

Avantea Steel Solutions

Avantea Steel Solutions is a global producer of industrial chimneys, founded in 2021 by industry experts. Despite being a young company, Avantea is continuing to experience significant growth in the chimney industry.

CASE: Avantea is looking to improve and scale their service department, which is responsible for after-delivery services, such as maintenance and inspections.

The case team needs to map out processes and customers related to the service department, to find optimization opportunities and improve Avantea's ability to find and contact potential customers.

OVERVIEW

Company	Avantea Steel Solutions A/S
Location	Falkevej 2, 6705 Esbjerg
Contact person	Ignasi Salvador, CEO

COMPANY PROFILE

Avantea Steel Solutions is a global producer of industrial chimneys, founded in 2021. Despite being a young company, Avantea is continuing to experience significant growth. The company was founded by industry experts, with the goal of making a company that focuses on high quality solutions, good work environment and using innovative solutions to improve the business.

In 2023 Avantea sold part of the company to Jeremias Group, which is one of the leading manufacturers of stainless-steel chimneys for both B2B and B2C. In this partnership, Avantea primarily focuses on the large-scale industrial solutions. Today Avantea Steel Solutions consists of 85 employees, most of whom have more than 10 years of experience in the industry. The employees are spread around Europe, with offices in Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Denmark. Although their HQ is in Denmark, Avantea primarily sells to companies in Germany, the UK & Poland. Where the customer base consists of companies such as paper mills, chemical plants and other manufacturers.

Avantea's sales process is largely relationship-based, as it is often the same customers who return for further orders. The entire sales process can take anywhere from 6 months to 2 years, due to the many factors to consider in terms of scale and complexity of the projects.

In 2023 Avantea acquired a new service department, that is responsible for maintenance and regular inspections, allowing them to offer quality service after the chimney has been installed. This also provides value for the customer, as Avantea can offer immediate repairs, if an issue is identified during the inspection. The service department supports Avantea chimneys, as well as from other manufacturers.

The customer decision-making process in the service business is considerably shorter than that of ordering a chimney, which opens new opportunities of growth.

CASE DESCRIPTION

Avantea has assessed that there is significant potential in their Service and Maintenance offerings. Especially considering the low barrier for selling the service, due to the low price and not needing upper management permission for the order. But the potential has not been examined thoroughly, as it is a new department.

Avantea aims to establish their Service and Maintenance department as a well-oiled machine that efficiently supports their core business operations. But in order to achieve this, Avantea needs a team of talents to gather insights and knowledge of the market and figure out how Avantea's solutions fit within it. The team will have access to Avantea's current market knowledge and experience.

To make the service department run like a well-oiled machine, a considerable amount of insights and knowledge is required. However, Avantea does have experience and market knowledge, which can prove to be valuable.

The goal of this case is to explore how Avantea can optimize and scale sales in its service department.

The project will focus on understanding who Avantea's customers are, how they make decisions, and how Avantea can better reach and engage with them.

Based on the insights, the team will be able to make the final output, which describes how Avantea can optimize the service department, as well as an action plan, detailing how Avantea can implement these changes to scale this part of the business.

TASKS AND EXPECTATIONS

0. Phase: Onboarding and calibration of the project

1. Phase: Knowledge gathering and mapping out the current process

1.1 Internal data sharing – Avantea will share their experience, knowledge and insights regarding the industry and the business itself.

1.2 Map out the customers:

- *Who are the relevant stakeholders?*
- *Who needs to approve the offer?*
- *What are the most important factors for the customers?*

1.3 Map out the customer journey, from when the customers first thought of the inspection, to the finalization of the inspection.

1.3.1 Why does the customers need an inspection?

- *What laws and regulations are relevant to the frequency of the inspections?*
- *What safety concerns do the customers try to prevent with frequent inspections?*
- *How many types of inspections are used, when it comes to chimneys?*
- *Do customers from different industries have different inspection standards and focus points?*

1.3.2 How does the customer order an inspection?

- *What is the industry norm, when it comes to ordering a chimney inspection?*
- *Does the customer value convenience over cost?*
- *Does the customer value quality over cost?*
- *How does the customer find an inspection technician? E.g.. Word of mouth, online marketing, direct sales, etc.*

1.3.3 What tasks are required from the customer?

- *What internal information does the customer need to order an inspection?*
- *What does the customer need to know about the inspection provider?*
- *Which tasks does the customer need to complete, to order an inspection? E.g. Call technician, provide information, etc.*

1.3.4 How does Avantea reach out to customers, regarding maintenance services?

- *What marketing initiatives does Avantea currently initiate?*
- *What has Avantea learned from previous experiences with marketing?*
- *What is the industry norm regarding marketing?*

1.4 What are the value propositions of the service department?

1.4.1 Identify the customer pains

- *What issues does the customer face regarding inspections and maintenance of the chimneys? E.g. Difficulty finding technician, uncertainty regarding the quality, inconvenient ordering process, etc.*
- *Do the customers address these issues?*

1.4.2 Identify the customer gains

- *What value does Avantea offer the customer?*
- *Does Avantea's value proposition relieve the customer pains?*
- *Does Avantea offer a unique value in their services, that differentiate them from the competition?*
- *Does Avantea's value proposition align with the value that the sellers are pushing?*

1.5 Map out all the steps in the current process.

1.5.1 Analyse Avantea's sales process for the service and maintenance department.

- *How does Avantea reach the customer?*
- *How does Avantea find the specific person that is responsible for the inspections?*
- *What happens after a customer accepts the offer?*
- *Do Avantea's sellers plan when to contact previous customers, based on when they're expected to need another inspection?*



- 1.5.2 What barriers do the sellers experience?
- *When are the sellers unable to convince a customer to choose Avantea for an inspection? E.g. High prices, customer has a deal with another provider, bad timing, etc.*
 - *Do customers from certain industries have a higher tendency to decline an offer?*

2. Phase: Identifying and reaching leads

2.1 Analyse the current lead generation process and explore potential improvements.

- 2.1.1 How does Avantea find leads to contact?
- *Where does Avantea find their leads? E.g. Public registry, web search, word of mouth, etc.*
 - *Are there any criteria for a potential customer?*
 - *What information is required, before a seller can make the first contact?*
 - *How does Avantea currently find the crucial information?*
 - *Is there an alternative way to find this information?*
- 2.1.2 What aspects of the process are redundant?
- *Are there any steps of the process that could be avoided?*
 - *Which steps require the most time and resources?*
 - *Could any part of the process be automated?*
- 2.1.3 What aspects of the process are important?
- *What are the most important steps, when finding leads?*
 - *Are there parts of the process that should have more focus?*
 - *Could any parts of the process be optimized?*

2.2 Look into and map out marketing/outreach options.

- 2.2.1 In what ways can Avantea spread the word about their service department.
- 2.2.2 How could Avantea reach out to potential customers, while keeping the following in mind:
- *Return on investment*
 - *Cost of establishment*
 - *Market relevance*
 - *Time consumption*

3. Phase: Based on the various insights, conceptualize and develop an action plan for how Avantea can improve the sales of services.

- 3.1 Create a process for lead generation, so Avantea quickly can identify a company and the person responsible for maintenance.
- 3.2 Outline a step-by-step action plan for customer outreach and engagement to grow the service department.



OBJECTIVE AND DESIRED OUTCOME FOR THE COMPANY

Wanted outcome after 8 weeks:

- ✓ A description of an improved lead generation process, that allows Avantea to quickly identify relevant stakeholders.
- ✓ Detailed action plan for how Avantea can implement said process, as well as how Avantea can reach out to the customers.

TALENT PROFILE

At Avantea Steel Solutions, teamwork is the foundation of the company. As a business that is built on collaboration, Avantea values a work environment where everyone contributes to reaching the goal together. The flat organizational structure means that every department, and every individual, plays a key role in driving innovation and growth. If you thrive in a team setting and enjoy working alongside passionate professionals, this is the perfect place for you.

Avantea is looking for talents who are proactive, solution-oriented, and excited by the prospect of optimizing processes. You will need to be analytical, able to work with data, and capable of abstract thinking to navigate, understand and develop upon the service department. Skills in business development and project management are also greatly beneficial in this role, as they provide a deeper understanding of how to grow this part of the business. Given Avantea's collaborative culture, strong interpersonal and communication skills are a must. You'll be working closely with colleagues across departments, and it's important that you're a team player who can contribute constructively to group efforts.

The team will be working closely with Ignasi, the CEO of Avantea, as well as the respective members of the service department, Henrik, Annika & Sabina.

This case is an interesting opportunity to test your skills in a fast growing, international business that values collaboration, creativity and dedication. You will get to work with experienced industry experts in a structurally flat company where your input matters, and your actions have a real effect.

