LAPIN AMK
Lapland University of Applied Sciences

CREATING CUSTOMER-CENTRIC EXPERIENCES

Winter Activity for Chinese Tourists in Rovaniemi

Tran An

Bachelor’s Thesis
Degree Programme in Tourism
Bachelor of Hospitality Management

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Abstract of Thesis

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Author	An Tran	Year	2020
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Visit Lapland Tours Ltd is a destination management company, freshly established in 2018. The company remains in the process of building a firm foundation regarding market research as well as product development. This thesis focused on the analysis of discovering China being the target market and exploring their consumption behaviour to propose a suitable activity for the Chinese tourists during the winter season in Rovaniemi. The research was conducted by qualitative method. The goal of the thesis was to improve company sales and secure income generation.

At the beginning, the research covered the market situation in Lapland and Rovaniemi to support the target market determination process. After the statistics have been examined, it brought the research to a decision-making process between China and Britain being the target market. The thesis applied Bhasin's theories to determine the target market for the commissioner based on market growth, profitability and competitiveness. As a result, China became the target market for the commissioner.

Thereafter, having determined the main segment, the retrieved information from interviews with experienced workers and owners in tourism firms in Rovaniemi were combined with articles on the Chinese tourists' consumption behaviour. Subsequently, a customer persona of a Chinese tourist was created. Applying the "Design Thinking Process" and "Experience Pyramid", all resulted in a tourism activity creation. The invented experience covered the needs of the Chinese tourists and excluded the unnecessaries from the tourists' perspective.

Keywords Chinese Tourists, Rovaniemi, Winter Product, Start-Up Company, Market Research, Experience Design, Tourist Behaviour

CONTENTS

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DMC	Destination Management Company
DMO	Destination Management Organization
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
CTA	China Tourism Academy
GPT	Group Packaged Tour
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
WOM	Words of Mouth

1 INTRODUCTION

Rovaniemi has been receiving a notable amount of attention in recent years for its friendliness of the locals and the beauty disregarding the seasons. In winter and summer, millions of visitors have experienced the Lappish wonders with hundreds of different activities organized by various tour operators taking advantage of the given natural element resources. (Rovaniemi 2016.)

During wintertime, the busiest season, northern lights have been the most attractive phenomenon for tourists, followed by the polar night and visiting Santa Claus. In the summer, it is the midnight sun along with the beauty of flora and fauna are the most interesting parts. Moreover, on the common ground between the seasons, people also seek the cultural side by visiting museums, meeting indigenous Sami people or having real authentic Finnish sauna sessions. (Visit Finland 2012.) In 2019, there were 917 different winter activities and 701 summer activities offered by over 33 operators (Visit Rovaniemi 2019a) including almost every aspect that the region possesses, being marketed and sold in a wide range of forms. For instance, culture, cuisine, nature, outdoor and indoor activities. (Visit Finland 2012; Visit Rovaniemi 2019a).

Nevertheless, with the variety of tour products and services that are existing on the market whilst new activities are continuously being composed, it is a challenge for a start-up company as they must be able to create a new potential innovative product, simultaneously offer a tailored one to a group of customers based on their demands. This thesis aims to find a solution for this challenge including three main phases. It is first to determine who are target group by searching for the potential customers in Rovaniemi based on the collected data and theoretical application. The next step is to analyse customers behaviours and discover their needs. Finally, a product will be created with certain criteria based on the customer persona.

2 THESIS BACKGROUND

2.1 Visit Lapland Tours as Commissioner

The thesis content is served as a business development for Visit Lapland Tours, a Destination Management Company located in Rovaniemi, founded by Matti Henttunen and the help of five other members in summer 2018. Visit Lapland Tours offers services by co-operating with other enterprises including transportation, tour experiences and accommodation. The company's vision and mission are to become a popular tourism service provider in Rovaniemi by providing tailored made experiences covering the natural and cultural features of Finland. (Visit Lapland Tours 2020.)

Due to the company's internal issues, the preparation process was in the middle of accomplishment. Thus, not many products are offered on the market compared to other businesses. The winter activities available namely northern light tours, visiting Santa Claus Village and Ranua Zoo, ice fishing trips. Most of the services are variations of Northern Lights tours by combining with multi-elements such as culinary, photography. Furthermore, there are other services provision such as husky/reindeer safaris and snowmobile tours which are beneficial from commission fees. (Visit Lapland Tours 2020.) Currently, the company is concentrating on improving its online marketing segments with the establishment of a strong foundation on the website, the exposure expansion on the internet by applying Search Engine Optimization (SEO) as well as the techniques and seeking for co-operations from tour agencies in different countries while searching for customer providers (Luu 2020).

According to Luu, the revenue from winter 2018 and 2019 heavily relied on walk-in customers (Luu 2020). Facing this situation, Visit Lapland Tours finds it necessary to create new interesting activities serving a certain niche market for the winter season. Thus, the research questions for the thesis are: (1) What should be the target market for Visit Lapland Tours in the Winter season? And, (2) What Winter experience should Visit Lapland Tours provide for the target customers?

2.2 Methodology

The thesis was conducted by qualitative methodology. Qualitative research is a method focusing on generating meaning and understanding through rich descriptions, with the intention of exploration but not with predetermined outcomes. Qualitative data could be achieved in four main sources, which are interview, focus groups, observation and documents (Center for Research Quality 2015). Interviews with qualitative research are usually either semi-structured or In-depth/unstructured. Yet, the in-depth/unstructured interview method has more reflexivity with a textual analysis that contains deep and thick descriptions (Richie, Burns & Palmer 2005, 101).

The execution of the thesis research was planned by, first, knowing the tourism market situation on a national level in Finland, of which the general view and information is gained through articles and statistics from Business Finland basing on the tourists' consumption behaviours, types of travellers, spending tendency and length of visit for instance. Later, to improve the clarification and credibility, the market research is narrowed down to a local level within Rovaniemi by collecting statistics on overnight spent from a Destination Management Organization (DMO) - Visit Rovaniemi.

Utilising the target-market-determination methods, the collected data from the previous step and further research, combining with a small-scale survey helps the author to identify the target market. The survey covers the local business competitiveness situation within Rovaniemi from local tour providers. Nonetheless, the number of respondents was low due to unfavourable timing. The execution was carried on during summer, the period when companies tend to have holidays and days off. This approach could have been replaced with interviews for better outcomes, but it would be tremendously time-consuming, therefore the author decided not to follow it. Once the target market was determined as Chinese tourists, the thesis discussed further on their travel tendencies with the information collected from other researchers. It was suggested that there are various types of Chinese travellers in the last few decades and their tastes of travel experience have also changed drastically in general. However, confirmation on the credibility is needed since the condition might not be the same in Rovaniemi compares to other countries. Hence, two semi-structured interviews were executed, one with the operation manager, Jolly Law from a destination management company (DMC) and the other one with the co-founder of experience provider company, Dilixiati Bolati. Both participants have broad experience with Chinese tourists and Chinese culture. The reason behind using a qualitative approach to this part of the thesis was because neither the author nor the commissioner had an in-depth understanding of the Chinese consumption behaviour, therefore, a survey with hypothesis options would not lead to efficient information retrieval. When the information is confirmed, the author started to apply experience design methods for the activity invention for the commissioner, serving the Chinese tourists during the winter season.

The validity of the research was ensured to be made as efficiently as possible since the survey respondents and the interviewees are only those who work in the tourism field in Rovaniemi. This ensures the high content validity, one of the approaches to measure the validity efficiency (Magdalena 2015). However, two remarkable flaws rely upon the survey are its low number of respondents and the questions are business competitiveness related, there is a chance that the answers are untruthful.

On the aspect of credibility, indicating the lifespan of the results retrieved from the measuring procedure on different subjects (Magdalena 2015). According to Visit Rovaniemi, the oldest statistics they could provide are recorded from 2013, when Russia was the country with the highest number of nights spent in Rovaniemi in total of the whole year until 2014. Then, it was Germany in 2015, Israel in 2016 and China from 2017 until the present, 2019. (Takalo 2019.) Regarding the number of over 100 million outbound travellers from China (Reed 2019), it is estimated that China would still be leading the chart at least for the next five years while keeping the same travel consumption behaviour. This is based on Jiang’s statistic (2014) suggested that 40% of Chinese tourists are inexperienced travellers (Jiang 2014, as cited in Li & Khan 2016, xxvi).

3 MARKET RESEARCH AND TARGET MARKET

3.1 Market Situation in Finland

A report was published in 2018, presenting the results from Visitor Survey 2017 conducted by Visit Finland organization, answered by visitors over 14-year-old. The results presented on a general level, it casts on visitors' motives when coming to Finland, trips by nationality, travel destinations in Finland (Figure 1), Finland's popularity and activities. (Visit Finland 2018.)

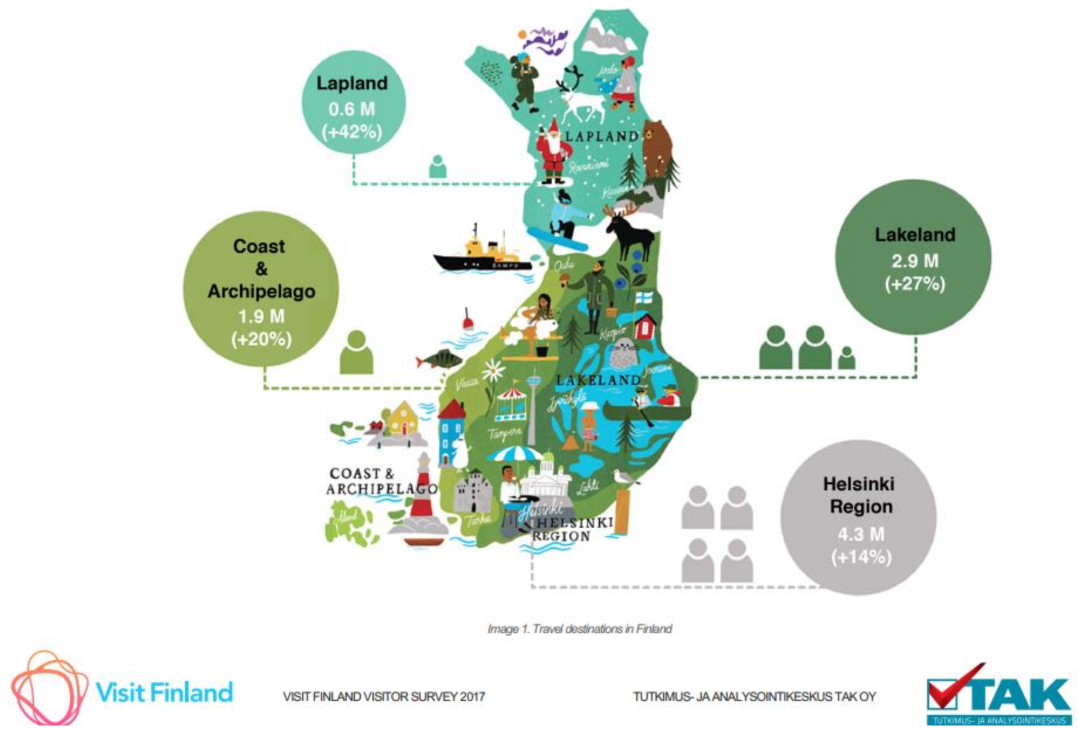

Figure 1. Travel Destination in Finland (Visit Finland 2018).

According to the survey, Finland welcomed around 2,8 million visitors from many parts of the world coming to its country as holidaymakers with 35% share of total trips, this number was 41 per cent higher than 2016. There are tourists originated from several countries that contribute the most to that number (thousand trips), namely, Estonia (239), Sweden (291), Germany (158), UK (143), Russia (672), Japan (105) and China (281). Lapland received the least attention compare to the other regions such as Helsinki Region, Coast & Archipelago and Finnish

Lakeland. Only 606 thousand trips were paid to this area whilst the others received 4294, 1858, 2917 thousand trips accordingly to the mentioned regions. (Visit Finland 2018.) The fact that Lapland has the smallest market is contrary to the expectation of most of the people studying and working in this field in the region, including the author.

Reportedly (Table 1), from the 0,6 million holidaymakers coming to Lapland, Great Britain is responsible for 77 thousand trips, France with 48 thousand and China with 110 thousand visitors. The tourists from these three nations are also the top three countries with the highest ratio of first-time visitors, ranking descending with China (64%), France (61%) and the UK (53%). (Visit Finland 2018.)

The statistics suggested that most of the Chinese, French and British visitors coming to Lapland are first-time travellers and the number of Chinese tourists is dominating all of the other nationalities. However, the Lapland region includes many other tourism destinations, not only Rovaniemi but also Levi, Ivalo and Inäri for instance. Since this market research process was conducted to assist the author in identifying the target market in Rovaniemi, therefore, it is important to take another step to make the research locally in that city. This helps the author and the commissioner to obtain an accurate view of the tourism market.

Table 1.Travel destinations in Finland by different nationalities in 2017 (thousand trips) - (Visit Finland 2018, 26).

	Helsinki Region	Coast & Archipelago	Finnish Lakeland	Lapland
Estonia	589 (638)	232 (157)	171 (152)	21 (37)
Sweden	358 (395)	419 (359)	198 (124)	19 (12)
Germany	283 (263)	99 (78)	99 (68)	38 (38)
Great Britain	211 (147)	65 (32)	39 (30)	77 (59)
France	92 (101)	41 (29)	35 (32)	48 (30)
Denmark	83 (52)	28 (17)	15 (13)	5 (3)
Italy	77 (75)	22 (22)	21 (25)	20 (12)
The Netherlands	57 (60)	25 (15)	23 (15)	12 (5)
Spain	88 (83)	41 (23)	32 (25)	16 (14)
Poland	49 (36)	15 (30)	15 (13)	4 (8)
Belgium	27 (28)	10 (9)	13 (8)	4 (3)
Lithuania	23 (34)	14 (6)	9 (4)	7 (4)
Latvia	71 (39)	20 (17)	34 (12)	4 (4)
Other EU Countries	138 (151)	63 (29)	34 (37)	27 (7)
Russia	841 (646)	441 (579)	1983 (1580)	25 (27)
Norway	60 (41)	35 (14)	30 (11)	2 (4)
Switzerland	64 (36)	3 (6)	8 (12)	31 (14)
Other European Countries	76 (72)	22 (13)	40 (24)	16 (8)
USA	101 (109)	38 (13)	20 (17)	11 (6)
Canada	19 (19)	13 (3)	5 (3)	2 (2)
Latin America	54 (51)	5 (3)	4 (3)	4 (3)
Japan	163 (157)	24 (11)	4 (13)	24 (33)
China	342 (226)	94 (41)	39 (19)	110 (47)
South Korea	115 (98)	33 (8)	3 (16)	14 (2)
India	83 (51)	9 (9)	5 (2)	14 (1)
Other Asian Countries	174 (120)	30 (19)	18 (30)	40 (38)
Africa	8 (13)	6 (6)	3 (5)	3 (0)
Australia	26 (24)	7 (5)	6 (3)	7 (8)
Rest of Oceania	3 (7)	1 (0)	2 (0)	0 (0)
Total	4294 (3774)	1858 (1554)	2917 (2293)	606 (427)

3.2 Market Situation in Rovaniemi

Statistics from Visit Rovaniemi, a local DMO was brought into consideration to clarify the local market situation. This DMO does not only operate as a public (online) travel marketplace, selling tours for local businesses but also publish monthly reports on registered overnight stays in Rovaniemi (Visit Rovaniemi 2020). According to Statistics Finland, a national statistical institution in Finland, the definition of an overnight stay is defined as followed:

> In the tourism statistics of the EU (Eurostat) an overnight stay is a statistical unit to measure both the volume of tourism, e.g. duration of stay on the supply side and duration of trip on the demand side. Number of nights spent (duration of stay) either in collective or private accommodation refers to the

time spent during a visit measured from the standpoint of the receiving country or place. (Official Statistic of Finland 2019.)

Visit Rovaniemi categorized Winter season with a period from December to March (Visit Rovaniemi 2019a), nevertheless, according to the commissioner, November could also be considered as Winter season the weather conditions are usually favourable for the operation of the program, already at that time. Therefore, based on Visit Rovaniemi's reports during those months, it is believed that the group of customers coming from the same country that visits Rovaniemi the most in the wintertime can be defined as potential customers. However, a flaw on this method is that by judging only on the overnight stays and nationalities, it does not holistically present the potential target since the differences in travel motives are not shown. Thus, more features will be taken into consideration to finalize the decision. (Visit Rovaniemi 2019.)

In November 2018 (Table 2), it is recorded that China, Britain, the United States, Italy and Spain exported the most inbound tourists. The number of visitors originated from these countries mostly increased compare to the previous year, especially the USA with 183.1% in ratio, meanwhile, Italian tourists' stays were 19,3% less this year. (Visit Rovaniemi 2018.)

Table 2.Overnight stays by country of residence in November 2018 (Visit Rovaniemi 2018).

Overnight stays by country of residence

	NOVEMBER Amount	Change	Share	JAN-NOVEMBER Amount	Change	Share
All	60,400	12.3 %	100.0 %	537,000	3.9 %	100.0 %
Foreign	37,900	17.6 %	62.7 %	331,000	5.6 %	61.8 %
Finland	22,500	4.4 %	37.3 %	205,000	1.2 %	38.2 %
China	4,400	33.4 %	7.3 %	41,100	20.5 %	7.7 %
Britain	3,700	26.3 %	6.1 %	14,600	6.9 %	2.7 %
United States	2,700	183.1 %	4.4 %	11,600	20.7 %	2.2 %
Italy	2,600	-19.3 %	4.3 %	11,600	-9.5 %	2.2 %
Spain	2,200	24.5 %	3.7 %	16,900	40.2 %	3.1 %
Japan	2,000	11.7 %	3.4 %	13,400	-19.2 %	2.5 %

Table 3. Overnight stays by country of residence in December 2018 (Visit Rovaniemi 2019b).

	DECEMBER Amount	Change	Share	JAN-DECEMBER Amount	Change	Share
All	126,000	10.4 %	100.0 %	664,000	5.2 %	100.0 %
Foreign	111,000	10.2 %	88.3 %	444,000	7.0 %	66.9 %
Britain	24,700	12.0 %	19.6 %	39,400	10.1 %	5.9 %
Finland	14,700	12.0 %	11.7 %	220,000	1.8 %	33.1 %
Singapore	8,600	5.0 %	6.8 %	16,000	3.4 %	2.4 %
Spain	8,400	8.2 %	6.7 %	25,300	27.5 %	3.8 %
China	8,000	1.9 %	6.4 %	49,100	16.9 %	7.4 %
France	7,300	18.8 %	5.8 %	33,100	6.8 %	5.0 %
Ireland	7,000	43.8 %	5.6 %	8,600	52.7 %	1.3 %

Table 4. Overnight stays by country of residence in January 2019 (Visit Rovaniemi 2019c).

	JANUARY Amount	Change	Share
All	85,400	11.5 %	100.0 %
Foreign	71,900	11.8 %	84.2 %
Finland	13,500	9.9 %	15.8 %
China	11,700	38.7 %	13.6 %
France	9,900	28.9 %	11.5 %
Russia	9,500	6.4 %	11.2 %
Germany	4,500	15.5 %	5.3 %
Britain	4,200	14.6 %	5.0 %
Spain	3,700	47.6 %	4.3 %

Table 5. Overnight stays by country of residence in February 2019 (Visit Rovaniemi 2019d).

	FEBRUARY Amount	Change	Share	JAN-FEBRUARY Amount	Change	Share
All	84,900	11.4 %	100.0 %	170,000	11.5 %	100.0 %
Foreign	70,400	9.6 %	82.9 %	142,000	10.7 %	83.6 %
China	14,700	2.8 %	17.4 %	26,400	16.0 %	15.5 %
Finland	14,500	21.2 %	17.1 %	28,000	15.5 %	16.4 %
Israel	11,600	10.0 %	13.7 %	11,900	7.0 %	7.0 %
France	9,600	25.2 %	11.3 %	19,500	27.2 %	11.4 %
Germany	5,500	24.1 %	6.5 %	10,100	20.3 %	5.9 %
Britain	3,400	23.4 %	4.0 %	7,700	18.5 %	4.5 %
Japan	2,300	-10.6 %	2.7 %	4,200	-8.0 %	2.5 %

Table 6. Overnight stays by country of residence in March 2019 (Visit Rovaniemi 2019e).

	MARCH Amount	Change	Share	JAN-MARCH Amount	Change	Share
All	75,100	2.6 %	100.0 %	246,000	8.6 %	100.0 %
Foreign	58,000	1.3 %	77.2 %	200,000	7.8 %	81.6 %
Finland	17,100	7.3 %	22.8 %	45,100	12.2 %	18.4 %
Israel	15,600	-3.4 %	20.7 %	27,500	0.8 %	11.2 %
France	6,400	3.7 %	8.5 %	25,800	20.5 %	10.5 %
Germany	4,200	31.1 %	5.6 %	14,400	23.8 %	5.8 %
China	4,000	-32.2 %	5.3 %	30,300	5.7 %	12.3 %
Spain	2,400	-46.3 %	3.2 %	7,900	-17.9 %	3.2 %
Japan	1,900	14.0 %	2.6 %	6,100	-1.8 %	2.5 %
Britain	1,900	19.1 %	2.5 %	9,600	18.8 %	3.9 %

From table 2 to table 6, it is shown that China, Britain, Germany, France and Israel are the nationalities that generate the most foreign visitors coming to Rovaniemi during the winter season from November 2018 to March 2019. Even though the ranking order fluctuated monthly. This gave the author and the commissioner an overview picture of the market situation in Rovaniemi regarding overnight stays by tourist nationalities, this helps the commissioner and the author to conduct the target market research which will be executed later in the thesis.

3.3 Choosing Target Market

3.3.1 Determinants for Target Market

Having reviewed the mentioned statistics, the next stage is to identify which group of nations will be the company's customer target during the winter season. According to Bhasin, the decision should be closed base on 5 determinants: market size, market growth, profitability, competition and customer type (Bhasin 2018).

The first and foremost, market size is defined as the total market sales potential of all companies put together including branded and non-branded products. However, this part should only be considered from the beginning of the business establishment. Therefore, it is unnecessary to discuss this issue further since the company already existed and under operation. (Bhasin 2018).

The second is the market-growth-rate, which can be determined by checking the facts and figures of the last 5 years of the industry that the company is in (Bhasin 2018). In this dimension, overnight stays numbers could help to demonstrate the situation.

Third, profitability. It is crucial to acknowledge whether the business is going to give low profitability, then the volumes need to be high or vice versa. Otherwise, the business would not function efficiently. (Bhasin 2018.)

Fourth, in the competition dimension. The more competitors the company has in the field, the higher the entry barriers are going to be. Hence, this situation leads to the requirement of deep pockets from the establishment to endure a period of giving high value while charging low prices in the company's counterparts until the competition leaves the market. (Bhasin 2018.)

Last but not least, the type of customer. This stage highly depends on the likeliness of the customers deciding to rebuy the same products. There are numerous questions that can clarify this stage. For instance, how frequently the product being sold, whether they are completely new in the market and how likely the customers adopt and accept it. (Bhasin 2018.)

From here onward to the end of chapter 3, the author will bring Bhasin's theories into practice, applying the formulas mentioned above to identify the target market for the commissioner. However, only the "type of customer" will be deeply demonstrated as the "customer persona" in chapter 4.

3.3.2 Customer Target

In the winter, displayed from table 2 to table 6. Chinese and British tourists are attracted the most to Rovaniemi, which gives strong ground to choose either China or the UK as the commissioner's main customer target. To help us have a clearer vision, Lapland Above Ordinary (2018) stated in an article that the growth rate of the Chinese tourist was the highest whilst a large section of the increased number of tourists to Lapland comes from Europe. To make the most beneficial decision, it is essential to analyse each market's favourability. (Lapland Above Ordinary 2018.)

3.3.3 Market Growth

The origin of the British tourists' waves started when Lapland was broadcasted on British television in 1982 and 1983. The first concord charter flight brought adult Brits to Rovaniemi to celebrate Christmas in 1984, afterwards, the tours gained more popularity with family and children through media. One of the main reasons for the Brits coming to Rovaniemi was to meet Santa Claus and the Lappish nature but after the horrific airline accident which happened in Paris in 2000, the motor caught on fire and burnt right after taking off to the air killing 109 passengers and 4 others. The advertisement message started to shift from the luxurious flight on the concord to Santa, the atmosphere, the snow, and the Northern Light. (Hakulinen, Komppula & Saraniemi 2007.)

In the recent years from 2013 to 2018, during the wintertime (from November to April), based on Visit Rovaniemi's overnight stays statistic (Table 7), the British scored 18 289, 21 709, 20 505, 27 295, 33 400 and 38 000 overnight stays respectively to the years. On the other hand, China has been increasing remarkably during the same period after every year with 5 353 in the first winter, and in the following years giving 7-594, 9 808, 26 909, 41 000 and 42 700 in the Winter season 2018-2019. From here, it can be seen that the Chinese market is growing rapidly not only by numbers but also by percentages, dominating the well-known British tourist. (Takalo 2019.)

Table 7. Overnight Stays by Chinese and British Visitors from 2013 to 2018. (Visit Rovaniemi 2019).

Year	UK (visit turns)	China (visit turns)
2013	18 289	5 353
2014	21 709	7-594
2015	20 505	9 808
2016	27 295	26 909
2017	33 400	41 000

2018	38.000	42 700

3.3.4 Profitability

To have a better understanding of this part, the process would be conducted by comparing how much people spend on certain types of activities, it is necessary to know what those types are. Six different segments' definitions categorised in Segmentation Cross Country Summary (Business Finland 2017a) will be presented.

The first group, City Breakers consists of those who interested in historic attractions, cultural places and design districts and culinary experiences. They value safety and history. Gender distribution is quite even and does more weekend trips than other segments. (Business Finland 2017a.)

Second, natural parks, forests, northern lights, surrounding natures are topics that people in this group are fond of. They also find the importance of safety for their trip as well as peacefulness and quietness of the destination. Those people belong to Nature Explorers. Chosen by more men than women and consumers of all ages. (Business Finland 2017a.)

The third one is Nature Wonder Hunters. The characteristics of this group are not much different from the second group except for having midnight sun and white nights as an alternative interest for enjoying the surrounding nature. For Chinese and Japanese, they expect the destination to be exotic. (Business Finland 2017a.)

Activity Enthusiast is the fourth segment, top interests include experiencing the local lifestyle, museums displaying local culture as well as local events. They value an opportunity to explore a new culture or way of life. Culinary and safety are also important. (Business Finland 2017a.)

Finally, Comfort Seekers group. They find it essential when it comes to safety issues like any other groups, culinary experiences and destination is expected to be genuine and idyllic. They are mostly interested in special accommodation, husky/reindeer ride and wellbeing treatment. (Business Finland 2017a.)

Table 8. Chinese Budget for A Trip. (Business Finland 2017b).

	City Breaker	Nature Explorer	Nature Wonder Hunter	Activity Enthusiast	Authentic Lifestyle Seeker	Comfort Seeker
Segment Size	21%	16%	10%	10%	21%	22%
Spend on Destination *	9906 CNY	9334 CNY	9547 CNY	9868 CNY	9932 CNY	10040 CNY
Value Share	21%	15%	9%	11%	22%	22%

In the report, it is indicated that China has the highest value share in three out of 6 segments, namely, City Breaker, Authentic Lifestyle Seeker and Comfort Seeker and same with segment size. Nonetheless, the UK also shares a considerable amount of segment size and value share in City Breaker, Authentic Lifestyle Seeker segments. (Business Finland 2017a.)

Table 9. British Budget for A Trip. (Business Finland 2017c).

	City Breaker	Nature Explorer	Nature Wonder Hunter	Activity Enthusiast	Authentic Lifestyle Seeker	Comfort Seeker
Segment Size	22%	17%	12%	12%	23%	15%
Spend on Destination *	758 £	827 £	795 £	807 £	755 £	808 £
Value Share	21%	18%	12%	12%	22%	15%

Nonetheless, when being asked for how much the tourists would most likely to pay for the whole trip per person, it can be considered that the Chinese (Business Finland 2017b) are willing to pay much more than the British (Table 8 and 9) (Business Finland 2017c). Furthermore, it is noticeable that when converting all currency into Euros, on average, the Chinese pay 300-400 euros higher in every segment. In Visit Finland Visitor Survey 2017 (Visit Finland 2018), it also stated that the Chinese spent most of their pockets over 1 200 euros per visit when discussing expenditures in Finland (Table 10). (Business Finland 2017 a, b and c; Visit Finland 2018.)

Table 10. - Division of expenditures, euros on average per visit. (Visit Finland 2018, 23).

	Advance	Accom-modation	Restau-rants	Shopping	Transport	Culture	Enter-tainment	Other
Estonia	17 €	18 €	20 €	42 €	6 €	5 €	8 €	17 €
Sweden	25 €	45 €	57 €	88 €	18 €	5 €	9 €	7 €
Germany	80 €	125 €	71 €	90 €	40 €	26 €	5 €	6 €
Great Britain	83 €	73 €	70 €	62 €	25 €	10 €	6 €	2 €
France	106 €	371 €	96 €	119 €	46 €	34 €	12 €	6 €
Denmark	33 €	34 €	62 €	40 €	32 €	3 €	1 €	6 €
Italy	68 €	152 €	113 €	65 €	31 €	26 €	4 €	1 €
The Netherlands	68 €	119 €	70 €	72 €	34 €	26 €	27 €	11 €
Spain	137 €	196 €	120 €	179 €	50 €	60 €	36 €	2 €
Poland	151 €	93 €	80 €	58 €	57 €	0 €	0 €	0 €
Belgium	81 €	168 €	104 €	145 €	85 €	11 €	10 €	3 €
Lithuania	52 €	94 €	19 €	27 €	9 €	17 €	0 €	0 €
Latvia	13 €	20 €	45 €	39 €	12 €	0 €	2 €	40 €
Other EU Countries	87 €	131 €	78 €	114 €	37 €	15 €	5 €	4 €
Russia	28 €	7 €	15 €	180 €	2 €	5 €	7 €	1 €
Norway	28 €	33 €	70 €	49 €	33 €	5 €	4 €	8 €
Switzerland	70 €	31 €	68 €	63 €	24 €	14 €	7 €	5 €
Other European Countries	93 €	49 €	50 €	75 €	15 €	17 €	0 €	0 €
USA	199 €	145 €	100 €	142 €	32 €	8 €	16 €	4 €
Canada	60 €	160 €	89 €	124 €	35 €	99 €	0 €	0 €
Latin America	110 €	96 €	115 €	85 €	29 €	41 €	0 €	0 €
Japan	219 €	94 €	78 €	152 €	26 €	9 €	21 €	3 €
China	808 €	121 €	79 €	197 €	33 €	9 €	4 €	10 €
South Korea	196 €	124 €	55 €	120 €	42 €	11 €	0 €	0 €
India	228 €	101 €	95 €	95 €	77 €	12 €	0 €	0 €
Other Asian Countries	257 €	115 €	90 €	164 €	42 €	19 €	19 €	5 €
Africa	127 €	384 €	97 €	168 €	71 €	13 €	0 €	0 €
Australia	125 €	138 €	72 €	84 €	38 €	70 €	3 €	5 €
Rest of Oceania	32 €	51 €	103 €	62 €	8 €	0 €	0 €	0 €
Total	77 €	53 €	41 €	110 €	16 €	9 €	7 €	5 €

3.3.5 Competition

A survey (Appendix 1) combined with interviews was spread to several tour agencies around Rovaniemi. The survey results were anonymously retrieved from 3 out of 7 popular companies namely Lapland Safaris, Nordic Unique Travel, Sunny Safaris, Safartica, Access Lapland, Lapland Welcome and Arctic Lifestyle. It was composed in a way to explore whether the mentioned companies noticed the expansion of the Chinese market and which market they are focusing on. Thence, based on the results, it is possible to decide which segment is more competitive between England and China.

The companies aware that there was a surge in the number of Chinese tourists, yet, when being asked whether they would consider changing their customer target from one to another in case of noticing a remarkable growth from another market than the original one, the answers are “maybe” or “likely yes” rather than “absolutely yes”.

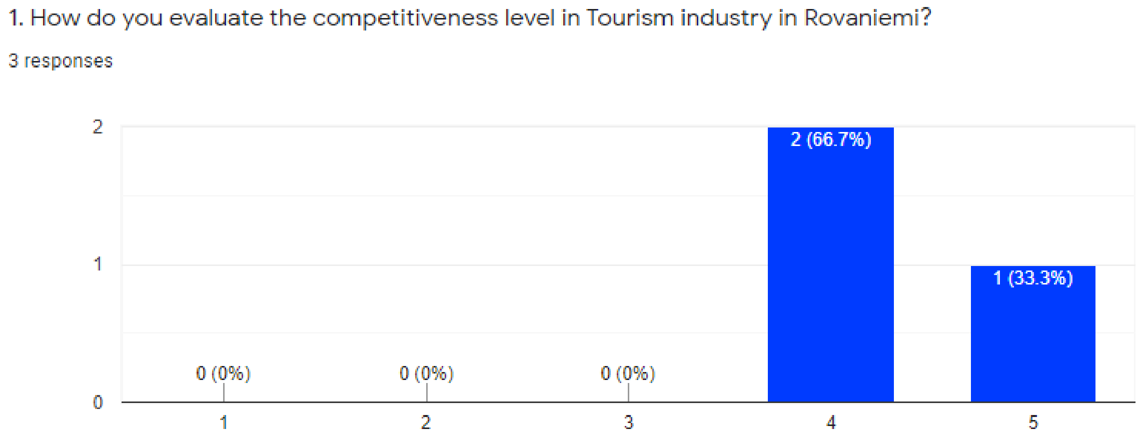

Figure 2. Competitiveness level in the tourism industry in Rovaniemi

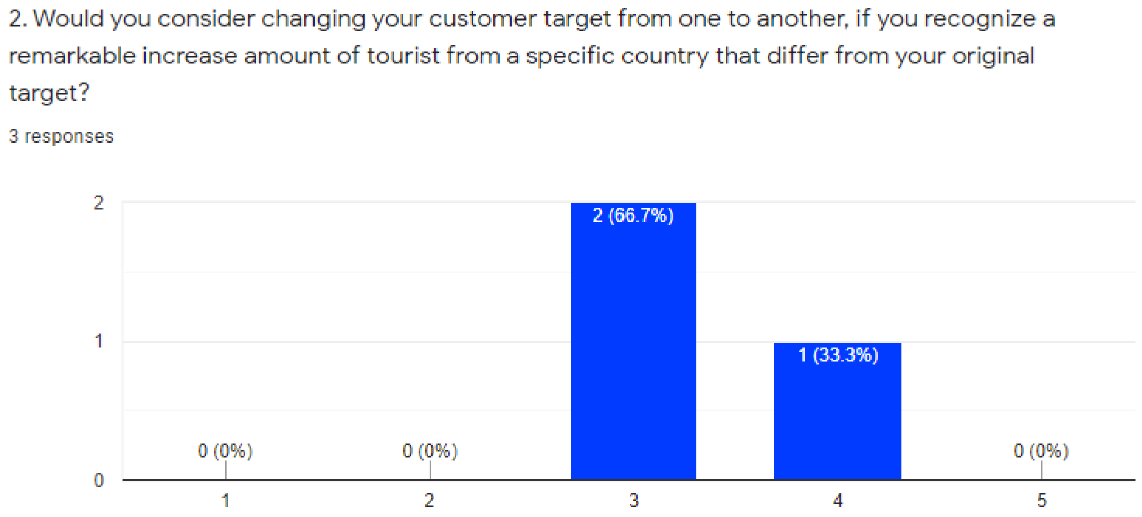

Figure 3. Consideration about changing target market.

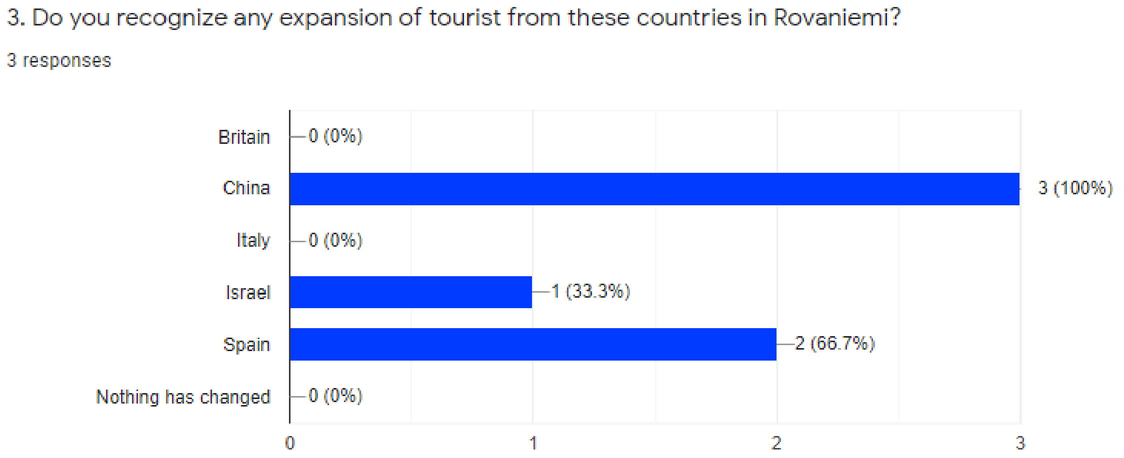

Figure 4 Market changes recognition

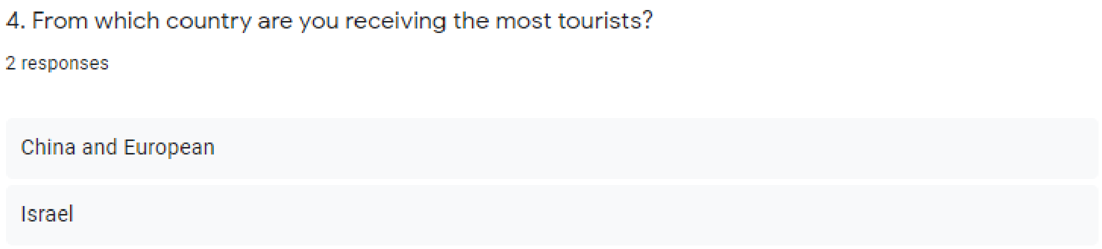

Figure 5. Biggest markets from companies

From the gathered results, even though the enterprises aware of the growth in the Chinese market and how competitive the tourism industry being in Rovaniemi, they seem not to be interested in investing or purchasing this segment. This makes the situation more favourable if the commissioners target the Chinese market now. Additionally, according to Nordic Unique Travel and Lapland Welcome, they do not have a specific tourist nationality or a persona to concentrate on. Instead, they are both being flexible with all customers (Nordic Unique Travel 2019; Lapland Welcome 2019)

To summarise, Rovaniemi is welcoming a remarkable number of tourists from the six big markets namely China, Britain, France, Germany, Israel and Spain. However, China and Britain are the two largest and most potential markets for Rovaniemi. Recently, the number of Chinese tourists is passing the typical inbound tourist source, which is Britain. Also, according to the researches, the Chineses is more willing to spend more than the British and only a few tour companies are targeting them. Thus, it is a reasonable decision to select China as the company’s main market.

4 CHINESE TOURISTS

4.1 What Is Customer Persona and Why?

According to Shopify, a customer persona is a fictionalized characterization of the company’s best customer(s) based on information about them and how they utilise the product or service. These descriptions mirror the company’s various market segments, with names to match the certain type of buyers. It should contain the person’s demographics, such as age, gender, income level and education; psychographics e.g. attitudes, beliefs, personality; the primary purpose of buying the product; how the product is used, in other words, what function are most important to them; what solutions it provides or how it improves their lives; purchasing frequency, objects and what prevent them from not buying it. (Shopify 2019.)

Moreover, the ultimate aimed goal is the Chinese travellers’ demographic information. Therefore, the important following step is to collect these mentioned data from them about how they behave when they use a tour service. According to the marketing concept nowadays, before creating a product (service), it is important to know who the consumers are first.

> Without customers, no business can get off the ground, let alone survive. Some people believe that customers arrive after the firm ‘open its doors’. This is nonsense. You need a clear idea of who your customers will be in advance as they are a vital component of a successful business strategy, not simply the passive recipients of new products or services. Knowing something about your customers and what you plan to sell to them seems so elementary […] But it is all too common - and one of the reasons why many businesses fail. (Barrow 2001, 77.)

The Customer Persona plays a key role in the experience development process later on.

4.2 Travel Experience and Motives

Focusing on the Chinese tourists, many of them barely have any experience of travelling overseas or having few bits of knowledge about the outside world and tend to have rude behaviours during the trip. For these reasons, they prefer to travel by purchasing travel packages organized by tour operators, which have been a predominant form of travel for most of them. However, the young generation becomes more adaptive and fluent to the new technology. Some of these young people are more global, consumption-driven and even have had overseas experience through working and studying abroad. They start gaining more details about the outside world. (Li & Khan 2016, xxvi-xxvii.) Li & Khan also suggested that consequently from the clues mentioned above about the young generation, a “Second Wave” of tourists has been formed and they are less impressed by cursory sightseeing or photo-taking at the iconic destinations but instead visiting new places to enjoy in-depth cultural experiences is more favourable. (Li & Khan 2016, 339.)

In the past, retired elderly and the incentives were the major sources of Chinese tourists for the Western destination. In the present, young people are able to afford outbound trips and they expect to experience the uniqueness of each destination. These young customers want a more tailor-made product and get in-depth experience in the exotic culture. Travel suppliers are recommended to re-define the Chinese tourists as a “heterogenous customer pool” in which different segments would need different tailor-made products because they are becoming pickier as well as demanding since they have already formed certain expectations of each destination before making the visit (Li & Khan 2016, 339).

Nevertheless, according to Jolly Law (2019), an operation manager from Arctic China in Rovaniemi receiving Chinese tourists, the information that the Chinese visitors prepared within for the trip is limited to only spots for photography and food to try. Even though it is contrary to Li’s statement, the information rather serves as a reflection of the actual situation happening in Rovaniemi, which being not so famous yet for the Chinese experience seekers. (Law 2019.)

The most noticeable tendency of the Second Wave of China outbound tourism is the growth of fully self-organized travel, as travellers prefer to travel with people they know, instead of with strangers and do not want to be bound to the schedule of the entire group (Xiang 2013, 134-148). This shifting in the service consumption has been growing recently and being acknowledged but in the foreseeable future, in terms of number, the package tours are in the upper hand based on low-price, low-quality offers (Fugmann & Aceves 2013, 159-168).

Dilixiati Bolati, a Chinese business student – co-founder of Elves Event where offering handcraft activity in Rovaniemi, mostly serve business groups, agrees that there are rarely lonely travellers but rather couples, families with children or colleagues visiting Rovaniemi. This has also been confirmed by Law. (Law & Bolati 2019). Additionally, Artt (2013), pointed out an interesting issue from his work that the Chinese tourists do not travel only for pleasure but rather perceiving it as a personal investment (oneself, family and social network), it could be considered as an alternative mean of education and approach to earn respect from peers (Arlt 2013, as cited in Li & Khan 2016, xxix).

UNWTO (2012), divides the market into 5 tribes. Traditionalists are those who look for intensive sightseeing experience, with almost no travel know-how, highly price-sensitive and have problem with communication in a second language, therefore, seeking security within a group and being unable to confront the destination alone; Wenyi youth, are white-collar Chinese with the westernized mentality and bohemian-romantic ideals, they look for freedom and uniqueness; Experienced-centred tourists concentrate on the material and less on emotional experience, they enjoy the whole process from planning to travel; The Hedonist, to a certain extent, they are similar to the experience-centred but in a higher level of consumption, interested in luxury shopping, eating well and having a good time are the most important parts, the scenery is only secondary; Lastly, the connoisseurs, they have concrete knowledge of where to go, what to eat with more focus than the experienced-centred tribe. (UNWTO 2012, as cited in Li & Khan 2016, 158).

Regarding this matter, Law believes that the Chinese tourists coming to Rovaniemi are mostly influenced by the (social)media and WOM, the materials on the internet, the magazines and it create demand push. However, they do not want to relax but are more into taking good photos and see new things in their lives, which makes it a mixture of intellectual and stimulus-avoidance as motivators. (Law 2019.)

In conclusion, from the evidence above, it is suggested to create a tour product for the Chinese which is suitable for grouped tourists. Keeping in mind that grouped tourist is the current biggest mode of travel for the Chinese outbound tourists. At the same time, it is also important to be able to deliver values that are educative as well as satisfying their needs of self-esteem when sharing their friends, as to how their consumption orientations are shifting.

4.3 Expectations

On the basic level of respect for expectation, while travelling, it is believed that the Chinese tourists have the same concern as any traveller about cleanliness, safety and value for money. However, the tour guides are expected to be bilingual, friendly, professional and culturally and historically knowledgeable. (Li & Khan 2016, 44.) In addition, Bolati and Law stressed so much about the effect of having a Chinese cultural perspective when serving them. For example, they favour hot food and hot beverages especially for breakfast while several hotels mainly serve cold food. The Chinese are demanding toward and dependent on the providers so the guides usually would have to do extra work. (Law 2019; Bolati 2020.)

From a research about Chinese tourists preconceptions of Europe on group packaged tours (GPT) before travelling, conducted by Xiang (Robert) Li, it is stated that they had limited knowledge of the continent’s geography and differences between countries along with the impressions of characteristics with words such as new, modern, civilized. However, once they arrived at the destination, they were disappointed since it was contrary to expectation with the continent being old and not as modern as they imagined. Only the young Chinese tourists inside the groups tend to be more informed on Europe’s destination. (Li

& Khan 2016, 155.) Hence, it is crucial to prepare and understand their expectations toward Finland in general or Lapland, Rovaniemi in specific in order to close the gap between expectation and reality so that the travellers could enjoy the activity at its best. (Li & Khan 2016, 339.)

Additionally, on the research by Li (2016), group tourists (Chinese) in Germany are actively bringing and using electronic devices (smartphones, tablets, GPS devices) whenever possible. However, a majority of group members are price conscious since the utilisation of mobile phones was highly restrained due to overseas mobile fees and the willingness to pay them. Among young travellers, only a few use it to instantly share photos on Chinese social media channels or navigate with their GPS. Nonetheless in the reality, according to the interviewees, both Law and Bolati believe that internet is not a big problem for the tourists since they usually equip themselves with internet connection (Li & Khan 2016, 162; Law 2019; Bolati 2020.)

4.4 Other Traits of Chinese Tourists in Rovaniemi

From Arctic China, it is revealed that the customers are in the age of 20s or 30s and very few of them are over 50 (Law 2019). Yet, from Bolati’s observation, and due to his market segmentation are targeting the business group, the tourists’ age is usually between 40 and 60 (Bolati 2020).

Law believes that snowmobile, husky or reindeer ride are the most popular activities for the Chinese visitors in Rovaniemi since they do not have much snow in China whilst Bolati’s opinion is contradicted to Law’s. According to him, China has the equivalent amount of natural resources as Finland, and it is the successful marketing performance of Finnish tourism stakeholders that makes industry bloom and attract travellers. (Law 2019; Bolati 2020.)

Furthermore, Bolati agrees that the Chinese guests do like outdoor activities yet the challenging part for them and the experience providers is that the Chinese do not want to stay outside for too long, enduring the cold. He suggested:

“[…] they could have 3 hours, still. But, they could have half-half of the time for indoor and outdoor, or you can distribute into 3 sections, so they go out, and then go inside, then go out for a bit more and get inside again, then you go home”. – Dilixiati Bolati, 2020. (Bolati 2020.)

Both interviewees notice that they are highly interested in the nature’s quality, for Finnish pureness of water, forest, air and the high standard of life (Law 2019; Bolati 2020). According to UNWTO, air-quality is one big motivator for the Chinese tourist to travel due to polluted situation in their home country (UNWTO & CTA, 2019, 25).

Photography is one of the features that was aggressively stressed by the interviewees, it plays such a huge roll in their visit. It is the proofs for others to see that the guests have landed on Finland, supporting their personal image as mentioned before. According to Bolati, in the Chinese perspectives, their classes are defined by the experience that they have. In this case, those who visit Finland are perceived to be in a higher class than those visiting Asian countries. Hence, photography is the primary channel for them to deliver this. (Bolati 2020.)

The second essential part after photography is to serve them accordingly to their cultural perspective. Bolati (2020) recommended to be proactive and fulfil any need. In addition, they want to be in their own group doing their own things and do not want to be interrupted so often. Also, they are not a big fan of storytelling and prefer a simple process. Therefore, Arctic China company usually have Chinese guides to serve the groups. However, this fact does not mean there is something hostile between the Chinese and the foreigner. In fact, according to Law (2019), they would like to interact with the foreign guides, but it is just the language barriers in most of the case that prevent them from doing so. (Bolati 2020 & Law 2019.)

Regarding food consumption, it seems that the Chinese tourists prefer to have Chinese cuisine during their trips rather than trying new dishes, “Chinese people like eating being indoor” Law adds and according to Bolati’s experience, “If they (Chinese visitors) are staying here for 5 days, they would go to European or

Western style for maybe twice…I am talking about a typical Chinese". Moreover, between a couple or in a family, women tend to be the key influencer for the experience of the activity. (Bolati 2020.)

To add up (Figure 6), Chinese outbound tourists made up of more female than male by 6%. (UNWTO & CTA 2019, 18).

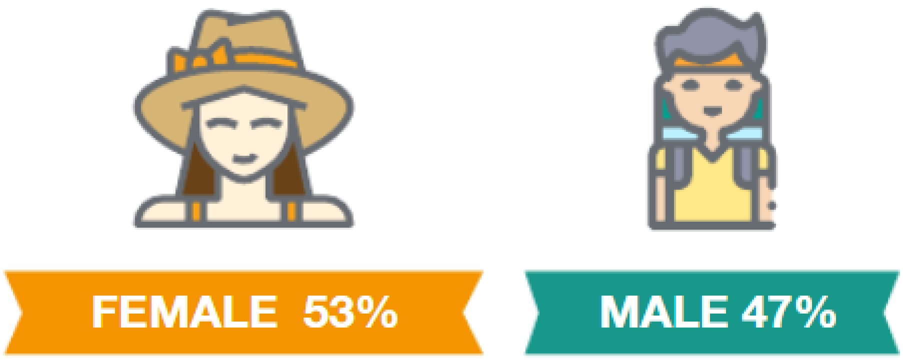

Figure 6. Chinese outbound tourists by gender (share, %) (UNWTO & CTA, 2019, 18).

4.5 Chinese Tourist Persona

According to China Travel News (2017), A Chinese is likely to spend 28% of their annual income for travelling expenses, which are USD 3623 in 2017 (EUR 3275 in 2020. This converted number could be different due to inflation during the time gap, which makes their monthly income around EUR 974 (China Travel News 2017). To sum up, a Chinese person only travels when their monthly income is expected to be approximately EUR 974. With this acknowledgement, it is possible to narrow down those who tend to travel as it would be inaccurate using the general Chinese income since not every Chinese citizen could afford travelling.

From all the indicated characteristics mentioned in the previous parts, a Chinese tourist customer persona is created (Figure 7). This customer persona would serve as the company's customer target, the experience development process will now be created to serve the author's fictional character "Liao Fang".

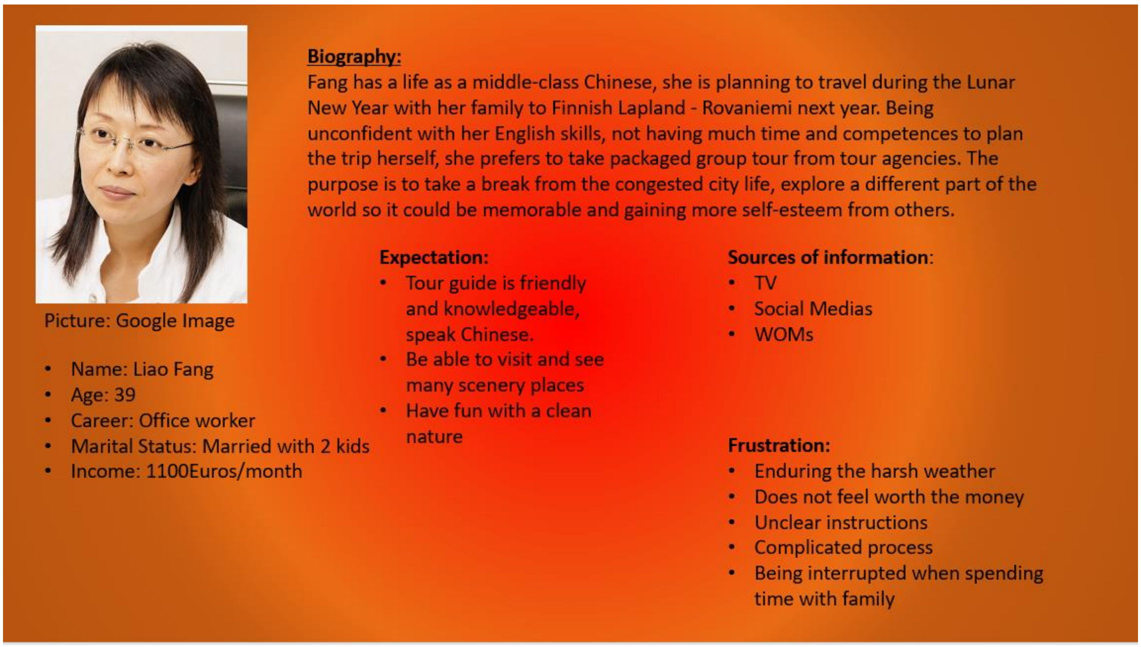

Figure 7. Chinese Tourist Persona

5 EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

5.1 Process' Background

At this point, the activity will be developed base on Design Thinking Process (Seppälä-Esser 2018; Hasso Plattner Institut 2020a&b; Liedtka & Ogilvie 2011; Lipiec 2014), which was introduced by Senior Lecturer Petra Paloniemi as a tool in 'Staged Experience Design' study unit. The module includes four main steps namely design brief, design criteria, experience design canvas and prototype product.

First, the method starts with a Design Brief, helping the creator to have a general picture about what they are doing, mostly answer the questions of 'What, Why, Who". Allowing the model's user to identify the scale and core of the project. (Heaton 2016). The second step would be Design Criteria, the inventor could gain deeper knowledge about the process at this phase, it displays the elements and clues that are believed to be potentially supporting/blocking the activity that is under development. This helps to direct the designer to the wishful outcome (Liedtka, Ogilvie & Brozenske 2014).

Third, Experience Design Canvas is the visual chart of the whole project, describing the attributes needed and created for the activity, in other words, it clarifies the problems that the provider is trying to solve (Huval & Shusterman 2019). The last step, a prototype product will be presented, bringing the concept to life, telling a story and triggering emotional responses. The presentation would be delivered through a customer journey process. (Seppälä-Esser 2019.)

From the commissioner, they suggested to utilise Uulan Mylly Museum, which possesses an in-depth history value, built from the 18th century, situated 20km away from Rovaniemi centre and currently, the commissioner has the right to use it. However, the museum can only be used for welcoming people on daytime since the neighbours could be disturbed at night. Picture of the place can be viewed in the appendix 4. Uulan Mylly Premises. (Totto 2020.)

5.2 Design Brief

The Design Brief consists of five features, which are Project Description, Target Users, Exploration Questions, Expected Outcomes and Success Metrics. The Project Description demonstrates ‘what’s being done and why?’ defining whether the project itself is a problem to be solved, an opportunity or challenge to explore, encompassing the purpose of the project. In this case, it is the topic of this research, ‘creating unique customer-centric winter experience for Chinese tourist’. (Liedtka 2015.)

Target Users, clarifying for whom this is designed. The person should be described as specific as possible since generalization leads to overlooking critical points of the problem or opportunity space. It is also suggested that not to focus on only the primary set of users but also the indirect users of it, how the others would be affected if this work is applied to them. For this part, the Customer Persona was created from the previous section – part 4, Liao Fang. (Liedtka 2015.)

Exploration Questions. What key questions are needed to be answered through the research? It is the main purpose of this part, focusing on what the experience creator wants to learn more about and not trying to look for or talk about solutions yet (Liedtka 2015). When the thesis discussed Chinese tourists behaviours, in the process of forming the customer persona, the exploration questions have been asked and answered in chapter 4 by the interviewees. Therefore, it is unnecessary to redo this step. The interview questions are available in the appendices (Appendix 2 and 3).

Follow by Expected Outcomes, which was left untouched, includes what outcomes the composer would like to view and what value they believe that they can provide. It provides a guideline to work on and leads to the expected future (Liedtka 2015). In this case, the programs are expected to run smoothly with a group of 20 people; the participants could feel good about themselves and; acquiring new, interesting knowledge about the Finnish nature/culture while having a relaxing time as well as quality pictures after the trip; lastly, the tourists would not face cultural contrast or have it at its minimal.

The final feature, Success Metrics helps to identify whether the project has succeeded in the development, what consequences are signs that telling the designer they did the right thing (Jeanne 2015.) It is important to include measures for both organization and the end-users. It is also believed that positive feedback, increase in sales, popularity and commitment from other workers are the traits that signal the success of this project.

The reason why employee motivation is one of the success metrics was that it helps in achieving the organizational goals and improving the employees' performance level (Samiksha 2020). Since there is no guarantee that the work would be perfect from the beginning, modifications through time are needed. However, in the scenario of when the employees have given up on it and found no motivation in running the program, it would be a total failure (Liedtka 2015; Samiksha 2020). Compiling all together, a design brief is completely made (Table 11).

Table 11. Design Brief

Project Description	With the increasing number of Chinese visitors coming to Rovaniemi annually during winter and yet, low competition on this market. It is important to take the opportunity before other corporations by creating a customer centric experience targeting the Chinese group travellers.
Target users	A married Chinese office worker woman in her middle age with children, tend to travel to escape from her daily routine and suffocating life and learn new things. Since most of the Chinese tourists in Rovaniemi are female dominant and tend to be the key influence in each group.
Exploration Questions	- What are they interested in the most from Rovaniemi? - What are their concerns when on a trip? - How do they consume the experience? - What are their travelling motivators? - What are their characters?
Expected Outcomes	- The product run smoothly for a group of 20 persons. - The guests could gain new knowledge about Finnish nature, have a relaxing time and good pictures. - The guests feel good about themselves - The guests would not experience cultural difficulties
Success Metrics	- Positive feedbacks from the guests - Increasing in sales - Gaining popularity - Workers are not discouraged or lost of motivation by executing the activity – Employees' feedbacks

5.3 Design Criteria

The Design Criteria consist of six questions. The first one is Design Goal, what needs must this experiences fulfil and why; User Perceptions, to think of the customers' expectation, about certain attributes from the experience; Physical Attributes/Parameters, questioning whether this is designed for a specific environment or situation, or requiring special utilisation of the delivery method; Experience Attributes, presenting what elements would be needed to make the experience appealing, worth trying and memorable; Functional Attributes/Requirements, presenting the scenario of whether the activity needs to accommodate unique situations or occasions; Lastly, Core Constraints, discussing about limitations and obstacles for the stakeholders from the project, e.g., budget, resources, time. (Liedtka, Ogilvie & Brozenske 2014.)

In order to create the Design Criteria efficiently, it is suggested to apply a method invented by Tarssanen and Kylänen (2007) – the Experience Pyramid (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2007). The model consists of two perspectives, six product elements on a horizontal level and five experiential perceptions from the consumer. When those are combined, the pyramid portraits the preconditions for a meaningful experience. With a closer view, the product elements are made of individuality, authenticity, story, multisensory perception, contrast and interaction.

The first element individuality refers to uniqueness, which makes the provider the only one who provide this certain product's feature. Following up with authenticity describes the credibility of the product in the consumers' eyes. A story is a product element that is described as a method to deliver the authenticity since it would generate significance and content to the product. Multisensory perception is needed to implement and should be designed in a way that strengthens the theme, atmosphere. Contrast as the product element emphasizes the difference between the consumer's daily routine and what they receive from the product. The last product element, interaction refers to efficiency in communication between the product and the consumers. (Riivits-Arkonsuo, Kaljund & Leppiman 2014.)

Moving on to the vertical axis, which covers the levels of consumer experience: Motivational, triggering the consumer's interest; Physical, the experience is perceived through the five senses; Intellectual gives the consumers opportunity to learn, think or apply knowledge; Emotional level is tackled when the guest has a meaningful experience; And Mental level brings a positive, life-changing experience with a long-lasting effect on the customer. (Riivits-Arkonsuo, Kaljund & Leppiman 2014.)

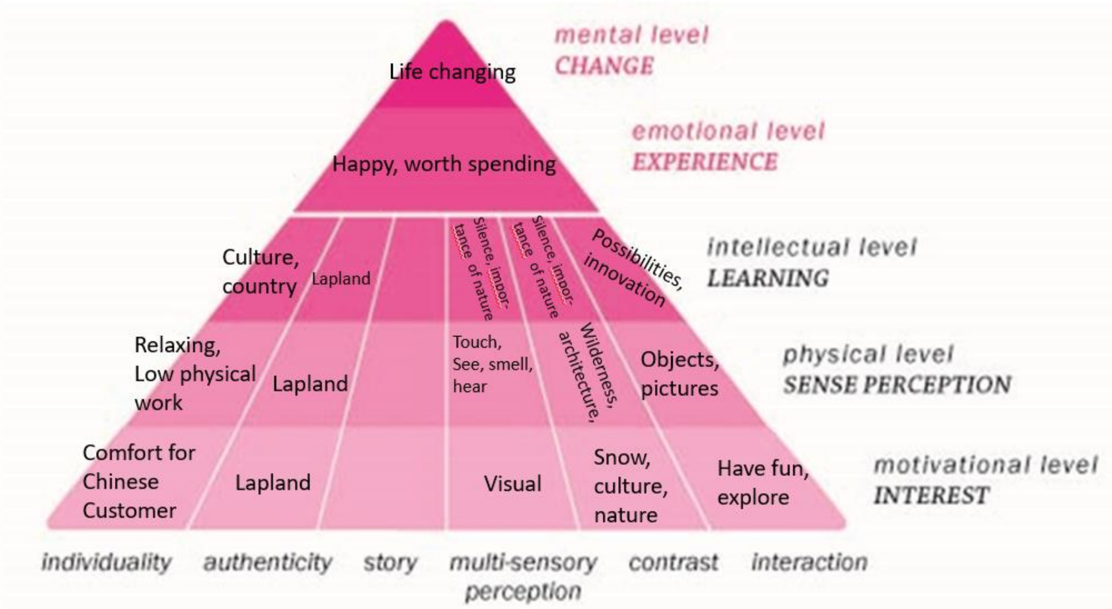

Figure 8. Experience Pyramid for Chinese Guests (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2007).

Base on the design brief and customer persona, an experience pyramid is designed (Figure 8). On the motivational level, the product should be uniquely created and deliver comforts for the Chinese tourists regarding beautiful landscape/scenery, the snow, culture, nature and the chance to have fun and explore a new place that motivated them to take the experience.

The sense-perception is supported by the relaxing time with low physical work. The guests can touch, see, smell and hear from environmental elements, they see the differences between the Chinese environment ecology along with the architecture and have pictures of it. Moreover, the thesis is aiming for the possibility that the consumers could uniquely learn about Finnish culture, think of the values of silence and the importance of nature. They could also have more innovative ideas as Dilixiati Bolati has mentioned above, that Finland and China almost have the same resources but it is the efforts and the human that make the differences.

On the emotional level, the tourists are expected to be joyful and able to feel their time and money spent worthily. Furthermore, having a life-changing experience, e.g. nature-oriented lifestyle or live slow. The main theme for authenticity covering Lapland that runs through three basic experiential levels, from motivational to intellectual level. The ‘story’ element, on the other hand, was left out as Bolati has shared that the Chinese are not so keen on it.

The experience pyramid has simplified the conduction of the Design Criteria by choosing emotional and mental effects as design goals. Combining the information, the design criteria are formed as table 12.

Table 12. Design Criteria

Design Goal	- Educative - Entertaining - Outstanding/unique - Customers perceive themselves being special
User Perceptions	- Easy to participate - Experience is unique and/or authentic - Have personal time and not losing face
Physical Attributes	- Transportation - Camera - Animal - Warm, cozy facility - Chinese-oriented cuisine - Memorabilia
Experience Attributes	- Exotic - Sceneric - Private - Nature-immersive
Functional Attributes	- Need to have snow - In wintertime
Constraints	- Require tour guides knowing how to serve Chinese and being knowledgeable about Finnish nature - High dependency on weather condition - Pricing

5.4 Experience Design Canvas

The experience design canvas includes Story Line, describing the activity and highlighting its vital points; DNA, listing the important elements that must be determined (what, where, when, the name, which class,…); Environment, where the experience properly take place; Atmosphere is crucial to be created that connects the event’s type and its value, which should all fits in the picture of the experience, making the activity unique and distinguishable; Experiences, can be also indicated as the five basic senses, it imprints the memory and emotions of the activity remarkably once being implemented properly; Emotions, the element forms the basis of the experience that the target group has at the event; People regards all those who involved in the event; Values/expectation, reflecting how the designer wants to be seen whilst delivering what are expected to have, this includes the certain must-have services such as the visitors' wellbeing; Last but not least, Goals/Objectives, commonly involve with money, yet it could also be features that contribute to facilitating a sustainable, bright future for the existence of the product. All of the mentioned elements once combined can create a unique experience while being clear and credible. (Event and Experience, 2018.)

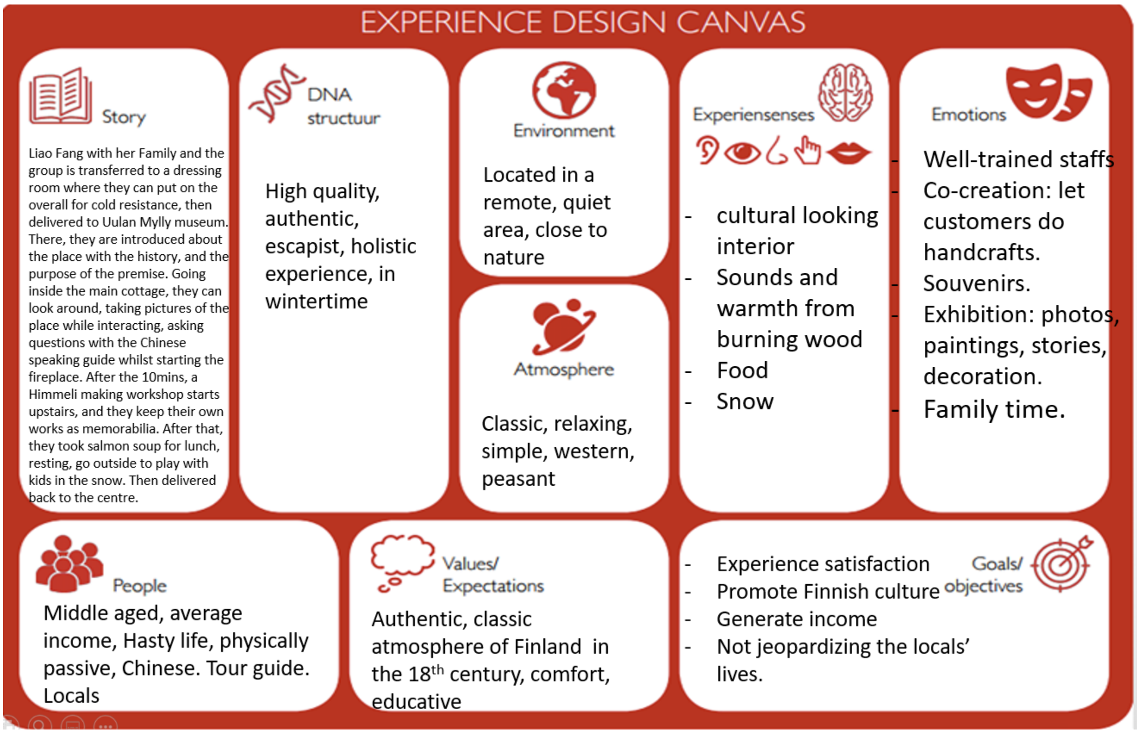

Figure 9. Experience Design Canvas

From the product perspective (Figure 9), the storyline begins with Liao Fang travelling with her family and other tourists as a group. First, they will be transferred to a dressing area where the company provides the overall costumes for cold resistance. From there, the group head to Uulan Mylly Museum. In the museum, they are introduced to the place, its history, facts along with the purpose of the premise. For instance, according to Matti Henttunen – the author's commissioner, the watermill is so old that there are only three elder persons knowing the technique to operate it and none of the other engineers neither have the adequate knowledge nor skill to try by themselves since this antique is too expensive and valuable to risk trying without clear instruction from the mentioned three (Henttunen 2020). At the place (Appendix 4), Liao Fang and the others leave the bus, start taking pictures, ask questions from the Chinese-speaking tour guide while moving into the main building of the museum. Inside the main cottage, they are advised to take off the overall since the tour guide is starting the fireplace. The Chinese-speaking tour guide (the main guide) begins to gather people's attention, leads the tourists upstairs for a Himmeli workshop. This workshop activity gives the tourists chances to create their own memorabilia and private time in their own group. During that time, the second guide can start cooking salmon soup in the kitchen so lunch would be ready right after the workshop. Having had lunch, the adults can either stay inside for conversations with hot beverage available or go outside and play in the snow with their children. Not long after that, the group members are delivered back to their places.

Additionally, Himmeli is an ancient decoration (appendix 5) handcraft item from the North, whose root originated from 1150 to 1500 in Middle Europe then later imported to Finland through Sweden. "Himmel" in Swedish also means "the sky". There are possibilities to make 28 different forms of the Himmeli, the materials are eco-friendly and easy to be found from nature. (Himmeli 2002.) Because of these reasons, the Himmeli workshop is decided to be a part of the program.

Regarding DNA structure, it emphasises certain characteristics of the activity such as high quality, authentic, escapist, holistic and operate in wintertime. Starting with the environment, it is located in a remote area where is quiet and close to nature. The atmosphere is classic, relaxing, simple, western and reflective to the life of a peasant from centuries ago. The group would be under influence of all the five senses, coming from the interior within the main cottage. The sparkling sound and warmth from the burning wood, the taste and smell for the food combining with the coldness from the snow. Emotions are delivered from the way they are treated by the staffs; Having personal time; Excited for learning new things; Having their own souvenirs; The historical feeling from the stories and old pictures.

The people elements consist of 3 parties, the first party is the customers in middle-aged with average income, hasty lifestyle and physically passive. The second one is the tour guide or the provider, experience provider. Lastly, the third one is the locals. It is important to find the harmony among the 3 sides. Authenticity brought from the classical/typical atmosphere of Finnish life in the 18^{th} century paving ways to the comforts and education, which are also the values that the author would like to achieve. Last but not least, with goals and objectives, the experience should satisfy the guests at the same time promoting Finnish culture, and most importantly, generating income and not being to jeopardise the locals’ lives.

5.5 Customer Journey

“Customer Journey” or “Customer Experiences Service as a Journey”, is a sequential service moment being put orderly as how the customer would actually go through while experiencing the service (Tekoniemi-Selkälä, 2017). The process is divided into three main processes namely pre-consumption stage, onsite and post-experience. The first one emphasises how the guests approach the experience provider, the second one describes the service process in detail which is the ultimate point of this thesis, the last process is post-experience introducing how to highlight the experience and make it long-lasting for the guests although they are no longer participating in the activity.

At the pre-consumption stage (Figure 10), it is expected that the consumers acknowledge the product through advertisement from a specific platform. It could be social media or magazines, later on, they would book it from a Chinese tour agency which co-operates with a DMC in Rovaniemi. Once the processes are completed, they will arrive at Rovaniemi.

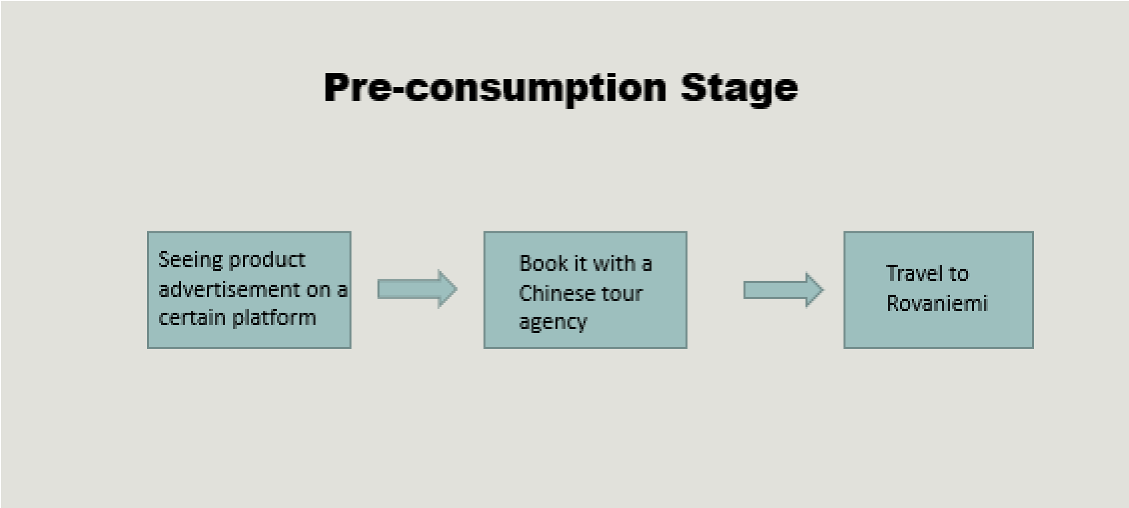

Figure 10. Pre-consumption stage for Chinese tourists

The onsite experience (Figure 11), served as the main part, starts with the tour guide picking up the guests from certain designated pick-up points that the two parties agreed on. Once everyone is gathered, they will be driven to the warehouse where the employees would collect all the needed items for the activity and help the guests with dressing. After that, the group proceed to travel to Uulan Mylly museum. At the place, the Chinese group would first, have the chance to take pictures and explore the museum with guidance from the tour guide. Afterwards, a handcraft workshop will be held, and it is estimated to last for 50 minutes since the author and the company are trying to give them a private, intimate time with their partners. Meanwhile, the other tour guide (driver) would prepare the lunch simply by warming up the salmon soup. After the lunch, the visitors would have some free time on their own either for pictures, chatting inside or have fun outside.

Thereafter, the group departs back to the warehouse to return the equipment. Then, each guest will be transferred to their accommodation. The whole onsite process should take around four and half an hour. Detailed route can be viewed in the appendices (Appendix 6).

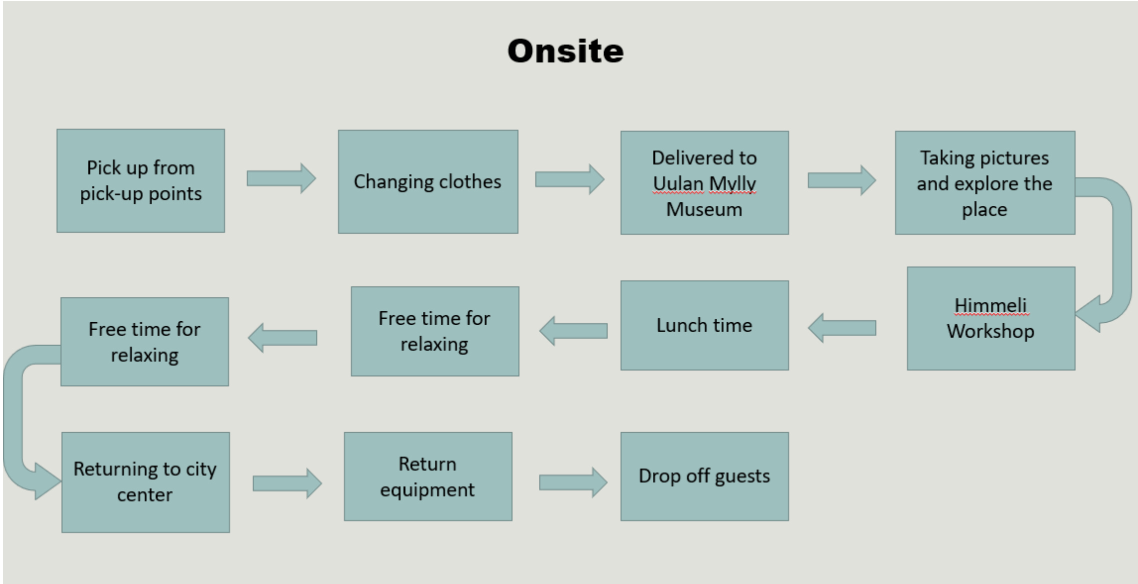

Figure 11. Onsite process

On post-experience (Figure 12), after the tourists have participated in the activity, from the side of provider, the employees would send an appreciation letter to each participant to show how important they are to the company. At the same time reminding them about the moment that they have spent with the company, this action engraves the experience deeper as well as makes it more memorable and valuable for the visitors.

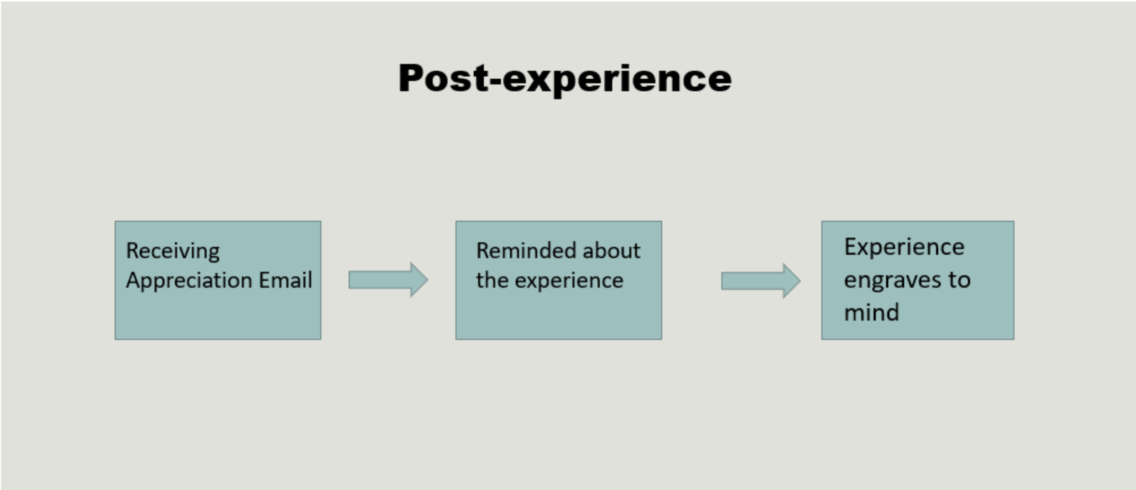

Figure 12. Post-experience process

5.6 Product Description

From Appendix 7, a product poster is created according to the basic template from the commissioner. However, pricing and availability features were left out since the thesis is not focusing on that part. From the poster, viewers could find basic information about the tour, starting at 10 am with the duration of 4,5 hours. Transportation, winter clothes, food and guiding are included. These points are important to be transparently shown since they receive the most concern from tourists according to personal experience when working for the company. Meeting point is the office address, which also is the final place that the driver visit before heading to the warehouse. Sometimes people find it more convenient to come directly to the office rather than waiting to be picked up. A short description is written, covering the values and services that are included in the activity in a way that could trigger the demands from the readers.

6 CONCLUSION

Continuing the company’s progress, this research was conducted as an effort contributing to the development of the company by helping the commissioner to find out the most potential target market simultaneously create a product as an economic tool to benefit the company from the target market.

After going through the statistics around Finland, it was found that China is the country that brings the most visitors to Lapland and at the same time having the tendency to spend the most while travelling. Nevertheless, the data were checked again in order to ensure that the situation in Rovaniemi (since Lapland includes many other cities) is unchanged. As a result, the data tells the biggest number of visit turns is generated also from China. The author later moved on to analysing the competitiveness in the area, which was not too high after researching. Having consulted with the commissioner, the target customer is officially decided as the Chinese tourists.

Having researched through Chinese consumption behaviours and their characteristics from various reliable sources, it was discovered that the Chinese tourists around the world are becoming more sophisticated in the taste of tourism products demanding for more exotic experiences rather than just taking pictures, referred as the Second Wave of Chinese tourist. However, in Rovaniemi, the case is a little different since it is still in a transition. Chinese tourists travelling in Rovaniemi are looking for good pictures at the same time good experience as a self-investment.

The next phase of the research emphasizes the invention of a tourism product for a fictional female Chinese tourist after compiling all the information together. By applying multiple modules and formulas introduced from lectures at Lapland University of Applied Sciences, a product was created that tackled her needs as a Chinese mom looking for an opportunity to spend time with her family while on vacation, escaping the suffocating daily life to a place with clean nature to immerse, learning new things and saving good memories. In particular, the guests can spend time with their beloved ones by doing handcraft, having lunch, nature sightseeing together. All of the activities do not require high physical endurance and are covered in the Finnish culture environment which makes them unique and worth saving in the form of pictures. From there, the tourists can proudly share and suggest their experience with others.

In terms of validity and credibility, the competitiveness level in the market could be higher than expected since the results were collected from an insufficient amount of respondents and the nature of the questions might put their businesses facing potential vulnerability with honest answers. A more sophisticated approach is recommended as it would deliver better results. However, it is expected that the Chinese tourists in Rovaniemi majorly prefer cursory sightseeing and will be still travelling in big groups for at least in the next five years according to the statistic collected mainly from the businesses, articles and the DMO. After that period, it is suggested to reinvestigate the market and modify the programme properly to keep the competitive advantages.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire to Companies

1. How do you evaluate the competitiveness level in Tourism industry in Rovaniemi?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very low	○	○	○	○	○	Very high

2. Would you consider changing your customer target from one to another, if you recognize a remarkable increase amount of tourist from a specific country that differ from your original target?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Absolutely no	○	○	○	○	○	Absolutely yes

3. Do you recognize any expansion of tourist from these countries in Rovaniemi?

- ☐ Britain
- ☐ China
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Israel
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Nothing has changed
- ☐ Other...

4. From which country are you receiving the most tourists?

Short-answer text

5. Do you have a specific customer persona? (If yes, could you reveal at least their continent?)

- ○ No
- ○ Other...

Appendix 2. Interview Questions with Jolly Law.

0. Brief Introduction about the company

1. Do most of them have travel experience to somewhere else before coming to Lapland/Rovaniemi?

1.1 Do they get stunt by how people interact in Finland since it's so difference from other countries?

2. What are their preimages of Rovaniemi or Lapland?

3. What are the expectations from the Chinese when they come to Rovaniemi or from certain tours?

3.1 do they have expectation toward the tour guides, like do they expect to be served as in China?

4. Which features of Lapland or Finland they are interested in the most?

5. What are their motivators when coming to Finland? (Intellectual, Social component, competence-mastery, stimulous-advoidance)

5.1 From your company, which part are coming the most to you between the groups and the FITs?

6. Do you find them have a strong need to improve personal image in others' eyes?

7. Who do they mostly travel with? Are they mostly in a group of strangers or private family groups? Age demography? Customer persona

8. What type of activities have they been taking the most?

9. Do they have problem to be seen as tourists in others' eyes instead of travellers?

10. Do you recognize any unusual growing need or difficulty from the Chinese?

11. On a trip, who tend to be the key experience influencer (the parents, children, grandparents or husband/wife)

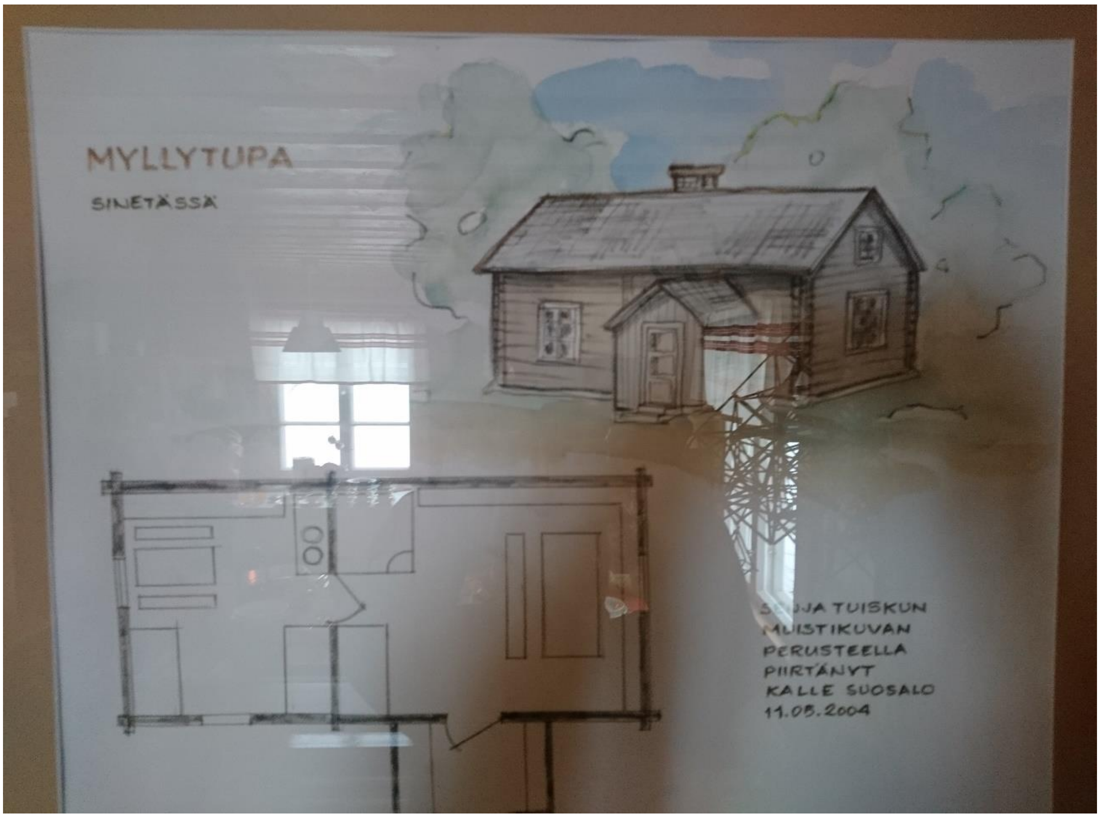
12. Has there been complain from the tourists? What are they?

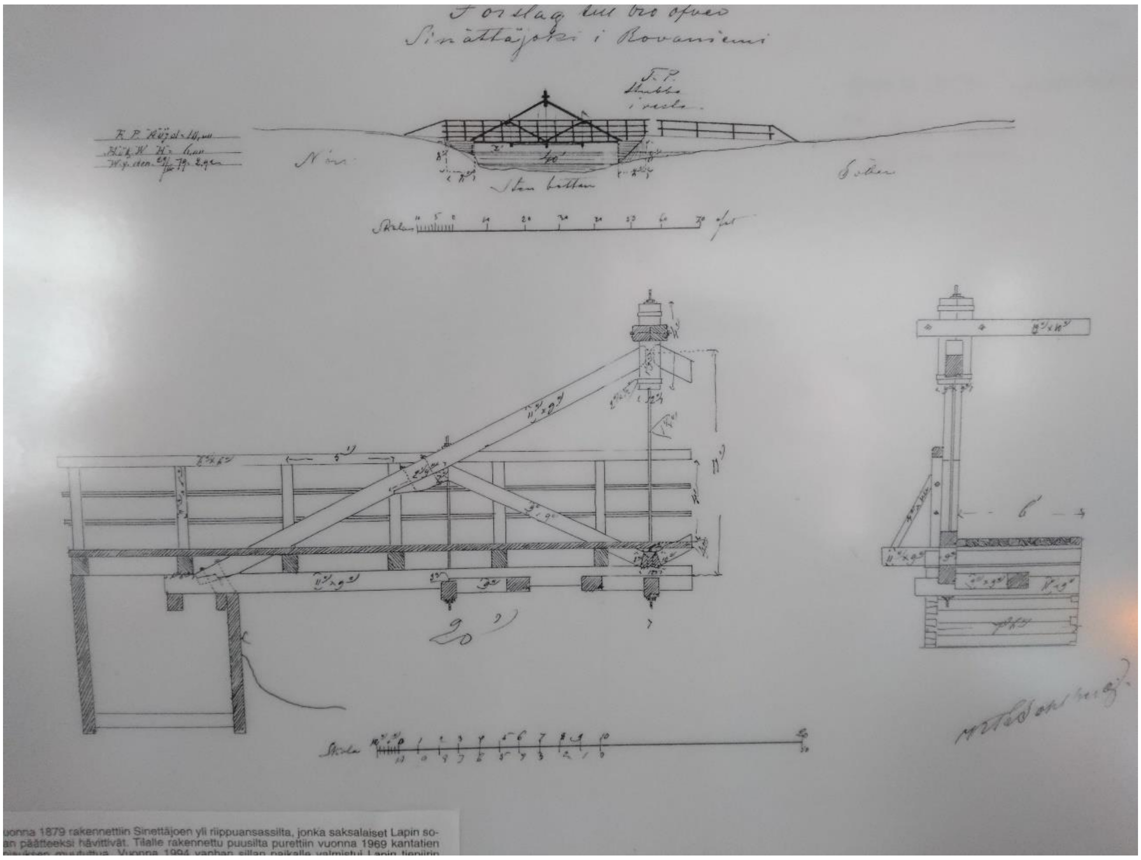
Appendix 3. Interview Questions with Dilixat Bolati

1. Brief Introduction about yourself and fieldwork
2. Do most of them have travel experience somewhere else before coming to Lapland/Rovaniemi?
3. What are their preimages of Rovaniemi or Lapland?
4. Which features of Lapland or Finland they are interested in the most?
5. What are their motivators when visiting Finland/Rovaniemi? (Intellectual, Social component, competence-mastery, stimulous-advoidance)
6. For the Chinese tourists themselves, when they come here, the experience of spending their time in Rovaniemi. Does it serve them to open their minds about the place, or makes them feel more important, or having a higher social division, or to master a certain skill, or just to come here and stay away from the Chinese daily life?
7. Do you find them have a strong need to improve personal image in others' eyes?
8. for those clients you have been interacting with, are they mostly from the middle class or the upper class, financially?
   How about their 'Price Sensitivity' by the Chinese tourists?
9. for the Chinese customers that you've been serving, are they mostly travellers being sent by some Chinese travel agencies or FIT?
10. do they experience the service actively or passively?
11. Who do they mostly travel with? Are they mostly in a group of strangers or private family groups? Age demography? Customer persona
12. When marketing your service to the Chinese, which feature do you focus on the most (price, safety, friendliness, authenticity…)?
13. Do you recognize any unusual growing need from the Chinese?
14. On a trip, who tend to be the key experience influencer (the parents, children, grandparents or husband/wife)?
15. Has there been complain from the tourists? What are they?
16. when there's a group of Chinese coming, do you plan to have another activity description or a shorter version of the story?
17. If you are suggesting someone about how to serve a Chinese customer, how would you put it?

Appendix 4. Uulan Mylly Premises


SINETÄN MYLLY (UULAN MYLLY)
PIHAPIIRI
SENJA TUISKUN MUISTIKUVAN
PERUSTEELLA PIIRTÄNYT
KALLE SUOSALO 11.05.2004

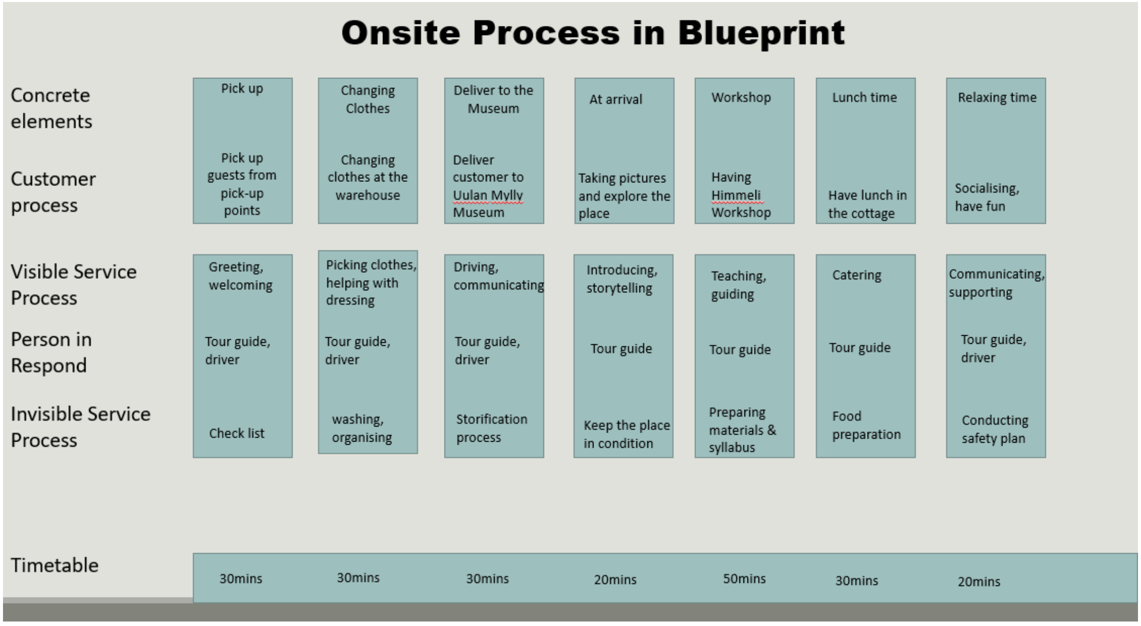

MYLLYTUPA
SINETÄSSÄ
JA TUISKUN
UISTIKUVAN
PERUSTEELLA
PIIRTÄNYT
KALLE SUOSALO
11.05.2004

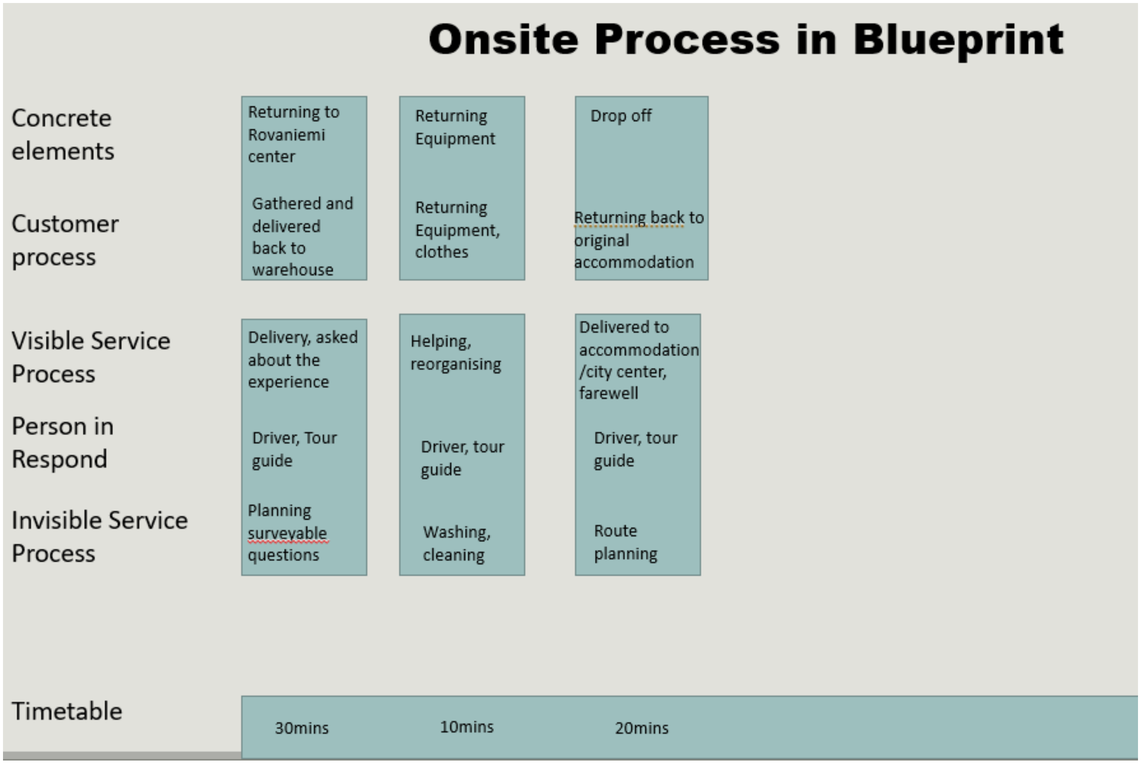

Förslag till bro öfver
Sinättäjoki i Rovaniemi
uonna 1879 rakennettiin Sinettäjoen yli riippuansassilta, jonka saksalaiset Lapin so-
an päätteeksi hävittivät. Tilalle rakennettu puusilta purettiin vuonna 1969 kantatien


Lahjakirja
Tällä lahjakirjalla Akseli ja Matti Vierelän perikunnat,
edustajanaan Eero Vierelä, lahjoittavat
Uulan Myllylle ja Sinetän Kotiseutuyh
Sinettään seuraavat museokoneet,
Puimakoneen (ryskän) merkki Esa,
Maamoottorin vm.1940 merkki Olympia ja
Käsikäyttöisen Teijon Tehtaan valmistaman silppukoneen
Nämä koneet otamme kiitollisuudella vastaan ja sijoitamme ne
Sinetän kotiseutumuseoon
tulevien sukupolvien nähtäväksi.
Sinetässä 5:nä päivänä syyskuuta 2009
Eero Vierelä
sukujen edustaja
Paavo Heikkilä
Uulan Myllyn ja Sinetän
Kotiseutuyhdistyksen puolesta

Appendix 5. Himmeli Sample

Appendix 6. Onsite Experience in Blueprint





Appendix 7. Product Poster