Effizienz																			X
	Marktanteil													X						
	Markenbewusstsein														X					
Service & Werkstatt	Werkstatt und Ausstattung											X								
	Servicequalität																			X
	Image von Service und Werkstatt																			X
	~~Wertschöpfung~~																			
	Know-how																		X	
	Erfüllung von Kundenanforderungen																			X
	Agilität/Flexibilität																			X
	~~Flexibilität~~																			
	Produktivität/Wirtschaftlichkeit																X			
	Kostenstruktur											X								
	~~Kapazitätsauslastung~~																			
	~~Durchlaufzeit~~																			
	~~Effizienz~~																			
	~~Wirtschaftlichkeit~~																			
	Kundenbindung																		X	
Waren-beschaffung	Lieferantenabhängigkeiten											X								
	Liferantenstrukturen															X				
	Lagerhaltung und -kontrolle											X								
	Lagerumschlag												X							
	Lagersystem											X								
	bedarfsorientierte Ware																		X	
	Effizienz																	X		
Personal	Qualifiziertes Personal																			X
	ausgeglichene Altersstruktur																		X	
	~~Talentpool~~																			
	Bezahlung										X									
	Motivation																	X		
	Lernbereitschaft																X			
	niedrige Fluktuation der Mitarbeiter											X								
	Arbeitsatmosphäre																			X
	Arbeitgeberimage																		X	
	~~Mitarbeiterorientierung~~																			
	Respektvoler Umgang miteinander																	X		
	Teamarbeit																	X		
	Mitarbeiterschulung														X					
	Loyalität zum Betrieb																		X	
Organisation	Betriebsstruktur																		X	
	Betriebsabläufe																			X
	Anpassungsfähigkeit und Agilität																		X	
	Wissensmanagement												X							
	Kundenorientiertheit																			X

	Informationsmanagement																	X		
	~~Effizienz~~																			
	faire Belohnungsverteilung																	X		
	Outsourcing						X													
Geschäftsleitung	Qualität der Entscheidungen																		X	
	Führungsstil																		X	
	Ziele																		X	
	~~Inspiration~~																			
	Motivation														X					
	Transparenz											X								
	detaillierte Aufgabenverteilung																X			
	authentischer Führung																			X
Finanzwesen	~~Eigenkapital~~																			
	~~Fremdkapital~~																			
	~~Finanzkraft~~																			
	~~Liquidität~~																			
	~~Gewinnentwicklung~~																			
	~~Profitabilität~~																			
Buchhaltung	Kostenzuordnung																	X		
	Kostenkontrolle																		X	
	Kostenplanung														X					
	Gewinn- und Absatzplanung													X						
	~~Effizienz der Arbeitsabläufe~~																			
	Frühwarnsystem																		X	
	Controlling																		X	

Bereiche	Erfolgsfaktoren	Erklärung				
Marketing	Branding	Ist unsere eigenständige Marke "Loitz" gut beworben?				
	Innovation	Wie innovativ sind wir?				
	Differenzierung	Unterscheiden wir uns im positiven Sinne von unseren Mitbewerbern?				
	Markenbewusstsein	Schaffen wir es unsere Marken Opel und Suzuki werbemäßig gut zu präsentieren?				
Verkauf	Vertriebskanäle	Wie gut sind unsere NW & GW Vertiebskanäle? (Z.B.: Direkt im Haus, Internet, Mundpropaganda)				
	Kundenbindung im Verkauf	Erzielen wir eine starke Kundenbindung im Verkauf?				
	Kundenzufriedenheit im Verkauf	Schaffen wir es unsere Kunden zufrieden zu stellen?				
	Produktportfolio	Haben wir eine große Produktauswahl (Autoauswahl)?				
	Qualität des Verkaufs	Wie ist die Qualität unserer Verkäufer?				
	Image des Verkaufs	Wie ist das Image unserer Verkäufer?				
	Kooperationen und strategische Allianzen	Haben wir gute Kooperationen und Allianzen mit anderen Betrieben?				
	Effizienz im Verkauf	Sind die Abläufe im Verkauf gut organisiert?				
	Markenbewusstsein	Representieren wir unsere Marken Opel und Suzuki gut?				
Service und Werkstatt	Servicequalität	Wie ist unsere Servicequalität?				
	Image von Service und Werkstatt	Welches Auftreten nach Außen hat unsere Werkstätte?				
	Know-how	Haben wir gutes Fachwissen?				
	Erfüllung von Kundenanforderungen	Erfüllen wir die Anforderung unserer Kunden an uns?				
	Agilität/Flexibilität	Wie agil und flexibel sind wir?				
	Produktivität/Wirtschaftlichkeit	Wie sieht die Produktivität und Wirtschaftlichkeit in der Werkstatt aus?				
	Kundenbindung in der Werkstatt	Erzielen wir eine starke Kundenbindung im After-Sales?				
	Kundenzufriedenheit in der Werkstatt	Schaffen wir es mit unseren Werkstattleistungen unsere Kunden zufrieden zu stellen?				
Waren-beschaffung	Liferantenstrukturen	Haben wir gute Liferanten? Sind wir diesbezüglich gut aufgestelle?				
	bedarfsorientierte Ware	Bieten wir die richtigen bedarfsorientierten Waren an?				
	Effizienz in der Warenbeschaffung	Ist unser Wareneinkauf gut organisiert?				

*Bitte die Auswahl eindeutig erkennbar ankreuzen!

Bereiche	Erfolgsfaktoren	Erklärung				
Personal (allgemein)	Qualifiziertes Personal	Sind unsere Mitarbeiter/Kollegen gut ausgebildet?				
	ausgeglichene Altersstruktur	Haben wir einen guten Mix zwischen alten und jungen Mitarbeitern?				
	Motivation	Ist das Personal motiviert?				
	Lernbereitschaft	Will das Personal neues dazu lernen?				
	Arbeitsatmosphäre	Wie ist die Arbeitsatmosphäre im Betrieb?				
	Arbeitgeberimage	Wie ist der Ruf des Autohaus Loitz in der Region?				
	Respekt	Wir miteinander respektvoll umgegangen?				
	Teamarbeit	Ziehen alle an einem Strang?				
	Mitarbeiterschulung	Bekommen die Mitarbeiter ausreichend Schulung um Ihre Tätigkeiten perfekt auszuüben?				
	Loyalität zum Betrieb	Wie loyal sind die Mitarbeiter/Kollegen dem Betrieb gegenüber?				
Organisation	Betriebsstruktur / detaillierte Aufgabenverteilung	Existiert eine detaillierte Aufgabenverteilung? Wissen sie exakt Ihre Aufgaben?				
	Betriebsabläufe	Wie sind die Betriebsabläufe geregelt?				
	Anpassungsfähigkeit und Agilität	Wie schnell passen wir uns an Neuerungen in der Branche an?				
	Kundenorientiertheit	Gehen wir auf Kundenwünsche ein und nehmen diese ernst?				
	Informationsmanagement	Werden Informationen zuverlässlich und verständlich für alle im Unternehmen ausgetauscht?				
	faire Belohnungsverteilung	Werden Belohnungen jeglicher Art und Weise gerecht unter den Mitarbeitern verteilt?				
Geschäfts-leitung	Qualität der Entscheidungen	Wie ist die Qualität der Entscheidungen die die Geschäftsleitung trifft?				
	Führungsstil	Wie ist der Stil der Führung den Mitarbeitern gegenüber?				
	Ziele	Hat die Geschäftleitung Ziele und Visionen?				
	authentische Führung	Wie authentisch ist die Führung? (authentisch=echt/original)				

*Bitte die Auswahl eindeutig erkennbar ankreuzen!

KMU Forschung Austria

Austrian Institute for SME Research
Zur Verfügung gestellt durch die Akademie der Steuerberater und Wirtschaftsprüfer GmbH

Branche: G 45 Handel mit Kraftfahrzeugen; Instandhaltung und Reparatur von Kraftfahrzeugen
Bilanzbranchenbild 2016/2017 (Bilanzstichtage zwischen 1.7. 2016 und 30.6.2017)

Österreich
Kapitalgesellschaften

V E R M Ö G E N S S T R U K T U R (in %)

					U m s a t z g r ö ß e n k l a s s e n (Jahresumsatz in Mio €)						
Positionsbezeichnung	Gesamt-durchschnitt in %	Oberes Quartil in %	Unteres Quartil in %	Beispiel-betrieb in Tsd. €	bis <300T	300T - <500T	500T- <1 Mio	1Mio - <2 Mio	2 Mio - <4 Mio	4 Mio - <7 Mio	ab 7 Mio
Anzahl der ausgewerteten Betriebe	1959	490	490	0	128	143	277	341	378	295	397
Immaterielles Anlagevermögen	0,92	0,68	0,94	5,01	1,31	1,38	2,41	0,85	1,24	0,66	0,88
Sachanlagevermögen	28,59	34,53	28,33	254,19	40,87	43,34	45,41	36,22	33,23	34,81	24,54
Finanzanlagevermögen	2,52	4,42	1,80	32,54	1,12	4,21	2,82	4,92	2,62	2,43	2,27
Anlagevermögen	**32,03**	**39,63**	**31,07**	**291,73**	**43,30**	**48,93**	**50,65**	**41,99**	**37,08**	**37,90**	**27,69**
Vorräte	40,27	23,62	41,43	173,87	18,69	16,91	21,18	30,97	39,13	33,81	44,29
Kundenforderungen	10,47	10,17	11,53	74,86	8,95	10,34	10,05	8,55	8,91	9,19	11,25
Sonstiges Umlaufvermögen	10,41	12,64	11,84	93,05	20,63	11,03	9,27	10,05	7,34	11,54	10,60
Liquide Mittel	6,52	13,74	3,89	101,14	8,19	12,36	8,50	8,09	7,39	7,45	5,81
Umlaufvermögen	**67,68**	**60,17**	**68,69**	**442,93**	**56,46**	**50,64**	**49,00**	**57,66**	**62,78**	**61,99**	**71,95**
Aktive Rechnungsabgrenzung und latente Steuern	0,29	0,20	0,24	1,47	0,23	0,43	0,35	0,34	0,14	0,10	0,36
Gesamtvermögen	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**736,13**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**

K A P I T A L S T R U K T U R (in %)

					U m s a t z g r ö ß e n k l a s s e n (Jahresumsatz in Mio €)						
Positionsbezeichnung	Gesamt-durchschnitt in %	Oberes Quartil in %	Unteres Quartil in %	Beispiel-betrieb in Tsd. €	bis <300T	300T - <500T	500T- <1 Mio	1Mio - <2 Mio	2 Mio - <4 Mio	4 Mio - <7 Mio	ab 7 Mio
Eigenkapital	**29,35**	**49,24**	**16,86**	**362,47**	**20,15**	**22,65**	**24,40**	**25,46**	**32,53**	**33,84**	**28,44**
Sozialkapital	3,71	2,92	4,04	21,49	1,06	3,76	3,10	3,52	3,96	3,72	3,72
Langfristige Bankverbindlichkeiten	11,45	9,65	14,24	71,04	20,10	25,48	22,64	21,45	17,37	13,48	8,33
Sonstige langfristige Verbindlichkeiten	4,51	4,95	5,74	36,44	13,68	15,14	8,27	8,45	4,88	4,57	3,68
Langfristiges Fremdkapital	15,95	14,60	19,98	107,47	33,78	40,62	30,91	29,89	22,24	18,06	12,01
Kurzfristige Bankverbindlichkeiten	14,80	8,29	15,92	61,03	21,84	12,16	14,81	16,33	15,86	13,72	14,77
Erhaltene Anzahlungen	1,47	1,70	1,40	12,51	0,45	1,36	0,94	0,26	0,95	0,67	1,89
Lieferverbindlichkeiten	20,37	11,18	24,55	82,30	9,61	7,66	10,11	12,57	14,26	19,57	22,94
Sonstige kurzfristige Verbindlichkeiten	14,18	12,00	17,23	88,34	13,12	11,78	15,72	11,98	10,19	10,44	15,95
Kurzfristiges Fremdkapital	50,79	33,17	59,10	244,17	45,02	32,96	41,59	41,13	41,26	44,37	55,52
Fremdkapital	**66,74**	**47,78**	**79,08**	**351,72**	**78,80**	**73,58**	**72,50**	**71,02**	**63,50**	**62,43**	**67,53**
Sonstiges Umlaufvermögen	10,41	12,64	11,84	93,05	20,63	11,03	9,27	10,05	7,34	11,54	10,60
Passive Rechnungsabgrenzung	0,20	0,06	0,02	0,44	0,00	0,01	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,01	0,31
Gesamtvermögen	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**736,13**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**

K O S T E N- und L E I S T U N G S S T R U K T U R (in %)

Positionsbezeichnung	Gesamt-durchschnitt in %	Oberes Quartil in %	Unteres Quartil in %	Beispiel-betrieb in Tsd. €	U m s a t z g r ö ß e n k l a s s e n (Jahresumsatz in Mio €) bis <300T	300T - <500T	500T- <1 Mio	1Mio - <2 Mio	2 Mio - <4 Mio	4 Mio - <7 Mio	ab 7 Mio
Anzahl der ausgewerteten Betriebe	1959	490	490	0	128	143	277	341	378	295	397
Umsatzerlöse	100,70	100,56	101,10	1.147,39	100,59	99,97	100,30	100,37	100,33	100,95	100,74
Erlösschmälerungen	0,74	0,68	1,10	7,76	0,16	0,37	0,41	0,52	0,53	1,06	0,73
Nettoerlöse	**99,97**	**99,88**	**100,00**	**1.139,63**	**100,42**	**99,60**	**99,90**	**99,85**	**99,80**	**99,89**	**100,02**
Bestandsveränderung, aktivierte Eigenleistung	0,03	0,12	0,00	1,37	-0,42	0,40	0,10	0,15	0,20	0,11	-0,02
Betriebsleistung	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**1.141,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**	**100,00**
Materialaufwand	75,46	64,93	78,31	740,85	42,53	43,26	48,78	60,05	68,43	73,18	78,73
Fremdleistungen	2,69	1,82	1,33	20,77	2,84	3,52	1,89	2,26	1,94	1,72	3,02
Materialaufwand inkl. Fremdleistungen	78,15	66,76	79,64	761,73	45,38	46,79	50,67	62,32	70,38	74,90	81,75
Rohertrag	**21,85**	**33,24**	**20,36**	**379,27**	**54,62**	**53,21**	**49,33**	**37,68**	**29,62**	**25,10**	**18,25**
Sonstige betriebliche Erträge	1,97	3,30	2,04	37,65	7,95	5,93	3,39	2,95	1,78	2,96	1,67
Personalaufwand	12,57	15,18	13,46	173,20	23,68	24,93	27,21	21,46	17,36	14,45	10,56
Kalkulatorischer Unternehmerlohn	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Personalkosten	12,57	15,18	13,46	173,20	23,68	24,93	27,21	21,46	17,36	14,45	10,56
Abschreibungen, GWG	1,30	2,69	1,21	30,69	5,79	4,12	3,48	2,39	1,73	1,85	0,99
Sonstige betriebliche Aufwendungen	7,17	9,36	8,10	106,80	24,55	20,62	16,80	12,36	8,95	8,12	6,05
Sonstiger Aufwand	8,47	12,05	9,31	137,49	30,34	24,75	20,28	14,75	10,68	9,98	7,04
Ergebnis vor Finanzerfolg (Betriebserfolg)	**2,79**	**9,31**	**-0,37**	**106,23**	**8,54**	**9,47**	**5,22**	**4,42**	**3,37**	**3,62**	**2,33**
Finanzerträge	0,12	0,38	0,07	4,34	0,22	0,39	0,08	0,12	0,15	0,18	0,11
Finanzaufwendungen	0,49	0,49	0,62	5,59	1,93	1,43	1,00	0,80	0,61	0,55	0,41
Kalkulatorische Eigenkapitalkosten	0,08	0,19	0,05	2,17	0,19	0,14	0,12	0,11	0,09	0,11	0,07
Finanzergebnis	**-0,44**	**-0,31**	**-0,60**	**-3,54**	**-1,90**	**-1,18**	**-1,04**	**-0,80**	**-0,55**	**-0,48**	**-0,37**
Ergebnis vor Steuern	**2,35**	**9,00**	**-0,97**	**102,69**	**6,65**	**8,29**	**4,18**	**3,62**	**2,82**	**3,14**	**1,96**
Steuern vom Einkommen und Ertrag	0,50	1,85	0,07	21,11	1,86	1,96	0,97	0,93	0,64	0,74	0,39
Ergebnis nach Steuern	**1,84**	**7,15**	**-1,04**	**81,58**	**4,79**	**6,33**	**3,21**	**2,70**	**2,18**	**2,40**	**1,57**
Kalkulatorische Kosten in Summe	0,08	0,19	0,05	2,17	0,19	0,14	0,12	0,11	0,09	0,11	0,07
Zuführung/Auflösung Rücklagen	0,05	0,10	0,07	1,14	0,31	-0,02	0,08	0,02	0,13	0,10	0,03
Gewinn/Verlustvortrag	1,26	3,92	-1,58	44,73	0,43	1,48	-0,76	1,82	0,29	1,25	1,40
Bilanzgewinn/Bilanzverlust	**3,23**	**11,36**	**-2,52**	**129,62**	**5,71**	**7,93**	**2,65**	**4,65**	**2,69**	**3,86**	**3,07**

						U m s a t z g r ö ß e n k l a s s e n (Jahresumsatz in Mio €)						
Positionsbezeichnung		Gesamt-durchschnitt in %	Oberes Quartil in %	Unteres Quartil in %	Beispiel-betrieb in Tsd. €	bis <300T	300T - <500T	500T- <1 Mio	1Mio - <2 Mio	2 Mio - <4 Mio	4 Mio - <7 Mio	ab 7 Mio
Anzahl der ausgewerteten Betriebe		1959	490	490	0	128	143	277	341	378	295	397
Ertrags- und Rentabilitätskennzahlen												
Kapitalumschlag	x	2,29	1,55	2,47	1,55	1,01	1,15	1,52	1,66	2,15	1,87	2,54
Umsatzrentabilität I (EGT vor Finanzierungskosten)	%	2,91	9,69	-0,30	9,69	8,76	9,86	5,30	4,54	3,52	3,80	2,44
Umsatzrentabilität II (nach Finanzergebnis)	%	2,35	9,00	-0,97	9,00	6,65	8,29	4,18	3,62	2,82	3,14	1,96
Gesamtkapitalrentabilität I (ROI)	%	6,66	15,05	-0,75	15,05	8,84	11,29	8,06	7,51	7,56	7,10	6,18
Gesamtkapitalrentabilität II (nach Finanzergebnis)	%	5,37	13,99	-2,39	13,99	6,70	9,49	6,36	6,00	6,05	5,87	4,96
Korr. Cash flow in Prozent der Betriebsleistung	%	3,72	11,88	0,29	11,88	12,62	12,56	7,78	6,12	4,64	5,10	3,01
Kennzahlen zum Vermögen												
Sachanlagenintensität	%	28,59	34,53	28,33	34,53	40,87	43,34	45,41	36,22	33,23	34,81	24,54
Sachanlagenintensität (ohne Gebäude)	%	7,54	10,06	6,45	10,06	15,45	10,54	13,02	10,60	8,18	7,23	6,90
Vorräte in % der Betriebsleistung	%	17,60	15,21	16,78	15,21	18,54	14,76	13,93	18,71	18,22	18,08	17,46
Kundenforderungen in % der Betriebsleistung	%	3,81	5,46	3,89	5,46	7,39	7,53	5,50	4,31	3,46	4,09	3,70
Investitionen in Prozent der Betriebsleistung	%	2,09	4,82	2,10	4,82	10,26	6,51	5,48	4,07	2,21	2,56	1,68
Anlagendeckung	%	153,04	168,47	131,59	168,47	126,96	137,00	115,33	140,18	158,40	146,73	159,54
Kennzahlen zur Finanzierung und Liquidität												
Fremdkapitalquote	%	66,74	47,78	79,08	47,78	78,80	73,58	72,50	71,02	63,50	62,43	67,53
Eigenkapitalquote	%	29,35	49,24	16,86	49,24	20,15	22,65	24,40	25,46	32,53	33,84	28,44
Bankverschuldung	%	26,25	17,95	30,16	17,95	41,94	37,64	37,46	37,78	33,23	27,20	23,10
Anlagendeckung	%	153,04	168,47	131,59	168,47	126,96	137,00	115,33	140,18	158,40	146,73	159,54
Liquidität	%	133,31	181,64	116,60	181,64	125,94	154,91	118,67	141,02	152,48	139,91	129,53
Schuldentilgungsdauer	J	7,07	1,84	106,02	1,84	5,55	4,26	5,40	6,21	5,63	5,76	8,09
Produktivitätskennzahlen												
Bruttoproduktivität	x	7,96	6,59	7,43	6,59	4,22	4,01	3,67	4,66	5,76	6,92	9,47
Nettoproduktivität	x	1,74	2,19	1,51	2,19	2,31	2,13	1,81	1,76	1,71	1,74	1,73

B U C H M Ä S S I G E   K E N N Z A H L E N

						U m s a t z g r ö ß e n k l a s s e n (Jahresumsatz in Mio €)						
Positionsbezeichnung		Gesamt-durchschnitt in %	Oberes Quartil in %	Unteres Quartil in %	Beispiel-betrieb in Tsd. €	bis <300T	300T - <500T	500T- <1 Mio	1Mio - <2 Mio	2 Mio - <4 Mio	4 Mio - <7 Mio	ab 7 Mio
Buchmäßige Kennzahlen												
Buchmäßige Umsatzrentabilität I	%	2,91	9,69	-0,30	9,69	8,76	9,86	5,30	4,54	3,52	3,80	2,44
Buchmäßige Umsatzrentabilität II	%	2,42	9,19	-0,92	9,19	6,83	8,43	4,30	3,73	2,91	3,25	2,02
Buchmäßige Gesamtkapitalrentabilität I	%	6,66	15,05	-0,75	15,05	8,84	11,29	8,06	7,51	7,56	7,10	6,18
Buchmäßige Gesamtkapitalrentabilität II	%	5,55	14,28	-2,28	14,28	6,89	9,66	6,54	6,18	6,25	6,07	5,13
Buchmäßiger Cash flow in % der Betriebsleistung	%	3,72	11,88	0,29	11,88	12,62	12,56	7,78	6,12	4,64	5,10	3,01
Kennzahlen lt. URG												
Eigenkapitalquote	%	29,35	49,24	16,86	49,24	20,15	22,65	24,40	25,46	32,53	33,84	28,44
Buchmäßige Schuldentilgungsdauer	J	7,07	1,84	106,02	1,84	5,55	4,26	5,40	6,21	5,63	5,76	8,09

Characteristics for identifying retail formats

#	Merkmal	Merkmalsausprägungen
1	Markenauswahl	Eine Marke
		Mehrere Marken
2	Modellauswahl	Es werden nur gängige Modelle (z.B. Polo, Golf, Passat) verkauft
		Es werden nur Modelle einer Fahrzeugklasse (z.B. Kleinwagen, Cabrio, Familien-Van) verkauft
		Gesamtes Modellprogramm wird verkauft
3	Varianten-auswahl	Nur Auswahl aus vorrätigen Fahrzeugen (gängige Modellvarianten)
		Nur individuelle Fahrzeugauswahl mit Bestellung beim Hersteller
		Auswahl aus vorrätigen Fahrzeugen und individuelle Fahrzeugauswahl mit Bestellung beim Hersteller
		Individuelle Fahrzeugauswahl mit Bestellung beim Hersteller und nachträgliche Veredelung möglich
4	Zusatz-programm	Kein Zusatzprogramm (nur Autoverkauf)
		Zusatzprogramm mit direktem Automobilbezug (z.B. Zubehörartikel)
		Gastronomiebereich (z.B. Restaurant, Cafe, Lounge)
		Zusatzprogramm ohne direkten Automobilbezug (z.B. Shops mit Hi-Fi, Kinderbedarf, Sportartikel und spezielle Events)
5	Atmosphäre (im Autohaus)	Schlichte Verkaufshallenatmosphäre: Autokauf steht absolut im Vordergrund
		Wohlfühlatmosphäre: großzügige und stylische Atmosphäre lädt zum Verweilen ein
		Clubatmosphäre: lädt auch losgelöst vom Autokauf zum Besuch und Verweilen ein
6	Ausstellungsfahrzeuge (zur Besichtigung)	Keine Ausstellungsfahrzeuge zur Besichtigung
		Wenige gängige Ausstellungsfahrzeuge zur Besichtigung
		Viele verschiedene Ausstellungsfahrzeuge zur Besichtigung
7	Beratungs-leistungen	Keinerlei Beratung
		Nichtpersönliche virtuelle Beratungsmöglichkeiten (z.B. über Infokiosk)
		Individuelle Fachberatung durch geschulten Profi
		Individuelle Fachberatung durch geschulten Profi, der zu meiner Persönlichkeit passt
8	Möglichkeit zur Probefahrt	Keine Probefahrt
		Geringe Auswahl an Fahrzeugen zur Probefahrt
		Große Auswahl an Fahrzeugen zur Probefahrt
9	Zusatzdienst-leistungen (bzgl. der Nutzungsphase)	Es werden nur Verkauf und Finanzierung von Fahrzeugen angeboten
		Angebot zusätzlicher Dienstleistungen (z.B. Leasing, Versicherungen, Garantieverlängerungen, Zulassung)
		Angebot von Full-Service-Konzepten (eine monatliche Gebühr mit Wartungs-, Reparaturleistungen und Leasinggebühren)
10	Werkstatt (beim Händler)	Keine Werkstattleistung beim Verkäufer
		Freie Werkstatt (keine Originalersatzteile, kein vom Hersteller autorisiertes Personal)
		Vertragswerkstatt (Originalersatzteile, vom Hersteller autorisiertes Fachpersonal)
11	Preis (des Händlers)	Absolut günstigster Anbieter
		Leicht unter dem durchschnittlichen Preisniveau
		Durchschnittliches Preisniveau
		Leicht über dem durchschnittlichen Preisniveau

Automotive industry specific retail format characteristics in German language. (Fassnacht et al., 2011, p1185; adapted)