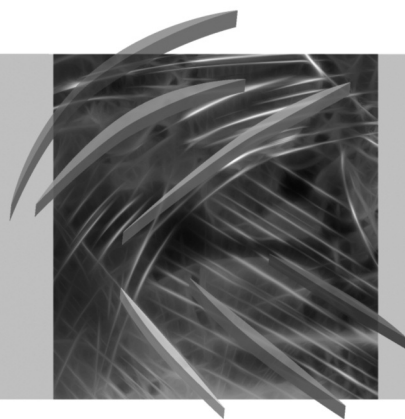# Advanced Information Technologies for Management – AITM 2011

Intelligent Technologies and Applications

edited by
Jerzy Korczak, Helena Dudycz, Mirosław Dyczkowski

Contents

Streszczenia

Kazimierz Perechuda, Elżbieta Nawrocka*
Wrocław University of Economics, Wrocław, Poland
Wrocław University of Physical Education, Wrocław, Poland
Wojciech Idzikowski*
Wrocław University of Physical Education Wrocław, Poland

E-ORGANIZER AS THE MODERN DEDICATED COACHING TOOL SUPPORTING KNOWLEDGE DIFFUSION IN THE BEAUTY SERVICES SECTOR

Abstract: The article objective is to present dedicated coaching, as the tool for knowledge catalysis, aimed at knowledge diffusion acceleration in customer service, as well as demonstrate an exceptional tool in the form of an electronic device called *e-organizer*. The article discusses dedicated coaching concept and functional attributes of a tool accelerating knowledge diffusion in a customer service process (by means of *coaching* idea implementation), using *e-organizer*, its application models and implementation opportunities in a beauty parlour functioning. In order to illustrate its practical application, the beauty services sector was selected, since at present it is one of the fastest developing sectors in Polish economy. Challenges of this particularly competitive market impose on beauty parlour managers the need to search for new solutions resulting in an increase of customers' interest in their offer.

Keywords: dedicated coaching, beauty services sector, beauty parlour, e-organizer.

1. Introduction

Recently an intensive development has been observed in the domain of coaching, which results both from changes inside an organization and in its environment. These transformations are mainly focused on searching for new strategies in order to improve competitiveness. One of them is the implementation of *coaching* to business practice. In professional literature coaching is referred to as the process allowing for knowledge acquisition and development and therefore supporting the improvement of one's skills [Parsloe, Wray 2002, p. 48]. The International Coaching Federation (ICF), on the other hand, refers to it as an interactive process which assists individuals or organizations in development rate acceleration and performance results improvement and therefore takes into account economic results of its implementation.

---

*   e-mails: {kazimierz.perechuda, elzbieta.nawrocka}@ue.wroc.pl; wojciech.idzikowski@awf.wroc.pl.

S. Thorpe and J. Cliffort perceive coaching in a different way and claim that the term should be understood as assistance offered to an individual in order to strengthen and improve one's functioning by analyzing the way of particular skill or knowledge application [Thorpe, Clifford 2004, p. 17]. The perception and application of coaching is subject to certain transformations, among which the following may be listed: new approaches to coaching application, e.g. generative coaching presented by R. Dilts and S. Gilligan (based on ideas of quantum world and symbols) and also related to philosophy which results in progressing from a psychotherapy oriented type of coaching towards forms in an integrated perspective.

In all spheres of social, economic, cultural and political life there occurs an urgent need of reorientation, from traditional sales of products and services towards supplying clients with tacit knowledge which solves their substantial problems (dedicated coaching – Figure 1).

TŁW   SPU

NŁW   RPK
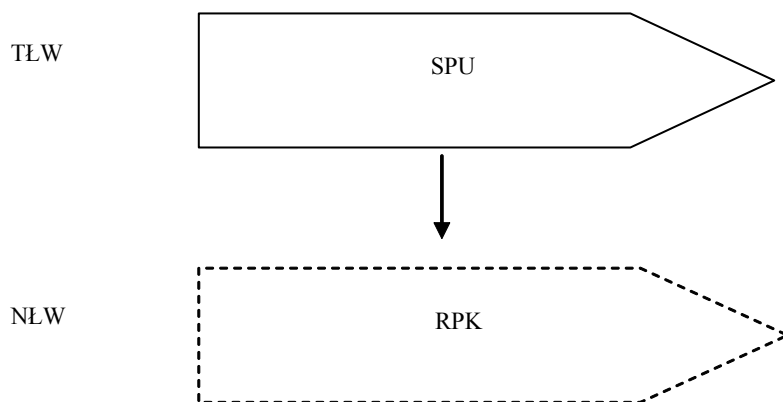
Legend: SPU – sales of products and services, RPK – solving client's problems, TŁW – traditional chain of values, NŁW – modern chain of values.

Figure 1. Transfer of company values chains

In traditional hairdresser's saloons (especially at the barber's) we were experiencing a very popular product, interestingly used in literature, of a highly visual name: "trimming – saving" (classical value chain).

At present beauty parlours for women generate the whole series of frequently unusual services (Table 1):
– correcting and improving the beauty,
– health (health oriented cosmetics),
– fun and entertainment (enjoying oneself over coffee or a drink in an elegant atmosphere),
– reduction of fear and loneliness (solving existential problems),
– new social contacts (solving psychosocial problems),
– discussing family and personal problems,

- analyzing professional problems and other.

The above problems may be solved by means of providing permanent education for clients of beauty parlours (knowledge education). Such education should be of the following nature:

- spiral (problem → new knowledge → problem solving → new problem → higher level knowledge → new problem solving, etc.),
- interactive (client – beautician – client – beautician, etc.),
- continuous.

E-organizer serves the above goals since it provides total (24 hours) care over a client focused on on-line solving his/her problems referring to beauty matters, health, wellbeing, existence, personal or professional issues.

In times of an overall crisis in inter-human relations, alienation, growing unemployment, people suffering from excessive debts and economic crisis there is a dynamically increasing demand for personalized consultancy and not necessarily a psychological one. Therefore, the roles played by a modern beautician have to become significantly extended (Figure 2).
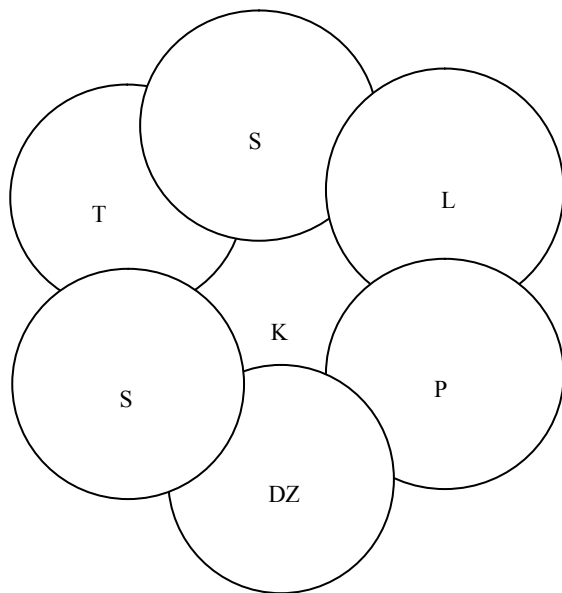
Legend: K – beautician, L – physician, P – psychotherapist, DZ – professional advisor, S – sociologist, T – coach, Sp – confessor.

Figure 2. New roles of a beautician

The roles listed above, to be performed by a beautician, require generating the whole range of new processes, which include as follows:

- beauty improvement,
- treatment by health oriented cosmetics,
- direct and indirect communication (e-organizer),
- entertainment and fun,
- education and others.

All these processes cannot be performed during one 3-hour session spent once a week in a beauty parlour.

E-organized, discussed in the hereby article, constitutes an excellent tool for an overall and permanent client service, indispensable for a beauty parlour functioning, based on dedicated coaching and focused on solving the above problems which may occur while working with a client. The details are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Services aimed at solving clients' problems in a beauty parlour

KŁW	NŁW	NMZ	ICT
Trimming Dying Modelling	Beauty Health Entertainment Psychology Sociology Professional advice Education	ZW ZP ZWi CRM Clienting OU PI	e-organizer

Legend: KŁW – classical value chain, NŁW – modern value chain, NMZ – modern management models, ICT – Information Communication Technology, ZW – knowledge management, ZP – processes management, ZWi – virtual management, CRM – Customer Relationship Management, PI – smart enterprise.

2. Methodological assumptions

The article objective is to present dedicated *coaching* as the tool for knowledge catalysis, aimed at knowledge diffusion acceleration in performing beauty parlour clients service, as well as a specific tool in the form of an electronic product called *e-organizer*. The sector of beauty oriented services represents the research area. Beauty parlours represent research objects.

The main research problem is focused on searching for a modern IT tool facilitating the elimination of disproportions between overabundant tacit knowledge of cosmetics producers and well educated beauticians and the minimal (most often coming from newspapers) knowledge represented by beauty parlour clients.

The following hypotheses are put forward in the study:

H1: Beauty parlours in Poland are only to a minor extent saturated by modern IT tools.

H2: Personal or phone communication dominates in beauty parlours.

H3: E-organizer constitutes a modern tool of dedicated coaching which facilitates long-term and structuralized problem solving of beauty parlour clients.

The article is the result of business processes modelling in a company by means of IT technologies implementation. A beauty parlour was used for practical presentation since the challenges, typical for this especially competitive market of entities, impose on their managers searching for new solutions related to increasing clients' interest in their offer. Virtual space offers, in this respect, large opportunities for finding new and effective methods useful in reaching a client. In order to prepare an *e-organizer* functionality study a survey was conducted in the group of 200 randomly selected respondents.

3. The concept of dedicated *coaching* in business based on the example of a beauty parlour

The discussed dedicated *coaching* takes advantage of the media in contacts with clients, which is a certain novelty as compared to the traditionally understood coaching, since the latter used mainly personal contacts as the tool for competencies development. It still does happen today that many coaches cannot imagine performing a session without personal contact. However, the analysis of coaching companies' offers indicates a trend, in this metrology development, towards electronic tools implementation. It mainly refers to using such tools as a phone, Skype on-line communicator, e-mails and other web focused ones. For example, in the USA 40% coaching is performed "by phone". The hereby article discusses coaching implementing on-line media which take advantage of knowledge output in the domain of coaching and CRM. The main aim of dedicated coaching in business is meeting clients' needs and increasing sales profits by means of prolonging relations with clients (lengthening the, so called, client's life cycle for a company). Therefore, the following clients' reactions are taken into consideration:

– on-line reading of beauty treatment and cosmetics oriented advice,
– visiting an on-line shop which offers beauty products up-selling,
– visiting a given beauty parlour web site.

Dedicated coaching, as the tool of knowledge catalysis, is used for passing on knowledge in a way which facilitates the effect of knowledge transfer acceleration from a sending entity (beauty parlour) to a recipient (client) and therefore an overall process may take a more effective form. Dedicated coaching, focused on a company client, is mainly directed towards the following objectives:

– solving particular problem defined by a client,
– making a certain activity easier,

–   facilitating the performance of a certain task,
–   saving client's time.
    On the other hand, it helps the company to enhance client service process, as well as information circulation and, as the result, improve client's satisfaction and sales, information circulation and its internal coordination, eliminate the loss of some information and extend the knowledge about client's needs.
    The implementation of dedicated coaching results in certain threats of social, technical, financial or organizational nature, but mainly associated with:
–   the need to participate in trainings, communication problems, changing the way of client perception,
–   integration problems with existing systems and data bases, as well as other technical complications, e.g. equipment platform,
–   data safety (information protection, Personal Data Protection Act),
–   implementation costs and the problem of investments – profits ratio,
–   organizational threats resulting from the need of transforming business processes and changing from old into new systems.
    It has to be emphasized, however, that coaching instruments may weaken the intensity and narrow down the scale of unfavourable phenomena related to dedicated coaching implementation in its CRM sphere by diagnosing motives and recognizing attitudes, among others, due to using metaphors, stage performances, games and simulations.

4. General description of an *e-organizer* tool[1]

E-organizer functionalities are related to the main idea of dedicated coaching which concentrated on "customer life cycle" prolongation. This facilitates the subsequent process of up-selling, i.e. selling more services and products later. Dedicated coaching is composed of three basic modules: preparing content and the list of subscribers, followed by providing this content during a complex service process, which altogether are carried out by an *e-organizer* implementation. The discussed tool attributes present the reaction to the needs recognized on the basis of a survey carried out at the turn of 2009 and 2010 in the group of 200 randomly selected respondents.
    One of the purposes underlying an *e-organizer* construction is to provide the indispensable knowledge and systematize it adequately. E-service is a step forward in creating valuable knowledge about opportunities in competencies development for individual recipients. Owing to this tool, its user is not imposed to search for such information – it is sent to him/her by an e-mail including valuable pieces of advice or consultancy. The process covers – not just sales and offer presentation, but the selection of suitable development opportunities for the course participants willing
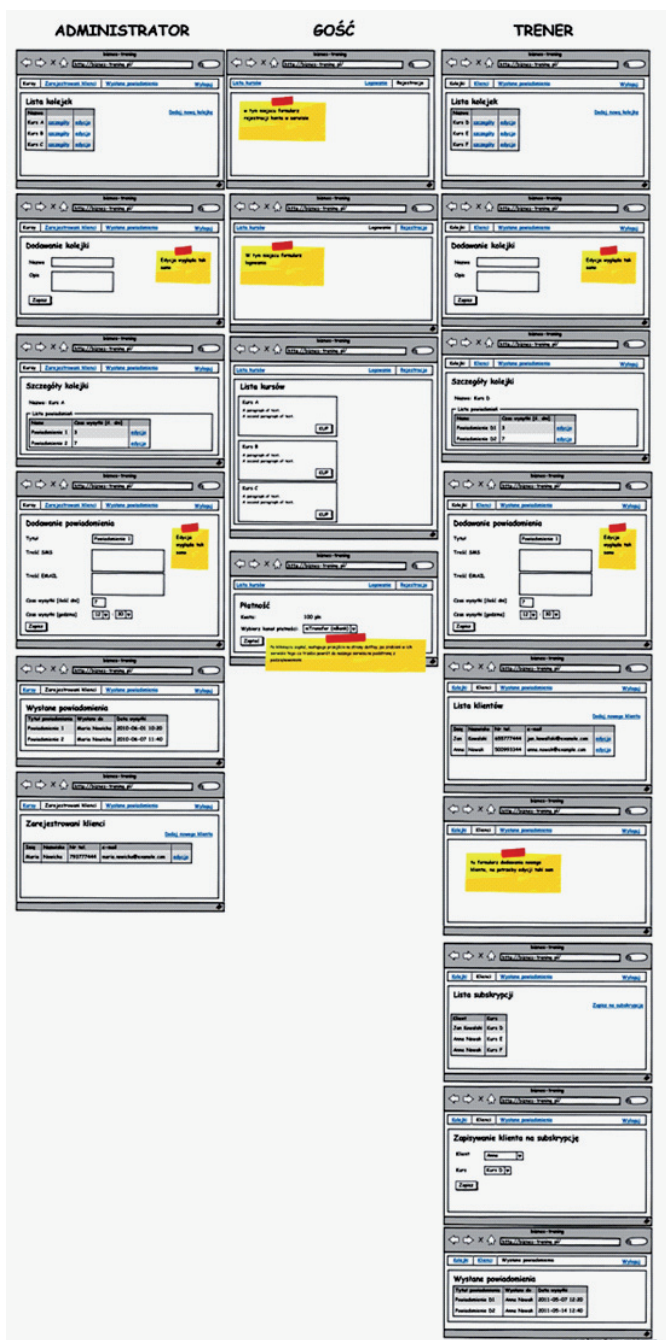
Figure 3. Graphic illustration presenting pannels of particular users

Source: Absolute Ltd. Company document dated 21.06.2011.

to learn more about a specific topic. An *e-organizer* was designed in the way to create an image of an expert (the survey indicated it as the main factor influencing the choice of such offer) and only later the possibility of purchasing a knowledge-based product was presented – again based on adequate selection rather than just sales. An expert who uses *e-organizer* will have the possibility of sending, free form charge, consultancy resulting from his/her expertise and therefore indicate, to a course participant, further opportunities for his/her development. *E-organizer* also allows for sending due advice (lessons, e-books) in properly adjusted time intervals adequate for a given learning process and identified in the survey. Owing to the above presented attributes, it is possible to coordinate knowledge acquisition process and its more effective and sustainable progress. *E-organizer* also represents an e-service which facilitates creating "lines of e-mails", i.e. specially designed messages sent to recipients in adequate time intervals. The system capacity covers three participants (Figure 3):

– Administrator,
– Guest,
– Trainer.

    E-organizer is an electronic product which functions in a totally automatized way without any interference from the system authors. Figure 3 characterizes particular functionalities divided into these of an administrator, guest and trainer. The detailed description of software and functionalities is described below:

Technological specification:
Software will be prepared based on Ruby* programming language together with the framework for the Internet Ruby on Rails** aplications preparation. For data storage MySQL. Server HTTP – Apache2 will be used.

Functionality specification:
GUEST – LOGGING
ADMINISTRATOR – TRAINERS' DATA MANAGEMENT
Functionality: Displaying the list of trainers
Functionality: New trainer adding
Functionality: Trainer's data editing
ADMINISTRATOR – NOTIFICATION TEMPLATES MANAGEMENT
Functionality: Preparing a template of an e-mail to be sent out
Functionality: Overview of the prepared e-mail template
Functionality: Presentation of the prepared templates list
Functionality: Template editing
TRAINER – NOTIFICATIONS MANAGEMENT
Functionality: Adding new notification to be sent
Functionality: Presentation of notifications to be sent
Functionality: Editing notification data
Functionality: Presentation of the beauty treatment specification
SENDING NOTIFICATIONS
Functionality: Automatic generation of notifications at the set hour

A trainer may prepare the line of e-mails him/herself and decide who they should be sent to (data base is created individually). Such line may take the form of a sent out consultancy – lessons as the result of which the recipient acquires knowledge in a linear way, based on the previously designed process. This form of knowledge diffusion enriches every single information transfer making the process more interesting and effective. An administrator prepares lines of e-mails sent out to all trainers, which take the form of e-learning sequences, lists of advice which an individual trainer purchases together with a product.

5. *E-organizer* application models

E-organizer, as the knowledge diffusion tool, may be applied in numerous business domains among which there are e.g.: corporate university or e-learning in customer service. Below there are presented short descriptions of the discussed models.

    1. Corporate university. It represents a particular form of *e-organizer* application in the form of internal trainings process – dedicated for one company. A trainer designs a spectrum of in-company trainings presented in a process related to the time of participants' development. It is also extended by the possibility of sending e-mails to them in due time intervals and provoking them to acquire knowledge in proper time span. The line of e-mails designed in such way constitutes the tool which supports knowledge diffusion and owing to which the designed education cycle allows for better knowledge absorption.

    2. E-learning. *E-organizer* application for the purposes of e-learning in the process of customer service is related to preparing the line of e-mails which contain short "invitations" to take advantage of advice presented at a web page. Such advice may also be sent directly as the content of an e-mail message. *E-organizer*, by offering additional possibility to design text messages is ahead of products sold under the name of auto-respondents (ImpleBot, FUMP).

6. *E-organizer* practical presentation in a beauty parlour (*cosmetic e-diary*)

An electronic specification of *COSMETIC E-DIARY* service is presented below.

Technological specification:

Software will be prepared based on Ruby* programming language together with the framework for the Internet Ruby on Rails** applications preparation. For data storage MySQL. Server HTTP – Apache2 will be used.

Functionality specification:

GUEST – LOGGING

GUEST – QUESTIONNAIRE

Functionality: Filling in the questionnaire

Functionality: Searching for a beauty parlour offering a suggested beauty treatment

Functionality: Making an appointment for beauty treatment in a selected beauty parlour

Functionality: Entering data of an individual client

ADMINISTRATOR – BEAUTY PARLOUR DATA PRESENTATION

ADMINISTRATOR – BEAUTY TREATMENTS DATA MANAGEMENT

Functionality: Entering beauty treatments data

Functionality: Beauty treatments list presentation

Functionality: Beauty treatment data edition

Functionality: Beauty treatment specification presentation

ADMINISTRATOR – QUESTIONNAIRE DATA MANAGEMENT

Functionality: Adding a question to a questionnaire

Functionality: Deleting a question

Functionality: Adding an answer to a question as an option

Functionality: Deleting an answer

ADMINISTRATOR – NOTIFICATION TEMPLATES MANAGEMENT

Functionality: Preparing template of an e-mail to be sent out

Functionality: Overview of the prepared message template

Functionality: Display of the prepared templates list

Functionality: Template editing

Functions:

1. BEAUTICIAN – CLENTS' DATA MANAGEMENT

Functionality: The list of clients presentation

Functionality: Client's data edition

2. BEAUTICIAN – BEAUTY TREATMENTS DATA MANAGEMENT

Functionality: Beauty treatments list presentation

Functionality: Adding a beauty treatment to a beauty parlour offer

Functionality: Beauty treatment edition

Functionality: Deleting a beauty treatment

3. BEAUTICIAN – MANAGEMENT OF APPOINTMENTS (DIARY)

Functionality: New beauty treatment planning

Functionality: Planned beauty treatments review

Functionality: Presentation of a planned beauty treatment specification

Functionality: Data edition about a planned beauty treatment

4. BEAUTICIAN – NOTIFOCATIONS BY TEXT MESSAGES AND E-MAILS

Functionality: Sending out e-mails about absence of activity

Functionality: Sending out e-mails about a beauty treatment continuation

5. CALCULATING BEAUTY TREATMENT CHARGES

6. ONLINE PAYMENTS

Cosmetic e-lessons function within the framework of a *beauty treatment e-diary*. These are specially prepared e-learning lessons – lines of e-mails offering advice to clients of beauty parlours. In such a case a beautician, who is the system user, takes the role of her client's trainer and by taking care of the designed pieces of advice

conveys the vision of becoming beautiful for women and men. In this way an indispensable knowledge about multiplying the quality of the service provided before is also delivered and the beautician creates the image of an expert. In this aspect it is the beautician who designs the process of knowledge diffusion all by herself.

7. Final remarks

E-organizer prepared in the above way carries out the functions of dedicated coaching which is delivered to a beauty parlour client after performing the due treatment and is made up of the formerly prepared sequence of advice – lessons sent out in the adequately planned time intervals. The advice refers to properly performed body care after the finished treatment alternated with sending out follow-up reminders about the next beauty treatment accompanied by a product range offer. Such tool implementation results in the fact that coaching in a beauty parlour becomes a didactic, training process focused on establishing and improving client's skills in the domain of cosmetology. It is the system based on partnership between a beautician and her client.

The discussed tool offers significant advantages for a company after its implementation. Among major ones the following may be listed: low cost of communication with a client; support for keeping up relations with clients and brand construction; reliable communication system; knowledge exchange between staff and clients; better adjustment of an offer to clients' needs; increased efficiency and cohesion of activities in customer service.

The presented above concept reflects trends in coaching development understood as the set of tools indispensable for the course participants - clients in this case, competencies development, which facilitates knowledge diffusion. As a result, it becomes a valuable tool for introducing changes in organizations and strengthening their competitiveness.

References

Parsloe E., Wray M. (2002), *Trener i mentor. Udział coachingu i mentoringu w doskonaleniu procesu uczenia się*, Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków.
Thorpe S., Clifford J. (2004), *Podręcznik coachingu*, Dom Wydawniczy REBIS, Poznań.
www.coachfederation.org (accessed: 22.06.2011).

E-ORGANIZER JAKO NOWOCZESNE NARZĘDZIE COACHINGU DEDYKOWANEGO WSPIERAJĄCEGO DYFUZJĘ WIEDZY W SEKTORZE USŁUG KOSMETYCZNYCH

Streszczenie: Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie coachingu dedykowanego jako narzędzia katalizacji wiedzy, służącego do przyspieszenia dyfuzji wiedzy w obsłudze klienta, a także narzędzia szczególnego jakim jest elektroniczny produkt o nazwie e-organizer. W artykule przedstawiono koncepcję coachingu dedykowanego i funkcjonalności narzędzia przyspieszającego dyfuzję wiedzy w procesie obsługi klienta (z wykorzystaniem idei coachingu), z użyciem e-organizera, a także modele zastosowań i możliwości jego implementacji w działalności salonu kosmetycznego. Do praktycznej ilustracji zastosowania tego narzędzia wybrano sektor usług kosmetycznych, ponieważ jest on obecnie jednym z najszybciej rozwijających się w gospodarce polskiej. Wyzwania szczególnie konkurencyjnego rynku salonów kosmetycznych, wymuszają na ich menedżerach poszukiwanie nowych rozwiązań związanych ze zwiększaniem zainteresowania konsumentów ofertą.

Słowa kluczowe: coaching dedykowany, sektor usług kosmetycznych, salon kosmetyczny, e-organizer.