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**FUTURES RESEARCH
TRAVELMYTH, GREECE**

Spa Category future aspects, related to
Travelmyth Business Environment

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän tutkimustyön tarkoituksena on kartoittaa hyvinvointimatkailun uutta aikakautta kylpylöihin kohdistuvan matkailijapotentialin kautta tulevaisuuden tutkimuksen menetelmillä. Tutkimus on keskittynyt erityisesti paikantamaan, etsimään ja analysoimaan eri trendien vaikutuksia ihmisten valintoihin ja kuinka ihmiset myös vastaavasti luovat tulevaisuutta valintojensa kautta.

Kylpylät toimialana on kiinnostava, tuhansia vuosia ihmiskunnan historiaan ja kulttuuriin ulottuva, nykyajassa olennaisesti matkailuun kuuluva osa-alue. Kylpylätoiminnan palvelujen moninaisuus antoi pohjan tälle tutkimustyöidealle, koska niillä on lisääntyvä merkitys myös tulevaisuuden matkailussa sekä välitys- ja muita palveluja tarjoavien yritysten toimenkuvassa. Kylpylöitä ja niiden merkitystä, palvelutasoa asiakkaille on tutkittu monin menetelmin, mutta varsin vähän tähän mennessä tulevaisuuden tutkimuksen kautta.

Aihe on mielenkiintoinen, erittäin laaja ja antaa paljon mahdollisuuksia lisätutkimukselle, joka on myös toivottavaa alan kehittymisen kannalta. Mielenkiintoiseksi tulevaisuuden tutkimuksen tekee sen monipuolisuus - valtava potentiaali monitieteellisenä tieteenalana, joka kehitty nopeasti, etsii vastauksia ihmisten käyttäytymisen, vuorovaikutussuhteiden, teknologian kehittymisen ja luonnossa tapahtuvan evoluution kautta. Tämä tutkimus on toteutettu avainsanahakujen, maailman hyvinvointisuuntausten ja kohderyhmäkyselyn informaation pohjalta. Työ tehtiin tunnelmataulun kautta visualisoiden, FSSF-menetelmällä tietoa lajitellen, trendien analyysin ja tulevaisuudenpyörän kerrannaisvaikutuksia tutkimalla.

Tämän tutkimuksen analyysien tulosten ja johtopäätösten mukaan keskeisiä näkökohtia ovat suuntausten ja arvovakenteiden muutokset, jotka ohjaavat kysyntää kohti yhteisöllisyyttä ja aitouden kokemista. Lisäksi yksilön kokonaisvaltainen itsensä kehittäminen, jossa painotetaan valinnanvapautta, pitkän aikavälin tuloksia ja luonnonvarojen merkitystä taustalla olevia teknologioita hyödyntäen, laajenee edelleen. Tämän opinnäytetyön johtopäätösten mukaan kylpylä kategorian merkitys tulee olemaan jatkossa merkittävä, vaikka kategorian eri painopisteiden sisältö on muuttumassa luksuspalveluista kokonaisvaltaisen ja kestäväen kehityksen suuntaan tulevaisuudessa.

Asiasanat: kylpylä, hyvinvointi, tulevaisuuden tutkimus, tulevaisuusteknologia, monitieteellisyys

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the new era of wellbeing travel, reflecting the spa visitor potential through futures research methods. Special focus in this research has been directed in searching, localizing, and analysing the various trends which influence the choices people make, and conversely, how people create the future through their choices.

Thousands of years of experience in the spa industry is an intriguing part of human history and culture, an integral sector of the modern travel trade. The many services and offerings of the spa industry, and its increasing importance in travel of the future, in the life of the businesses providing meta search and other services, created the basis for the thesis study idea. The spa environments and their importance, the outcomes of their services to the customers, has been studied with many methods, but so far to a lesser extent through methods of futures research.

The subject is interesting, very broad and offers a lot of scope for further research, which is also desirable for the development of the field. What makes future research interesting is the versatility – the enormous potential as a rapidly evolving interdisciplinary science, seeking answers through human behaviour, interactions, technological developments, and evolution in nature. This research was implemented by key word searches, world wellness trends and target group survey data collection. The study was carried out using Moodboard to visualize, FSSF-method to organize information, Trends analysis and Futures wheel tools to explore layer effects further.

The results of the analyses and conclusions of this study highlight the key aspects of the changing trends and value structures that are driving the demand for a sense of community and an experience of authenticity. In addition, the holistic self-development of the individual, with an emphasis on freedom of choice, long-term outcomes, and the importance of natural resources taking advantage of underlying technologies, continues to expand. The conclusions of this Thesis suggest that the spa category will continue to play an important role in the future, although the content of the different focuses of the category evolves from luxury services to holistic and sustainable development in the future.

Keywords: spa, wellbeing, futures research, future technology, interdisciplinary

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1 INTRODUCTION

The subject of this study is: Spa Category future aspects, related to the Travelmyth Business Environment. This research aims to observe and analyse trends and other related phenomena through futures research methods and tools. Specifically, the emphasis on this research lies in the “spa offerings and spa environment” as it has been one of the most popular categories in Travelmyth company over the years of its existence. Hence, the aim is to explore this area of the wellbeing and wellness tourism deeper and seek answers to what, where, and why people choose different spas and spa hotels, and the outcomes importance, after participation to the treatments and experiences in the chosen spa. What is important to the future wellbeing spa travellers, whereabouts and what kind of spa environments and services they want to use and furthermore, why do they seek to go to the spa? The motives are explored through many trending offerings in modern spas, in comparison to the past of the industry, when relying on thermal mineral water cures and simpler general services with modest or none, side business offerings, was a norm. (Abarca-Álvarez et al., 2022; Amara, R., 1984; Bakirtzoglou, et al., 2017; Choi, et al., 2015; Dryglas, D. & Różycki, P., 2016; Erfurt-Cooper, P. & Cooper, M., 2009; European Spa Magazine, 2023; Global Spa Summit, 2011; Han et al., 2017; Han et al., 2018; Hiang, S.-T. & Hsieh, Y-C., 2004; Sangpikul, A. & Thipbharos, P., 2022-2023; Stogiannidou, et al., 2016; Schwartz, P., 1996; Travelmyth, 2023.)

1.1 The objective and purpose of this research

The objective of this thesis was to explore the new era of travel and tourism interest towards wellbeing offerings. The chosen perspective is specifically spa environment as well as the future of the spa industry and the new technological advancements in travel industry when experiencing the spa offerings. In addition to this, the aim has been to find out direction and underlying causalities affecting many generations future usage of spas.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the future potential of and interest towards spa industry, to reflect and adjust, the implications of the results of the research and analysis, to the commissioner, Travelmyth business environment. Thus, the purpose is to explore the underlying causes and ideas, in which way the human activities in the world are influencing the future of spa user experiences. The aim is also to try to find useful information to benefit future marketing efforts and visibility of the company in near and far-reaching future. (Chantrapornchai, C. & Choksuchat, C., 2016; Dryglas, D. & Różycki, P., 2016; Kuusi et al., 2013; Niiniluoto, I., 2009; Rubin, A., 2004; Sangpikul, A. & Thipbharos, P., 2022; Travel Market Report, 2023.)

This study will be conducted using mix-methods approach, with both qualitative (open questions in the survey) and quantitative (structured survey giving answers to the study questions) data collection due to nature of the research and company operation structure. Moreover, the process explores deeper into this phenomenon of spa and the evolving area of health and wellbeing offerings, to explain and investigate spa category future potential and interest. Then the results are perused to introduce possible outcomes to benefit future marketing expertise. Hence, the chosen and used futures research approaches are exploratory, observing cultural and critical attributes, thus enabling to establish more profound picture of the study area. (Aalto, et al., 2022; Abarca-Álvarez et al., 2022; Bell, W., 1997; Peterson, C. & Stará, J., 2017; Sangpikul, A. & Thipbharos, P., 2023.)

1.2 New Technologies and Key Concepts in Brief

The rise of the Wellness Metaverse, where virtual reality technology is used in various ways to improve physical and mental health, is accelerating the technological leap in dimensions and the way we perceive our reality. New innovations are launched every day, and learning artificial intelligence (AI), computer systems performing tasks learning in the human intelligence way, and other technological advancement are emerging to change the world with

accelerated speed in the coming decades. Trends, the changing, observable patterns, behaviours, or underlying phenomena, and causalities, are propelling new innovations forward to common usage. Wild cards are sudden, unexpected events, that happen in the world, which impact directly or through domino effect, our reality, or the whole system. Weak signals are existing things or phenomena of weird things, or they feel funny or unbelievable at first notice. According to Kuosa, T., 2010, they can be interpreted as indicators for potential greater change. Virtual reality (VR) makes possible to experience through simulation, augmented reality (AR) gives a possibility to added, enhanced experiences. The process of finding the right combination of ideas and tools to manage the future marketing efforts and to excel the expectations of spa clientele, may benefit utilizing the combination of futures research methods and analysing techniques. (Aalto et al., 2022; Chao et al., 2013; Global Wellness Summit, 2022; Mondok, A., 2019; Theoretical Foundations of Futures Research, 2018.)

The spa environment, as business, in the specialized field of travel and tourism, belongs to the wellbeing and wellness industry. Wellbeing, often understood, the overall equilibrium of mind, body, and spirit (defined in more detail in this study part 3.1), in travel and tourism related discussion and research, is more present today than ever before in history of tourism. (Global Wellness Summit, 2022). The importance and interest towards wellness (overall feeling of health with bias towards material wellness, defined in more detail, in this study part 3.1) and wellbeing services, has been increasing potential and undergone myriad of changes over 20 years at an accelerated pace. The concepts of wellness and wellbeing tend to confuse and include slightly different meanings in different parts of the world. Therefore, they are explained in deeper detail in the section of Concepts, part 3 of this study. Holistic is another term used a lot in this study and it can be explained as integral sense of whole, which is more than parts of it. In this study it mostly means combining qualities of mind, body, and spirit, used often in the offerings of the spa. (Costa, et al., 2022; Dillette et al., 2020; Dryglas, D. & Różycki, P., 2016; Global Wellness Institute, 2022; Grénman, M. & Räikkönen, J., 2015; Pforr, C., & Voigt, C., 2014; Travel to Wellness, 2023; Wellness Tourism Association, 2023; World Spa Organization, 2021.)

1.3 The Commissioner

The client and commissioner to whom I perform this research, is Travelmyth Private Company, a hotel meta search engine, 22 Githiou, Chalandri, Athens, Greece. The business idea is based on algorithm development with other new technologies to test and introduce within the company. The company uses a wide variety of innovative technologies and part of the company initiatives lay on using artificial intelligence technology services, including DeepL, learning translating AI technology, and they provide a huge database using intelligent algorithms of detailed information on travel destinations, in 60 categories. The company developed these algorithms, which are used effectively to categorize and rank the hotels in the platform. Their services are in co-operation with the big hotel meta search engine providers: Booking.com, Hotels.com, Kayak and more. Travelmyth is a small company that is eager to explore novel paths of future travel experiences and visions and it is flexible enough in size to quickly incorporate possible changes in their business. (Travelmyth, 2023.)

In addition to the summary of the commissioner, I will quote the official Travelmyth site introduction of the company: *“Travelmyth is a unique hotel and accommodation meta-search engine, specializing in providing personalized hotel recommendations based on users' preferences. Our innovative approach sets us apart from other search engines as we encourage users to select from a variety of hotel themes, beyond just the destination, leading to a more tailored and satisfying search experience.*

We have established partnerships with major booking sites including Booking.com, Hotels.com, and Kayak. Through these partnerships, and our connections with bed banks like HotelBeds and booking systems such as WebHotelier, we are able to draw from a vast inventory of hotels and accommodations. We currently categorize more than 4 million properties into 60 thematic categories like 'beachfront', 'dog friendly', 'former castle', and 'adult only', just to name a few.

Once our users select their preferences, we recommend the best-suited hotels or accommodations, providing detailed explanations as to why they are the top choices. Furthermore, we compare prices from several booking sites to ensure that our users not only find their ideal stay, but also secure the best available price. Upon selecting an offer, users can be redirected to the respective booking sites to complete their reservations, or they can finalize their booking directly on Travelmyth." (Travelmyth, 2023).

2 THE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This thesis structure consists of data collection with key word searches, target group survey and highlighted analyses of the previous research with special emphasis on trends. Moreover, the drivers of demand trends are in constant evolvement during the past five years or more, largely due to demographic changes. The methods and tools used in this futures research study, aim to reveal important clues to the future of the spa industry and the way human beings are creating the changes in the world. In this study I will use the overall futures research approach with the wide array of tools and techniques to choose from. The chosen methods are explained in full detail in the chapter 6. (Aluculesei, et al., 2021; Bell, W., 1996; Chantrapornchai, C. & Choksuchat, C., 2016; Inayatullah, S., 2021; Kuusi et al., 2013; Niiniluoto, I., 2009; Rubin, A., 2004; Stenman, K. & Talvela, J., 2012.)

The past years have reminded the people of the world, what power so called "wild card" phenomena occurrence possesses. Illnesses like that of Covid19, and natural disasters create major changes, quite suddenly, in our daily lives and especially travel related matters. The pandemic has brought up many layers of discussion, debates, new policies, and practises as well as most likely changed the way we see the world. Not surprisingly, it has accelerated the increasing trend to work in distance, responding to trending flexibility in lifestyle and freedom to live anywhere in the world. People are facing the challenges and possibilities of the changing world we live in, from excessive daily information to emerging

technological innovations. The quest for balancing life is acutely present in the human experience. Consequently, the interest towards wellbeing matters, in all generations, seems to expand even more rapidly than anticipated by researchers in the past decades. A unifying factor is stress management and the seeking of a deeper purpose for individual life. (Aalto et al., 2022; Abarca-Álvarez et al., 2022; Asadi, R., & Daryaie, M., 2011; Costa et al., 2022; Bushell, R., & Sheldon, P. J., 2009; Buzinde, C.N., 2020; Grénman, M. & Räikkönen, J., 2015.)

2.1 The size and impact of Wellbeing Market in the world and Spa Industry

According to World Spa Organization (WSO), “health and wellness market size is estimated over 4,4 trillion U.S. dollars in 2019, a figure to increase to over six trillion U.S. dollars by 2025” (World Spa Organization, 2021). In addition, this development is noted by: “Wellness is estimated by the Global Wellness Institute (GWI) to be a multi-trillion-dollar market, with global spending exceeding \$4 trillion every year since 2017” (Global Wellness Institute, 2022.). Furthermore, the growth rate has consistently outpaced global GDP growth, except for the year 2020, due to pandemic restrictions. (Global Wellness Institute, 2022., Bushell, R., & Sheldon, P. J., 2009.) In 2008, the Global Wellness Institute (GWI) unveiled the first-ever *Global Spa Economy* study. In that report, they estimated that there were 71,800 spa establishments globally, earning \$47 billion in revenues in 2007. Since that time, the spa industry has grown rapidly alongside the broader wellness movement. By 2019, GWI estimates that the number of spas had grown to 165,700 globally, earning \$111 billion in revenues. The main drivers of the spa industry are rising incomes, the growth of the middle class, mixed with similar development on growth of wellness tourism, and people`s desires increase to spend on all things related to wellness (Global Wellness Institute, 2022).

2.2 Timeframe of the Study

This thesis commission with Travelmyth Private Company was signed in the end of January 2023 after which the ideation process begun with the Travelmyth

team. In February, March, and April search process for information of previous research on the Spa industry and the futures research was started. I also enrolled to courses to study more about futures innovations and technologies, reflecting to my other, earlier learning experiences on futures research and the commissioner company`s business environment.

During the month of August, the outline of the Literary Review was written, and a small group presentation was planned to happen on the 4th of September, yet it had to be moved to 2nd October, due lack of participants. Thus, the thesis pre-seminar processes were moved to the month of October and presenting of the survey results to early November seminar meeting. The first week of September, was reserved to make a survey to investigate potential spa clientele interest in future, connecting it to Travelmyth business environment by their findings of the keyword searches. The survey was made using Webropol and distributed via Facebook target groups allowing six weeks` timeframe for answers to gather. After this collection of data, it was processed with futures research methods & tools. The final presentation for this thesis research was planned to 15th of November, but the back-up date, 7th of December 2023, was the presentation seminar day, due to the scope of the study area taking more effort than anticipated.

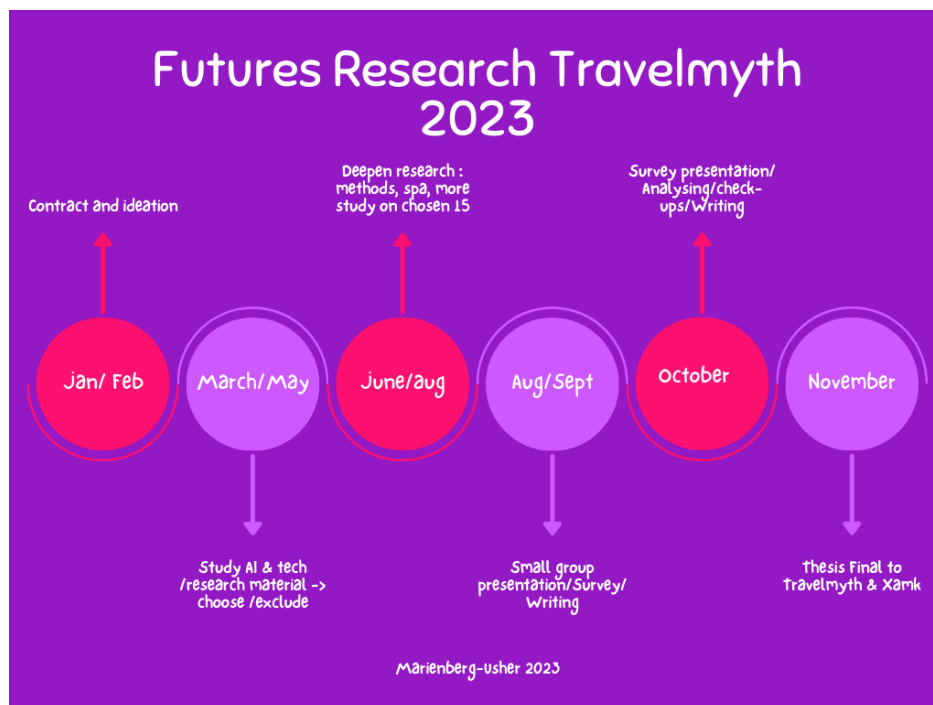


Figure 1. Marienberg-Usher, 2023. Canva. Visual map on the schedule.

2.3 Futures Research

Modern futures research has quite an array of concepts, theories, methods, epistemologies, and principles, which have, in fact, been developing from the classical mythology prophetic traditions anticipating futures events and possible crisis in human history. Modern futures research begun significant advancement after the World War II, when the USA begun scientific analyses of trends and indicators of change. (Masini, 2006.) Hence, many analytical techniques were created especially at the RAND Corporation, including the most used Delphi and scenarios methods. Pioneering country in Europe was France, taking interest in philosophical and sociological aspects of futures research. Changes of the directions of observations in futures research, according to used methods, were mostly quantitative in the past, which recent times has transited to qualitative, integrated communicative processes. Thus, due of competition and all-encompassing complexity of business and world dynamics, the interest to prepare for the future has increased rapidly. (Aalto et al., 2022; Amara, R., 1984; Boulding, E. & Boulding K., 1995; Kuusi et al., 2013; László, E., 1988; Levitas, R., 2013; Masini, E., 1993; Yeoman, I., 2008.) Futures research/ studies is by character, cross-scientific, systematic study of possible, probable, and preferable futures. What was in the past predicting, has evolved to mapping and shaping desired futures in collective and individual levels. (Bell, W., 1996; Inayatullah, S., 2021; Rubin, A., 2004.)

2.3.1 The outline of the study process

Futures research, specifically creating scenarios of future possibilities, both positive and negative, have been used in many areas of business for a few decades as recognized scientific methods. However, this area of study and research is relatively new and developing fast with much more to offer than scenario tool. Delphi technique has been widely used as well. Both methods demand expert panels, group work, large analysing processes, thus, they are not suitable to my individual research work structure. Therefore, instead of relying on these most known tools and methods, despite their obvious value in the futures

research, I chose to explore the data with other futures study method tools and variations, layering the usage of tools according to futuristic practises (Aalto et al., 2022; Stenman, K. & Talvela, J., 2012). The methods chosen to this thesis study include: Moodboard (visual map), Trend analysis, FSSF (Future Signals Sense-making Framework), Futures Wheel (visual mind map with analysis). All these methods are used to complement each other, to explore interesting signals and other relevant findings. The futures research performed to a specific reason for a company purposes, utilizing multi-tool layering, is the recommended way to proceed according to my investigations on this field of study. Continuation of the analysis needs to connect the results to the company with further analysis by using methods like 8-SWOT and Customer Journey Blueprint, for example.

Qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data are both used to perform the best possible research outcome, adjusted to the Travelmyth company structure, yet the emphasis is on the qualitative. In this study the data collected from Travelmyth key word searches is used in combination with the Target Group Survey in Facebook groups environment in September-October 2023. In addition, I have made many observations from older and recent research data in relation to “spa”, from tens of study articles, hence, gaining valuable insight information on some interesting findings, and learning about what points to focus on in my own research and analysis process. The previous research is explored further in chapter 5.2 in this study. The worldwide trends from the past four years have been perused and used in the processes. (Aalto et al., 2022; Bell, W., 1996; Hiltunen, E., 2011; Hirsijärvi, et al., 2013; Kuusi et al., 2013; Niiniluoto, I., 2009; Rubin, A., 2004.)

2.3.2 Traveler segmentation observations

The interest to do futuristic research, to vision and explore futures with new, innovative approaches, tools, apps and more, is going to increase in the coming years and decades. The data, information, to be of interest to this study, is in many layers of the human behaviour and various sources need to be explored. On the other hand, spa tourism has begun the expansion to other areas

wellbeing in the beginning of the millennia and many wellness and wellbeing concept contents do overlap on various areas of human life. This is reflected in the deeper change processes of the spa industry. The focus is to search data to understand people who travel, and to find signs of change. To explore this further I have observed the Future Foundation key consumer groups reports, as it is very important for business point of view to understand what customers want and what may influence their decision-making process. (Future Foundation, Amadeus, 2015; Kasakov, S. & Oyner, O., 2020; Konu, H., 2010; Lehto, X.J, & Lehto, M.R., 2019.)

The types of travellers are demonstrated visually in the figure 2. (Future Foundation, Amadeus, 2015.) Here the different types of potential travellers are categorized according to their interests, lifestyles, demographics, and values. Inside the figure, are the original four tribes created for 2020, and outside is the future vision of six tribes for 2030. Tribes for 2020 were: Active Seniors, who are healthy, active, and financially secure with time to travel. Next is Global Clans, which refers to people who travel to meet their family and friends, who have migrated around the world. Cosmopolitan Commuters explains the lifestyles to work and live in different place, including flexible work styles, sensible travel costs, in search of better quality of life. Last of the original tribes is the Global Executives, consisting of senior executives travelling internationally short and long distance on business, using first or business class. The original tribes have been created mainly using demographics (Future Foundation, Amadeus, 2015).

The new evolved six tribes for 2030 form more detailed six groups, based on values, behaviours, and needs of travellers. Simplicity Searchers, look for the easy planning and organizing of any travel. From former tribes: Active Seniors and Global Clans fit to this tribe. Cultural Purists, have interest to explore different way of living, like Cosmopolitan Commuters. Social Capital Seekers look for maximize the reward gained through travel in social life and think well-travelled is an enviable personal quality. This group includes digital media users constantly in contact with their online audiences. Reward Hunters are the true luxury travellers, seekers of extraordinary, 'must have' experiences, who want real value and

contrast to busy, high-achieving lives. The growing trend of wellness, physical and mental self-improvement, is closely connected to the group. Obligation Meeters are business travellers and people with reason to travel at certain times and places. This tribe has schedules, but some freedom to choose extras. Cosmopolitan Commuters and Global Clans from the original tribes are closest to this new group. Ethical Travellers are guided by their values on environmental matters, global conscience, political ideals and consists mostly of Active Seniors (Future Foundation, Amadeus, 2015).

Future Traveller Tribes 2030

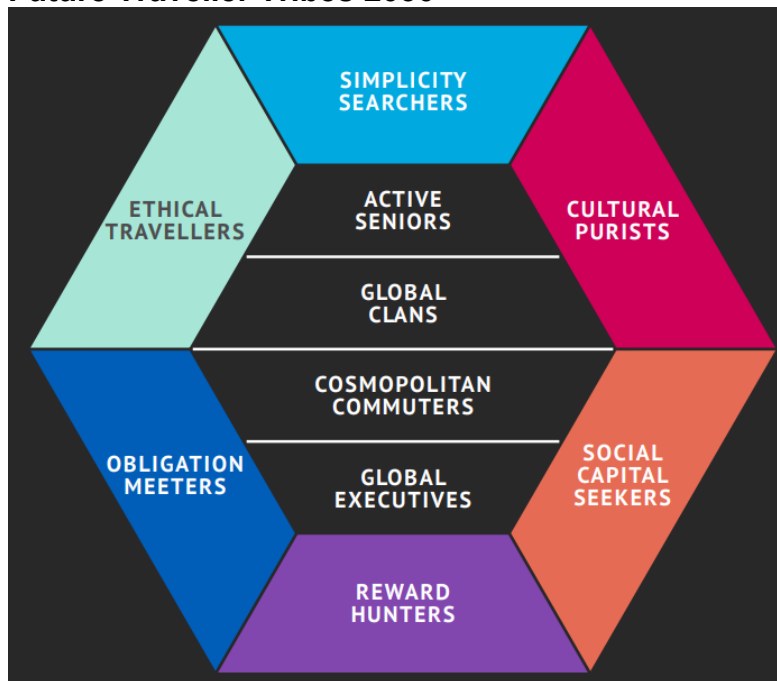


Figure 2. Future Foundation, Amadeus, 2015

There is detectable change in the more detailed and unique demands of the travellers as well as inclination to separate true luxury travel from the simple and authentic and environmentally valued travel. Arguably the general direction is towards more individual choices to experience the travel and destination in accordance with the values, needs and preferences (Future Foundation, Amadeus, 2015; Global Wellness Institute, 2021; Travel Market Report, 2023; Travel To Wellness, 2023; Wolf, N., 2013; World Travel Trends – ITB Berlin, 2020.)

2.4 Objectives of the Study and the Research Questions

My aim has been to look deeply into the possibilities of futures research and its many methods and tools, to observe and find out information and future change phenomena. Hence to prioritize new ideas, target marketing efforts, to interested customers by groups, areas, age, generations. Therefore, I have worked towards understanding variable factors, phenomena, and people's behaviour connected to the "Spa" business field in the increasing potential of Wellbeing and Wellness industry.

The research objectives are to:

1. Explore main attributes of all generations', within lifestyle behaviour and interest towards spa tourism.
2. Identify the challenges the spa industry will face in the future due to different generations' expectations, changes in cultural, technological, and value-oriented factors: spiritual, holistic, and material offerings - and their expectations and their outcomes.
3. Evaluate current marketing and visibility efforts and create a platform to find out how to improve both effectively according to the results and conclusions of this study.

The research questions giving guidelines to this study are:

1. What is the future importance of the spa category, currently one of the most popular categories of Travelmyth business, while observed through changes in the world and trends, occurring in the variables of cultural, generations, socioeconomics, and values, of potential customers? Will the category importance to the company stay the same or change in either direction?
2. Observing the analyses of this study, which are recommended actions to invest within the company? Does the research exploration give new ideas

to the marketing strategies and social media support development, and will it give new insight to create more visibility and competitive edge in the meta search engine field of business?

To continue, I add the explanation of the variables, which include a selection of behavioural attributes of human existence affecting the choices people make now and in future. Furthermore, the cultural and socio-economic structures vary all over the world, despite globalization effectively narrowing the differences between all living areas. The mentioned factors and phenomena, have significant role in the understanding of futures. (Aalto et al., 2022; Bell, W., 1997; Han, et al, 2017; Hiang, S.-T. & Hsieh, Y.-C., 2004; Hiltunen, E., 2011; Kuusi et al., 2013; Wolf, N., 2013.)

2.5 Significance of the Study and the Goal

Possible goals and outcomes of this research: this study aims to find answers how the spa category importance develops, and its future relevance to the company. It aims to ideate new possibilities in marketing management efforts, in the field of wellbeing tourism, part of health tourism subsection, specifically spa tourism, at the Travelmyth company. This specific spa category, is one of the most popular categories of the company`s 60 categories, representing a significant part of the company`s future marketing initiatives and therefore appears to be in key role in future marketing efforts within the company. Increasing popularity of the huge wellbeing/ wellness tourism market globally, supports the use of futures research approach and aim to find intrinsic value understanding the future activities of people creating the future. (Global Wellness Institute, 2021; Travel Market Report, 2023; Travelmyth, 2023; Wellness Tourism Association, 2023.)

2.6 Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study is to find answers regarding the spa industry future implications from the perspective of the Travelmyth company. The decision was made early on to outline the research on “spa”, to guide and limit the amount of data and information. The scope of this study does not include the whole of wellbeing/ wellness industry, although spa industry does overlap on many wellbeing areas. Thus, even though this study by its nature reflects on many areas of human living, and phenomena in the world, there are many further areas to explore and investigate in future research work with futuristic approach. Limitation of the research area is of vital importance, as this type of research expands easily too much.

3 KEY THEMES AND CONCEPTS

This section discusses the main key themes, which in this work focus on spa environment and health tourism in wider context, including holistic health. In reference to the previous, I mention that key themes normally to include futuristic theories and thinking, this scientific field's approaches, methods, and tools as well, which is not repeated in this section. In addition, the concepts of wellness and wellbeing are both present in holistic healing traditions (integrating of physical, mental, spiritual, and social context) different offerings across the world. (Kuusi, et al., 2013; Han, et al., 2017; Lagrosen, Y, & Lagrosen, S., 2016; Lehto, X.J. & Lehto, M.R., 2019; Lo, et al., 2015.)

3.1 Concepts

It is quite necessary to note that the definitions of wellbeing and wellness, are concepts to be understood, depending on the countries or areas they are used. Bearing this in mind, it is important to point out some of the areas where terminology might cause a bit confusion. Thus, the concept of wellbeing in Nordic Countries is used to explain promoting the holistic sense of equilibrium, as it is

considered a wider definition of overall mind- body- spirit and specifically non-material balance, experienced by individuals and societies. In recent years it has been a trend to encourage the use of wellbeing in general discussion, instead of wellness, which in turn is primarily and easily associated with similar, yet narrower, and more materialistic and often, luxury services. As I am from Finland, part of Nordic Countries, I use these terms in the same way I learned them, and we have been encouraged to use them in my studies. (Buzinde, C.N., 2020; Grénman, M. & Räikkönen, J., 2015; Manhas et al., 2022; Peterson, C. & Stará, J., 2017; Visit Finland, 2021.)

To be clear, it is good to recall the different definitions of the terms from official context. Thus, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), wellbeing encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose, overall zest of life with sustainability (World Health Organization, Glossary of Terms 2021.) I quote: "Wellbeing, on the other hand, is a concept intermingling with most of the human experience on any level of inner and outer health, feelings of self-satisfaction and purpose of life – it is part of our utmost quality of life in all levels of existence" (World Health Organization, Glossary of Terms 2021). And furthermore: "a society's wellbeing can be determined by the extent to which it is resilient, builds capacity for action, and is prepared to transcend challenges" (World Health Organization, Glossary of Terms 2021).

In addition, the health is defined as being "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." "Several key areas of lifestyle are considered dimensions of overall wellbeing" (World Health Organization, 2021.) To look deeper into the concept of wellness, it has been defined to contain elements of lifestyle, physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. From the same source, according to World Health Organization, wellness is "the optimal state of health of individuals and groups," and wellness is expressed as "a positive approach to living." (World Health Organization, 2021.) In other words, the concept of wellness refers to living in a state of optimal health, wellbeing, and vitality. This includes everything from having a good diet,

exercising regularly, and getting treatments like massage and bodywork that allows you to perform at your best and live a great and healthy life (World Health Organization, 2021).

Concepts include also trends and weak signals – and consequently interesting methodological tools: causal layered analysis (the theory of conceptual metaphors), visioning and future maps, to mention a few. (Kuosa, T., 2010; Minkkinen, M., 2020).

Learning AI – Learning advanced artificial intelligence and algorithms, which enable large amount of data to be used to benefit companies creating services, is part of the Travelmyth business and included in this type of research as base knowledge of futuristic technology. Wellness metaverse is a term derived from the gaming world and is now expanding to the creation of wellbeing in many dimensions, and therefore worth noticing. Simplified it explain novel era of virtual reality technology used to improve physical and mental health. A hotel meta search engine, like Travelmyth, is a platform for online searches where the company or organization offers massive amounts of data to perform desired tasks and provide useful results to the use of the customer quickly and efficiently. (Chao et al., 2013; DeMicco, F.J., 2017; Travelmyth, 2023, Global Wellness Institute, 2020.)

3.2 Key Themes

Spa in purest form, is about water, the healing properties of natural mineral contents of certain area or the sensory effect produced to the body by water. It may also include other substances added to water, for example herbal, essential oils (aromatherapy), peat and algae. Therapeutic and other professional services offered in spas, are aimed at renewing the body, mind, and spirit. The spa is also about variety of massages and face and body treatments, hair salons and more. The spa hotel offers accommodation, catering and often entertainment services for the customers. Holistic approach includes Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), and all other methods of Medicine. In addition, the self-development and mind & body techniques and exercises to enhance the overall

well-being of the human experience are part of the holistic theme. A few examples of these expansive services in spa environments are guided lessons to mindfulness, meditation, Tai Chi, Qigong, various sensory therapies, yogic practises, Pilates, and Ayurveda. (Anaya-Aguilar, et al., 2021; Clemes et al., 2020; Costa et al., 2013; DeMicco, F.J., 2017; EUROCAM, 2021; EU Commission, 2011; Global Spa Summit, 2011; World Health Organization, 2019.)

3.3 An overview of the spa industry

The spa industry stands on the foundation of the Health and Wellbeing Tourism and has elements of medical and wellness sectors, due to the purpose and variety of treatments and other services received in spas. (Grénman, M. & Räikkönen, J., 2015; Global Wellness Institute, 2023; Puczkò, L. & Smith, M., 2008). Spa, Wellness and Medical tourism are all branches of Health tourism, nowadays intermixed in spa environment, when people are adapting to healthy lifestyles, integrating wellness and holistic experiences. Hence the wide variety of the offerings in the spa industry, can be also explained through analysing the health paradigm, which, according to Grénman, M. & Räikkönen, J., 2015, place the spa environments 2/3 into the wellness industry proactive experiences, within the wellness tourism industry wellbeing realm. (Bushell, R. & Sheldon, P. J., 2009; Čeperković, J., & Čerović, S., 2023; Chantrapornchai, C. & Choksuchat, C., 2016; Grénman, M. & Räikkönen, J., 2015.)

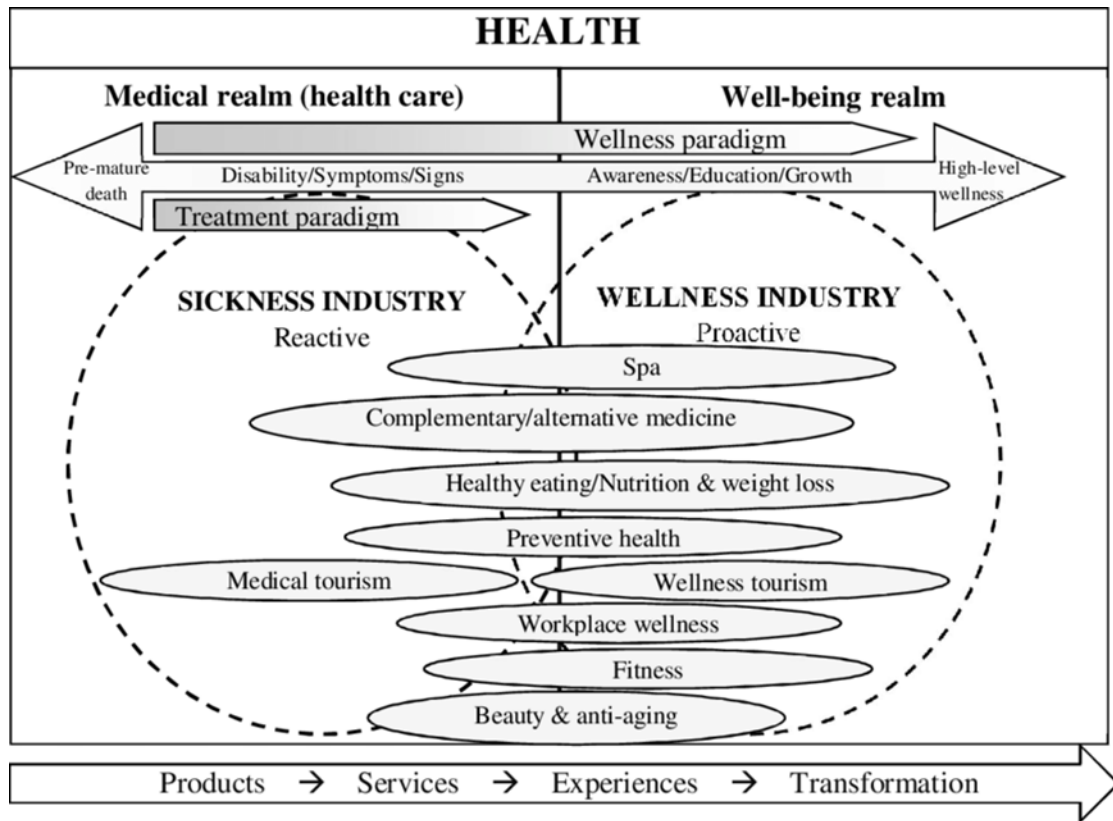


Figure 3. Grénman, M. & Räikkönen, J., 2015. The framework of health-related consumption (modified from SRI International, 2010).

In the following spa industry environments are explained in detail, from the point of the users of the spa services. Spa businesses generally offer a lot of services in one destination, but to manage the wide variety of different groups needs and preferences, the specialization to various spa types has been developing in the past decades. (Choi, et al., 2015; DeMicco, F.J., 2017; Dillette, et al., 2020; Global Wellness Institute, 2021; Lo, et al., 2015; Löke, et al., 2018; Naramski, M. & Szromek, A.R., 2019; Szromek, A. R., 2020.)

The categorization of the different types of spas is as follows:

- Day/club/salon spas: Day spas offer daily spa services to customers when club spas focus more on fitness. Salon spas cater for beauty services.
- Destination spas and health resorts: full-immersion spa experience in which all guests participate, often in all-inclusive programs including fitness, mind-body, special diets and cleanses, energy work, personal coaching, nutritional counselling, weight loss, sports medicine, preventive, or curative medical services, etc. The traditional sanatoria and health

resorts in Europe for wellness and therapeutic purposes belong to this category.

- Hotel/resort spas: spa services on an à la carte basis to hotel guests and outside/local guests. Spa services act as complementary resource with a wide range of other activities on offer.
- Thermal/mineral springs spas: spa- and wellness-related treatments in day-spa & destination/health resorts with on-site source of natural mineral, thermal or seawater into their spa treatments, as well as other bathing/recreational springs establishments that offer complementary spa services.
- Medical spas: comprehensive professional Medicare integrated to spa services with traditional, alternative, or cosmetic medical therapies and treatments as further offerings.
- All other spas: cruise ship spas, airport spas, mobile spas, Turkish hammams, Indian Ayurveda centres, etc. (Global wellness Institute, 2021.)

3.4 The history of spa

Since ancient times in human history people have known to have travelled to natural thermal springs with mineral compounds to benefit their health. (Asadi, R. & Daryaei, M., 2011; Bell, W., 1996; Čeperković, J. & Čerović, S., 2023; Dryglas, D. & Różycki, P., 2016.)

In Europe the oldest written information about spas is from Ancient Greece and Rome (Aluculesei et al., 2021)., where over 2000 years ago the phenomena of pleasure, leisure, and social activities in spa environment, was recognized. The utilization of thermo-mineral water healing in natural settings has evolved on modern spa centres with advanced medical equipment, strong bias to wellness services as added value or main perspective, on the process of unwinding stress-related issues and preventive health care offerings. (Bushell, R., & Sheldon, P. J., 2009; Čeperković, J. & Čerović, S. 2023; Naramski, M. & Szromek, A.R, 2019.) The following infographic presents some of the Spa environment history with timeframes to further clarify the deep roots of the Spa in human experience.



Figure 4. Global Wellness Institute, 2023. History of Wellness.

The chosen, relevant research studies, serve to investigate, explore, and compare closer, to benefit my own work with the understanding of the long traditions and changes in the past. In my own study I have outlined to concentrate on newer, current years material and information available, preferably from 2010 till present. During the pandemic years, scientific research peaked in published articles related to spa environment and therefore gives more insight to my own research in futures study field. (Čeperković, J. & Čerović, S. 2023; Global Wellness Institute, 2023; Dryglas, D. & Różycki, P., 2016.)

3.5 Global Wellness Industry trends in recent years

3.5.1 Background

In the process of searching material for this research work, I visited "visitfinland.fi" — a learning platform and found teaching material called: "Matkailukysynnän trendit vuoteen 2030 mennessä". This summary points out observations previous

researchers have noted, thus, showing the way trends and megatrends are guiding the future choices of the travellers. According to this book, trends and megatrends do signal what people are interested in and what they want, in the now and near future. On the other hand, to predict or give long-term insight to which way the future is heading is more uncertain and poses difficulties in the research field, due to deciphering the influence of multitude of factors. Mainly, these are the actions of people, and the way nature reacts to human activity on this planet. Hence, through analysing the trends observations, we may have better understanding of the implications and possibilities in what kind of wellness (and other) offerings, future customers are interested, what they use and why and how they prefer to use them (Aluculesei, et al., 2019; Clemes, et al., 2020; Costa et al., 2013; Dini, M. & Pencarelli, T., 2021; Global Spa Summit, 2011; Szromek, A. R., & Wybranczyk, K., 2019; Szromek, A. R., 2020; Visit Finland, 2021).

3.5.2 The trends

The general growth in the travel industry continues to expand towards 2030, as globalization progresses, also the competition increases in the whole industry. Asia emerges forcefully in significance of new outbound traveller potential, specifically China, but also India – often referred as “Chindia” (Inayatullah, S., 2020). Thus, this happens within new demographics, when seasoned and demanding customers state their desired services to reflect their personalities as well as identity, and want value for money, using customized services.

Observations on the trends show tendencies for travellers to collect variety of experiences in so-called “snacking”- travel culture. New gathering and community spirit is raising awareness of inner values and reflecting commune thinking and crowdsourcing popularity. The longing for authenticity in experiences, societal pressures in work life towards constant learning, self-development, and the need to accomplish more, turn the travellers’ quest for deeper meaning in the inner realm of existence. Social media interactions are influencing the travellers’ choices on services and products. Therefore, deeper involvement, even extreme ways of travel experience are getting popular, for example volunteering (Workaway, WWOOFing), sabbatical travel, creative tourism, LOHAS (lifestyles

of health and sustainability) and slow tourism. (Aluculesei, et al., 2021; Bushell, R. & Sheldon, P.J., 2009; Buzinde, C.N., 2020; Dillette, et al., 2020; Global Wellness Summit, 2020-2023; Han, et al., 2017; Manhas, et al., 2022; Sangpikul, A. & Thipharos, P., 2022; Travel To Wellness, 2023; World Spa Organization, 2021.)

The demand for luxury seems not to diminish, but to translate more towards the desires of inner abundance of one's own time invested wisely, looking for eudemonic (producing happiness), and holistic wellbeing. In addition, nature, and traditional values, back to basics, and experiencing "heartspitality" (feeling the pulse of the destination), while integrating into local way of life, has been a growing trend in the past decade. The popularity of Couchsurfing (connecting to world of travellers and offering a place to stay without monetary reward), Workawayers (volunteer worker organization, connecting to like-minded people), and work & life-style nomadism, creates examples of this development. Classical nature activity travel has not lost its lure and meaning, however, the interest in adventures tourism transforms to safe experiencing and overlaps often with wellbeing tourism. New prospects in future of nature and adventures, are virtual and augmented reality enhanced "travel testing" experiences, and/ or offerings of a new way to experience something, they would not otherwise manage or dare to do. This can also be significant benefit for sustainability practises and keeping many areas of the world's natural treasures safe from the ill effects of the tourism. (Aluculesei, A. & Nistoreanu, P., 2021; Costa et al., 2022; Global Wellness Summit, 2020-2023; Levitas, R., 2013; Mondok, A., 2019; Sangpikul, A., 2022; Sangpikul, A. & Thipharos, P., 2023; Visit Finland, 2021; World Travel Trends, 2020.)

According to Worldwide Travel Trends, ITB Berlin, Travel Trade Show statistics in 2020, the latest insights and outlook indicates strong increase in outbound trips to Europe from American continent, cruise market and city breaks on top list drivers. The destination choices from Europe reflect multitude of trends, yet city breaks remain popular. Eastern Europe growth rate is higher than Western Europe to outbound travel. Information analysed shows Asia has the lead in tourism growth

market in trips abroad as well as within Asia. City breaks keep popularity and expand, MICE (incentive) segment with business travel to trade fairs, has strong hold in Asia. Significant detail in Asian travel is the role of Travel Agencies, which is important, even the online services are on the rise. When international travel from Japan has been on decline, the outbound travel from India to other Asian destinations, has been in great upward demand. (World Travel Trends, 2020.)

3.5.3 Comparison chart of the Global Wellness Trends 2020-2023

Global Wellness Trends in years 2020-2023

2020	2021	2022	2023
Focus to Circadian health reset, from sleep with timing of light and apps that use timed light doses	Affordable and reachable wellness for all – with big media platforms, is 2021's big trend. Inspired by pandemic	Dirt-y wellness – the impact of soil exposure on human health is the hot topic. Soil-bathing for children experimented	Wellness solutions to loneliness epidemic: creation of gathering groups to engage in social activities
Aging rebranded, major potential, vibrant & cool	Balancing metabolic health, the microbiome, and personalized nutrition leading the trend. Experimentation from “positive stress” experiences to intermittent fasting for immune resilience	Toxic muscularity takes a turn to more natural body image – staying clean from steroid abuse and focus on male mental health	Wellness in travel is turning towards more natural – indigenous and genuine experiences. Traditional medicine and other like druids, practices, interest
Wellness from Japan-combining traditions with innovative technologies	The move from fads and always-on consumerism to architecture that touches our souls - sacred moment - new way to spirituality	From Wellness tech to Technological wellness – pausing the negative effects of tech usage and finding solutions to limit and balance	Hating your work & non-effective wellness plans: The workplace wellness reform is well underway, set to change everything: how we connect with coworkers/ what we look for in a job
Mental tech health, via virtual care, wearables, and other futuristic innovations	Breathwork is being recognized to have profound impact to overall wellbeing	Next-gen self-sufficiency boom, from outdoor survival to foraging and home-grown produce	The beauty wellness shifts towards scientific, visibly effective methods
Exploring a new force in health, electromagnetic, light, and sound interventions to heal your 'energy body'	New era in healthcare – integrating wellness in holistic and life-style oriented ways	Post pandemic travel seekers, working nomads, are ready for adventure and engagement	Wellness and cities reimagined again with healthier infrastructures, happier residents

More religious organizations, are incorporating a wide range of health and fitness modalities	Adding color to wellness – opening more discussion about Black Wellness	Exploring how startups and tech giants are increasingly trying to expand & improve research data on women's health through AI, apps, wearables & virtual trials	Obesity on battle – brown, life-saving fat to stay slim, instead of the white – to live longer and younger with aid of scientific research to innovate new solutions
Balance between the pursuit of wellness and the need to work is the central concept of the wellness sabbatical	Resetting events with new protocols for health, safety, and immunity, after the halt during the pandemic years	Urban huge bath houses and public parks: nature meets the art and wellness; pop-up playgrounds transforming cityscapes:affordable, accessible, inclusive	Wellness policies evolve and strengthen to create a world, where preventative wellness is integrated in people's lives
Fertility and reproductive assistance crucial part in healthcare	Breaking the money taboo – the start of financial wellness awakening	Development of pocket neighbourhoods; innovative, mutually beneficial intergenerational co-living models; no for retirement homes	Hot springs and wild untamed, natural areas beckon all year round. The water element is accentuated whether blue, hot, or cold
Wellness music with new technologies that capture our biometric data to create personalized, healing soundscapes	Travel Reset- from over tourism to mindful, slower travel experiences, where people leave places better condition than arrival	Health and trained wellness coaching people get certified	Pro-level sports wellness is available more in hotels and resorts answering the demand of wellness-focused clients
Looking to authenticity in wellness offerings with the aid of science		Wellness welcomes the Metaverse: trending medical and wellness experiences created in the metaverse - the future opportunities for companies	Wellness in senses that elevate our human experience, as nature is multisensory, so are we.
			Wellness in biohacking- superhuman qualities
			Resurgence in faith- also in corporate world

Chart 1. Marienberg-Usher, 2023. Modified from data of Global Wellness Summit, 2020-2023.

4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study the focus is on spa environment and health tourism in wider context, including holistic health and the concepts of wellness and wellbeing. The research will also utilize futuristic theories, approaches, methods, and tools. I will

explore concepts, motivations, values, attitudes of people, to identify the many layers in different cultural and other relevant influencing factors on people behaviour.

To fully comprehend futures research approaches and methods, it is good peruse the evolution of the study field. Many of the scientific researchers split the future-oriented discussion to different approaches, which have been influenced by cultures and times in history (Inayatullah, S., 2021; Minkkinen, M., 2020; Rubin, A., 2004.) On the other hand, futures research as a science, can be perceived as collection of tendencies and trends, classified by timeframe or by most common methods usage basis. These tendencies reflect the known epistemology: the philosophy of knowledge and paradigms: concepts or patterns of thoughts, including theories and research methods, which contribute to futures science. The purpose of prediction is not the goal here, but to offer a chance to explore possibilities and alternatives and open discussions in public. However, this does not exclude tapping into new foresight methods, when they follow principles of good scientific practices. (Rubin, A., 2004; Theoretical Foundations of Futures Research, 2018.)

From the history of the futures research, in traditional point of view, Masini, 1993, divides the futures research approaches into three: 1) Extrapolation, approximate calculations analysis, 2) Utopic thinking models, and 3) Visionary approach. Thus, they aim to explain the need to understand the interrelations between humans, societies, and environment. Other theory from Malaska, 1995, suggests another division of futures research as following: 1) Utopic approach, 2) Dystopic approach, 3) Analogic approach, 4) Systems thinking approach, 5) Scenario approach, 6) Evolutionary approach, all of which have been commonly used in the futures research. More is offered by the humanistic and technocratic approaches, which relies on the purpose of research itself. Resulting analyses are narrow and simplified, with vague credibility. This approach importance to the research field has been significant when we investigate influencing the future. Therefore, the historical perspective and scenario method, are part of humanistic approach, which is the foundation of most futures research methods used today.

Hence, Ossip Flechtheim, in 1940`s, pioneering in the future research thinking, can be connected to this approach. (Masini, E., 1993; Rubin, A., 2004.)

To continue, according to Inayatullah, 1990, the basic approaches influencing this field of study are: 1) anticipatory, 2) cultural or interpretative and 3) critical approaches. Anticipatory or proactive futures research aims to accumulate precise, often mathematical knowledge, from the future. Thus, this can be mechanic, short timeframe and non-flexible in use. He also criticizes cultural approach for its tendency to favour values and traditions of the industrialized western world, while ignoring the developing countries and minorities futures, research in just ways. Therefore, he introduces critical approach, which does not rely on anticipatory nor scenario thinking, but instead gives value to question those research assumptions and initial positions, where the researchers are beginning to unveil the just future actions for promoted expectations and activating people as part of creating it. To sum up, the goal of this approach, is to shake the dominant power-order, to change social circumstances in favour of all living needs in future generations. (Inayatullah, S.,1990.)

Hideg and Novàky, 2000, state traditional futures research to be objective in thinking of the possible futures. They have thought to widen the approach with evolutionary and critical thinking, with understanding of open future, simultaneously on an undefined platform of human activity. Thus, emotional realm is added to the research field. Bell, 1997, wrote the basic of futures studies, with division to: 1) positive, 2) post-positive, and 3) critical realism. This leads to the conclusion of the four main approaches currently in use in the futures research field of study as presented in the following:

❖ Anticipatory/ proactive approach

This approach is the best in near future situations with less variants. The aim is to find tools to process future and aid the human activity towards it with the help of mathematical models and time sequences to create one, clear vision of the future to support strategic decision making.

❖ Cultural approach

Here the future is formed from different possibilities, emphasizing equality in variety of values and cultural practices and it is used to understand implications from different cultural or social variants to decision making.

❖ Critical approach

The point is not in scenarios nor in the predictive nature of understanding futures. The aim is to challenge and explore basic initial positions and assumptions to perceive futures. Activating and crowdsourcing people in social activity is important. This is used with groups and cultures or practices.

❖ Analytical approach

Focused on investigating possibilities: “probable, maybe- possible, desired and scary”, as in different scenarios, and thus creating tools to help perceive futures and projecting activities in long-term. Analytical approach is the most used in Finland acting as foundation to the theories and methods and models in the past. (Aalto et al., 2022; Bell, W., 1997; Hideg, E. & Novàky, E., 2000, Rubin, A., 2004; Theoretical Foundations of Futures Research, 2018.)

5 OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

5.1 Observations based on theories in the field of Futures Research

To begin the theoretical observations, the complexity and sheer quantity of different theories and methodological tools in futures research, must be understood. It has been argued, most futurists may all choose a different theory base to be the most significant to the field, according to their various perspectives. To form a larger picture of the evolving of theories and the developers of theories, I decided to concentrate my efforts mainly to two accomplished futurists, with a long history of academic research. Hence, through their works in the research field, I was able to finally comprehend and create some order, at least partially, to the complexity of the theories and methodologies in this vast field of constantly evolving knowledge and methods, and where it all has come from since the dawn of human history. (Inayatullah, S., 2007; Inayatullah, S., 2021; Minkinen, M., 2020, Rubin, A., 2004; Sardar, Z., 1999; Schwartz, P., 1996; Theoretical Foundations of Futures Research, 2018.)

To begin with, according to Minkkinen, 2020, the theories from many fields with transdisciplinary frameworks are argued to be of use understanding and explaining the futures studies. Moreover, he states, in accordance with his survey results, to divide the theories by two factors: firstly, theories of action, practices and behaviour and secondly theories of change. These he categorizes further to micro, meso and macro levels, representing individuals, different communities, and organizations and finally the surrounding society. The theories are shown in the following tables as it makes the complexity of the matter clearer to comprehend. (Minkkinen, M., 2020.)

Categorization of Theories in Futures Studies.

	Theories of action, practices, and behaviour	Theories of change
Micro level	Sensemaking, anthroposemiosis, theories of representation, theories-in-use, rationality, practice theory, mental time travel, self-determination theory, futures consciousness, cognition theories, anticipation	Niche theory, pioneer analysis, innovation theories
Meso level	Theories of organizational culture, institutional theories, actor network theory, social network theories, the mobilities paradigm, anticipation	Theories of social movements, (sociotechnical) imaginaries, theories of institutional change, theories of regional development
Macro level	Theories of temporality, theories of decision making, (visionary) leadership, theory of power (Foucault), anticipatory governance, theories of complex systems, anticipation	Evolutionary theories, development theories, transition theories, cultural transformation, mediatization, images of the future (Polak), paradigms (Kuhn), the Annales school, Kondratieff waves, utopian thinking

Chart 2. Minkkinen, M., 2020. Theories in Future Studies: Examining the Theory Base of the Futures Field in Light of Survey Results. World Futures Review, 2020. Vol. 12. Sage Journals.

Micro level theories consist of sensemaking theories, Weberian rationality (behaviour + practices), theories of practice and futures consciousness (Ahvenharju et al, 2018). Meso level theories pointed out were about organizational culture, institutions, imaginaries, and networks. Furthermore, theories of change as well as several theoretical frameworks on institutional change (rational, historical, sociological) can be implemented in this level. On macro level, Minkkinen mentions theories of temporality, leadership, power, and governmentality. Evolutionary theories, development, and transition theories as the multi-level perspective, can bring understanding to change. In addition,

theories of cultural transformation, mediatization, Kuhnian paradigms and utopian thinking may be added to the macro level with naming three of the theories: Frederik Polak's theory of images of the future as drivers change, Kondratieff waves aiding comprehending long-term economic development and last Pentti Malaska's framework of societal transformation. (Levitas, R., 2013; Malaska, P., 2000; Polak, F., 1973; Wilenius and Kurki, 2017; Minkkinen, M., 2020.)

Furthermore, Minkkinen organizes his research outcomes to five different theoretical approaches in futures studies. They are the following: Theories of rigorous forecasting, theories effectively representing the futures, theories for effectively pursuing desired futures, theories of making sense of anticipatory processes, and radical epistemological critiques. (Minkkinen, M., 2020.) He argues further, to be most important to identify and discuss the theories guiding us and keep developing and transforming them in future. These theories tend to create expectations about the future with images of the future as well as influence decision making and societal development for new generations. (Minkkinen, M., 2020.)

Sohail Inayatullah, professor of political sciences, and futurist, is a man of many titles and long working history organizations and institutions in the whole world, including being an author/ editor of thirty books, over 350 journal and articles to mention a few. His contribution to future studies seems to have created deep impact to this field of research. According to Inayatullah, future study is systematically consisting of possible, probable, and preferable futures. Moreover, he states the evolution of the futures research has already transformed from predicting futures to mapping alternative futures and shaping desired futures. (Inayatullah, S., 2021.)

The Six Pillars approach (Inayatullah, 2008), is a conceptual framework, created to help to understand what tools and methods are necessary in futures research. Pillars are called: 1) "Mapping the future" (primary method is futures triangle) 2) "Anticipating the future" (emerging issues analysis, Molitor, 2003)., 3) "Timing the future", 4) "Deepening the future" (causal layering analysis – acts also a theory as

well., 5) Creating alternatives” using scenario planning, to end with the last pillar of 6) “Transforming the future” (Inayatullah, S., 2008).

Inayatullah sums up theoretical frameworks through four approaches to form foresight about future: predictive, from empirical social sciences, interpretative, drawing understanding through competing images of future, critical, asking who and which methodologies are to benefit from certain kinds of futures. He asserts the future studies has become more common, largely by the influence of many crises in the world during the last 100 years of human history and the developments in digital, genomic, nano and neuro technologies. (Inayatullah, S., 2021.)

5.2 Observations on previous studies

In the early processes of this work, I made numerous searches in various databases and found many research concerning some areas of the spa industry, including the historical and customer demographics evolution, customer experience and generations effects. From tens of studies, I made deeper observations on those relevant to my own research. Consequently, to ponder deeper what makes my approach different from the other studies, I chose various studies to explore more closely and in more detail. These research papers included discussions in following topics, to mention a few: the value customers have from their investment on spa offerings, the environmental factors in choosing spa and hotels, the new era of spa offers, transition of the business from government supported health vacations to self-supplied investments on own wellbeing, and the way spa personnel’s contribution reflects on the outcomes of experiences. It was also interesting to make observations on how much research has been done on the future of spa industry and has it been by futures research methods.

In my observations of the previous research articles and other studies, I noticed these matters been investigated: segmentation of Spa goes, historical spa towns new era, thermal traditional spa transformational change in user base (who pays/how long you stay), very deep scenario study on German spas,

understanding service outcomes in the Spa industry, typologies of spa goes, impact of social media marketing in consumption and sharing, spa and pool regulations in Mediterranean, investigating relationship between experience, wellbeing and loyalty in wellness tourism, workplace health in wellness: employees in spas, comparison between medical and wellness spa, measuring spa customer preferences, using TripAdvisor's online reviews to do research on market segmentation and travel choice prediction in Spa hotels, case study of acceptance of new technologies in spa tourists point of view in Spain, emerging trends in wellness tourism, factors promoting post-purchase behaviour in wellness tourists, spa tourist satisfaction and preferences factors, importance-performance analysis within spa clientele, and the effect of generations. In the following paragraph, I will explain some of these in more detail.

The effect of generations has been researched by Hungarian, Anita Mondok, in her study article: "New generations - New trends in the spa industry". Mondok argues the tourism sector rapid changes have effect on both demand and supply side of the industry and therefore, it is worth exploring further to identify the nature of which the different generations expectations toward service providers. (Mondok, A., 2019.) To continue exploring important factors arising in the spa industry, professors Thipbharos and Sangpikul, investigate the service outcomes. Their findings point out two outcome attributes: physical and mental. They also discovered how the customers perceive the quality of the spa services in two separate ways: service satisfaction and outcomes satisfaction (Sangpikul, A. & Thipbharos, P., 2023.)

Loyalty, experience, and wellbeing co-existence in wellness tourism has been given a deeply interesting hypothesis testing study, presenting results which confirm the value of experiences, creating positive emotional feedback. The quality of the spa experiences unique characteristics is also argued to have a major impact on the recommendations and loyalty, hence the suggestions to spa businesses to invest on wide variety of complementary and other services available to their customers. (Manhas et al., 2022.)

Furthermore, besides being a pioneering study on German Spa environment change processes, Wolf's scenario study builds up strong foundation to future spa development and at the same time explains in detail the underlying causes of the transformative change forces in the traditionally famous German Spa environments. (Wolf, N., 2013.)

Moreover, Dini and Pencarelli, give insight to the holistic development in wellness tourism and share a comprehensive analysis on the most important elements of the wellness and health tourism offerings. (Dini et al, 2021.) In addition, spa tourists' satisfaction has been analysed in quantitative methods in a study in Andalusia, Spain, to find more information of the actual factors associated creating outcome of satisfaction or vice versa. (Anaya-Aguilar et al, 2021.)

Expectations of spa patients in more traditional medical treatment setting in Polish spas, has been researched on the perspective of expectations and the outcomes. Another study reflects the changes in the Government subsidy systems and their repercussions and business relationships objectives to sustainability and tries to find guidelines to spa resort companies. (Naramski, M. & Szromek, A.R., 2019; Dryglas, D. & Różycki, P., 2016.)

In general, the Eastern European thermal and other spa industry and business environments, have been more popular scientific research phenomena in the past decade, as they explored the "wellness medical and pure wellness", dynamics in spa tourism including lengths of stay and trends, in quantitative methods. (Čeperković, J. & Čerović, S., 2023; Dryglas, D. & Różycki, P., 2016.)

Thermal tourism has been the main interest also in Portugal, where a group of students studied the profile and motivations of spa users (Costa et al., 2022). Furthermore, co-word analysis of previous research has been explored in a study concerning medical spas, to identify the past and future trends, adding new trend to research itself – even post-covid recovery in spa environment. (Aluculesei et al., 2021.)

“Perceptions and Profiles of Young People Regarding Spa Tourism” investigates the profiles and compares two Universities students of Germany and Spain in the context of interest and even knowledge about in spa tourism (Abarca-Álvarez et al., 2022). Moreover, to peruse more innovative methods to research tourist satisfaction, argued the most important indication to loyalty in general, the study on tourist satisfaction using participatory simulation in virtual environment reveals the importance of quality in achieving the levels of satisfaction to promote interest to various product offerings (Chao et al., 2013).

5.3 Importance of Outcomes

The outcomes of the spa experience is crucially important to explore as it literally means the long-term benefits, on many levels, to the person who invested time and money to the spa experience. To continue listing the important factors to spa industry future evolvement, the learning and other innovative technologies need to be mentioned, as they are undoubtedly emerging in ubiquitous potential to health industry and other businesses within human life. Monitoring health and prevention of illnesses is present today, what are the next steps or leaps waiting to happen in future? (Chao et al., 2013; Clemes et al., 2020; Sangpikul, A. & Thipbharos, P., 2023.)

Behaviour and activities of the people have the power to change the worlds. What is known now, is a quality for people longing and demand for authenticity, simultaneously respecting and preserving nature. The cultural traditions and art in our lives has always supported humanity and the impact of these factors is a powerful, creative force in life. Increasing quest for inner peace, serenity, balance, understanding the spirit and spirituality and thus, inner values reflecting our choices in life, are becoming more pronounced. Consequently, it is a trend to search for the meaning of life and purpose in personal level, concerning what and how we can change our own realities. Question is how soon we will embrace yet another technological leap towards even deeper in new innovations era and what is the other side of this development for the research area of this study? Is it creating more interest in spa, wellness related treatments, more expansion in the demand for wider scale of offerings to promote holistic wellbeing, in comparison

of moments of relief and pleasure in materialistic spa services? The outcomes are of interest: what are the deeper and more meaningful experiences regarding our overall health and wellbeing in holistic all-encompassing ways, and how will they be measured in value for the money and time associated with the long-term effects in people's lives. (Chen, et al., 2019; Clemes et al., 2020; Costa et al., 2022; DeMicco, F.J., 2017; Sangpikul, A. & Thipbharos, P., 2022–2023.)

5.4 Gaps in the Literature

According to Sangpikul and Thipharos, 2023, in the study of: “Understanding service outcomes in the spa industry”, they point out the researchers have failed to examine Service Outcomes` role further, in spa literature, to fully understand customer needs and expectations. Furthermore, they add, most spa research to opt for quantitative approaches, which may cause limitations explaining this important part of the customer experience and value process. Futures Research is still quite new part of the research field and therefore this approach has not gained so much research in the past. In addition, the theory base is admittedly very complex. During and following the pandemic years of Covid19, the research seems to have increased in numbers, thus I was able to choose in most part, very recent material to my background research. The spa related research seems to have been conducted with bias on traditional spa users, or emphasizing on how and when, the spa industry has changed in the past decades. Especially Eastern Europe and Germany, the government support in national health schemes has dramatically diminished, creating already the need to find ways to survive financially or vanish from competition. (Bakirtzoglou, et al., 2017; Čeperković, J. & Čerović, S., 2023; Clemes et al., 2020; Lo et al., 2015; Löke et al., 2018; Sangpikul, A. & Thipbharos, P., 2023; Wolf, N., 2013.)

In my database searches, relevant previous research was found related to “spa environment” one way or another, and quite a number, yet albeit just in recent years, very few of those studies used Futures Research approach. Master`s Thesis, by Natalie Wolf on German Spa, scenario work, 2013, explains multiple

scenarios researched, tested, analysed, and processed in detail. In the field of spa industry, this kind of futures research seems to just emerge in popularity. Most common futures research methods applied in the scientific field, have used methods of Delphi, or scenarios, while other tools to understand the future, are waiting more pioneering efforts. (Wolf, N., 2013; Rubin, A., 2004.)

The past few months during which I have conducted the background research, observing on how much and in what context the “Spa” as part of culture and business, and value to customers, is researched in the past years in any method, I found out there is increasing interest on this subject, yet very few of the previous research directly explore the matter in futures research methods/ approach. Thus, I draw the conclusion to find it relevant and important to explore this matter further and wish to contribute to my commissioner as well as the scientific field some new information of the spa industry as part of the wellbeing/ wellness tourism sector, specifically exploring this matter with the approach of futures research.

6 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Design

Following the purpose of this thesis research, is fundamental to understand the history of the spa industry offerings, explore and recognize recent changes in the world with their repercussions, and the ways our future is created by human interaction, including the effect of natural forces. In the number of scientific articles and spa and wellness related discussions, I have noticed that in the complexity of the knowledge base, there are some ubiquitous guiding lines. Thus, the future consists of variables on people behaviour, in social, demographic, political, psychological, ecological and economics aspects, at both universal and personal level. As a continuation, these reflections are explored and observed in connection to future spa customer potential in Travelmyth services.

The overall approach of this study is futures research, in its cross-scientific nature, integrating many natural sciences and utilizing various methods and analysing techniques to observe and find trends, underlying phenomena, not to predict, but to understand a larger picture of the forces and choices influencing the creation of futures. Hence, the dive into the known and unknown territory of possibilities, challenges, and constant evolving in life, is processed with exploratory research attitude.

To conduct this study, selection of the data was made from the highlight points in previous studies on spa industry, complemented with a target Facebook group survey, according to keyword searches, time framed from January to September, in Travelmyth company. In addition, data from global wellness trends was explored from the past four years and introduction to global tribes 2030 criteria was observed. All the data is analysed and processed with the tools and methods available in the futures study field. After a careful consideration and testing the suitability of various methods to this specific study, I chose to utilize Moodboard, Trend analyses, Futures Wheel, FSSF and 8cell SWOT tools for processing the data and analysis. These method tools are used in succession of each other, to help exploring the research subject profoundly, according to the general guidelines of futures study. (Aalto et al., 2022; Bell, W., 1996; Kuusi et al., 2013.)

6.2 Methods

6.2.1 Moodboard

First, I choose to use Moodboard, a collage created from pictures, texts, drawings, and/ or videos. It is a visual tool to express the feeling and atmosphere of the subject, thus enabling easier discussion and analysis in concrete level. This tool enables to create the whole, larger point of view from the research subject. In this study the Facebook survey results are used as the source data, as well as observations on the spa environment and wellbeing industry. (Blink Helsinki, 2016.)

6.2.2 Trend Analysis

Next layer in the process is Trend Analysis, which explores the influence and direction of trends (long term developments) with their sub trends, and how they show up in practical life. Many factors and variables are involved in trend recognition, for example from professional, cultural, or ideological areas of life. This tool enables multidimensional observations and analysing implications from different perspectives, hence creating further inspiration to explore totally new possibilities in research. The results produced are related to how people perceive the world, what they co-create. Trends, especially mega trends, guide decision making processes by influencing choices and values of the people. As a method tool, trend influence analysis is suitable for individual work as well as workshops. (Gordon, T., 2009.)

6.2.3 Futures Wheel

Futures wheel is developed by Glenn, in the 1970's and it is structured, method of observation by which to vision the future. Factors and subjects are arranged in clusters circling the main subject in the middle. The process continues layering different perspectives with insights in various factors and variables. First layer is primary effects and the one after secondary effects. The method tool is widely used in the same basis as mind mapping, although the goal is different. The Futures wheel helps to arrange and outline different variables and perceptions of the future of the phenomena under observation as well as understand their repercussions. The method is suitable for workshops and individual study. (Glenn, J., 2009.)

6.2.4 FSSF

FSSF (Future Signals Sense-making Framework) is another step forward aiding in classifying and assessing the data, especially when there is a desire for estimating whether the information concerning the future is accurate and sufficient. In practise a square table with individual fields is formed and in basic form six fields are explored: 1) Seed of Change: observations of something is changing – it may be funny, surprising, irritable. 2) Business as Usual: all stays

the same. 3) Push towards the Change: technical innovations, political acts, financial changes, new ideas creating the change path. 4) Pull factors: needs, dependencies in society, causalities, multiplicative effects, autocatalysis. 5) Weights, greater factors slowing down the Change: historical reasons, laws, values, gained benefits, bureaucracy, taboos, mantras, belief systems, hierarchies, other hindering factors in technical and societal planes. 6) Trends, representing the long-haul evolution and structural changes in the world and human life. These are explored through A) Weak signals B) Drivers C) Huge evolutionary trends. (Kuosa, T., 2010.)

6.2.5 The company perspective

In addition, further analysis to form action plans for the company are various SWOT analysis and 8cell SWOT, which is used to achieve a larger picture from the internal and external factors than normal SWOT analysis method. This means exploring the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats added with combinations of Strengths + Opportunities = Exploit/ Weaknesses+ Opportunities = Repair, Develop/ Strengths + Threats = Prepare, Anticipate/ Weaknesses + Threats = Prevent, Avoid. I have also tried to find a good way to explore the customer experience and for this purpose suggest using the Service Blueprint and Customer Journey, which will explain the reasons for travel to spa destinations and the total travel experience.

6.3 Data Collection Procedures in Travelmyth

Key word searches of “100 topmost used keywords” in Travelmyth company database have been made using variables of “spa” category. Searches and charts made in January 2023 and September 2023 in Travelmyth business environment by Stefanos Vasdekis (APPENDIX 1).

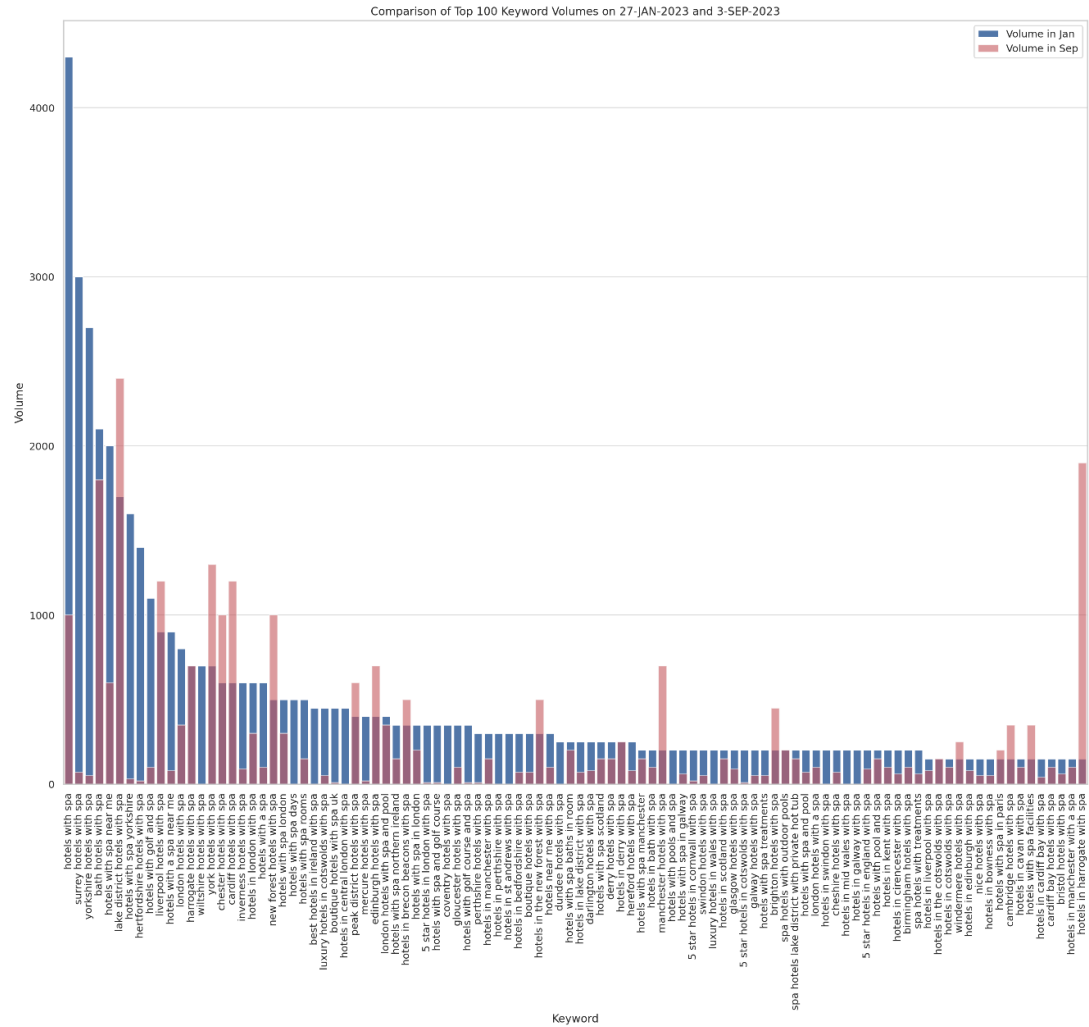


Chart 3. Travelmyth. Search volumes by category.

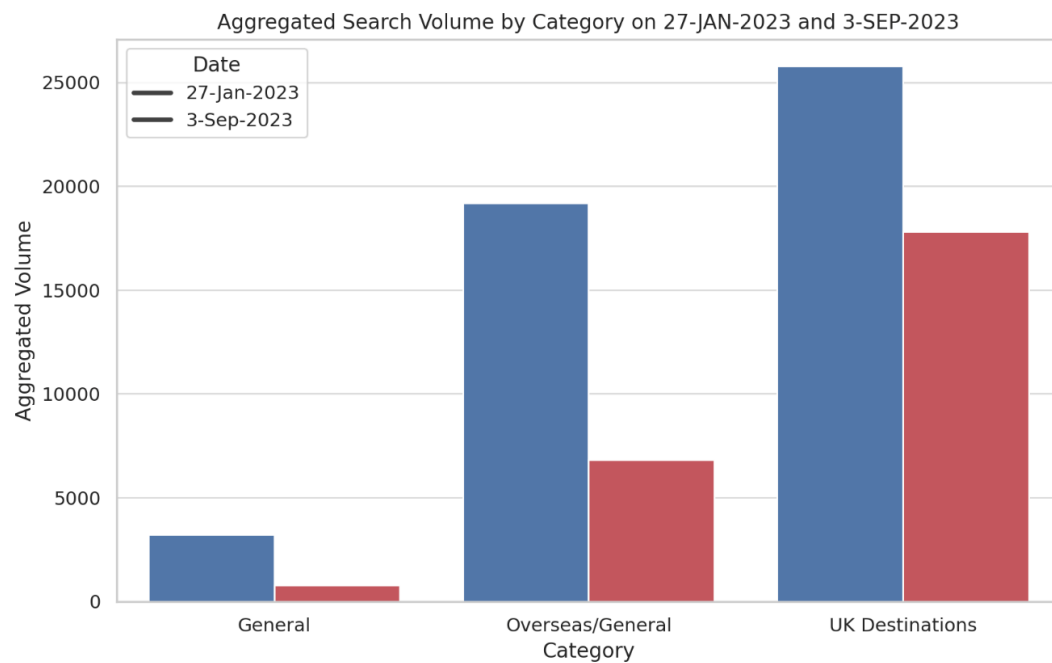


Chart 4. Travelmyth. Search volumes by category.

In the above charts from Travelmyth, blue bars represent the aggregated search volume for each category as of 27th of January 2023. The red bars represent the aggregated search volume for each category as of 3rd of September 2023. The observations from this chart are UK Destinations have the highest search volume on both dates, but there is a decrease from January to September. The Overseas/ General category shows also notable decrease in search volume. The General category has the lowest search volume and shows a decrease over the same period.

6.4 Target Group Survey

According to the results of the keyword searches within the commissioner company, I chose to use part of these findings of the search data, to form a survey. Hence, a target group survey in Facebook online environment, was made and processed with Webropol survey tool and distributed to Spa and Wellbeing interested groups in FB. These results are used to further analyse the importance and direction of the chosen area of study.

Timeframe for the survey availability for collection of data is in September-October, for 5 weeks. Survey Questionnaire forming work begun in the end of August 2023. Ready to distribute to Groups after first week of September. After collection of the data, processing data and analysing it last week of October, combining all other data and analysing processes together within the month of November.

Answering the survey anonymously benefits privacy protection of individuals and voluntary, without compensation survey will provide more reliable information in general. The Survey was distributed to more than 60 groups on FB and may have given better results in participation using other channel of data collection or multiple platforms. The Survey Questionnaire is available in picture format in the Appendices.

6.5 Data Analysis Procedures

Analysing process is performed in the multi tool method, layering chosen tools in analysis one after another. The analysis process begins with Moodboard visual sensory ideation according to the survey and known trends reports from years 2020 – 2023. The process continues with Trend analysis, through which is possible to recognize and understand changing phenomena and the influences, probable outcomes of these, including threats. Next, the Future Signals Sense-making Framework (FSSF) arranges and explores more possibilities observing and classifying possible weak signals, drivers for changes and long-haul evolutionary mega trends and trends as continuation of the analysing process. It observes seeds of change, no change in the business practises, push and pull factors and factors weighting down the change. It also directly explores the long-lasting changes i.e., trends with variety of qualities. Furthermore, the process explores all findings with Futures wheel tool, where clusters are built from the middle, adding subject phenomenon, and unravelled to consequences and sub trends in many circulating layers to observe possible causal effects. (Blink Helsinki, 2016; Boulding E., & Boulding K., 1995; Glenn, J. C., 2009; Gordon, T., 2009; Kuosa, T., 2010.)

7 ANALYSIS

What is analysed: the Facebook target group survey, observations on trends from the past years, the previous research articles, worldwide scale news and spa related discussions supporting the explorations to find weak signals and other relevant information. The data file is attached to the end of this study from the results of the group survey performed with Webropol survey tool in September-November 2023. Participation level in the study was noticeably low with 25 completions, while 29 individuals left it unfinished, despite the surveys having been opened 1012 times, so the interest was established, nevertheless. This affects the general reliability of the survey, as it is greater when participation reaches over 30. Even in this case, the results give material for analysis, due to the fact the survey was distributed to over 60 different Facebook spa and

wellness related groups, with an English language base from around the world. Thus, I presume the sampling was done from wide angle and the results reflect many different nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

The relatively small quantity of answers to the questionnaire in the survey, may suggest the survey being too long, or the approach in the survey language was a bit too scientific in the questions. In any case, this kind of survey would be possible to perform in other target group environment in the future, and I am recommending suggesting this to be done through another platform and with other incentive, than to simply help a university student with her thesis. This incentive could be a little reward in the form of a code, a participation to a competition, or similar.

7.1 Target Group Survey results

The target group survey results as follows; the full survey is in the Appendices. The Facebook target group survey resulted 88% answers from female and 12% answers from male respondents. The survey also gave a possibility to choose “other” as genre. Respondents were mainly 46-58 years old by 52% and secondly 59-85 age group by 32% of the answers. Rest of the 16% answers were recorded from the 31-45 age group.

Other demographic information in the background questions was the cultural heritage and ethnicity, resulting 54% of respondents choosing African, 42% Caucasian and 17% other, while also Asian and Hispanic origins were provided, resulting no participants.

The survey method was used to ask spa and wellbeing/ wellness interested potential customers of their preferences and opinions when choosing a spa related holiday. It was shared within over 60 Facebook target groups and distributed with an introductory letter on each group site, some of which took a week to accept the letter and the link.

The idea of the survey question base was to clarify how the potential spa service users perceive the present and future of the spa industry in larger context. The results are utilized as comparison material in the analysing procedures, giving the emphasis on finding trends influencing the future, and other significant variables effecting the development and evolution of the field.

The survey was created to use both quantitative (single and multiple-choice questions) and qualitative methods (open questions) aiming to provide better observations on how global changes are emerging to people's lives, affecting their choices, preferences, and dreams in connection to spa industry and travel. Thus, by writing in your own words, it is possible to have different data in comparison to the fixed single or multiple-choice question data. Survey itself is a useful method due to its flexible and versatile nature as a tool, and it complements research reliability and coverage. Most of the research is explored, observed, and analysed in qualitative methods, like collecting data by observations, survey, previous research documented data. This approach offers valuable benefit to define the characteristics and relevance of the research questions, in larger context. Part of the questions used in the survey were formed to match the keyword search material data from Travelmyth, the rest of the questions were closely connected to the spa industry specific factors of interest. Key word searches represent the background data of the booking and search processes in the hotel and spa meta search engine company. In addition, the cultural, demographic, environmental, technological and socioeconomical factors have been implemented in the study.

Participation level turned out to be 25 full responses, 29 beginning to answer, despite the initial interest to open the survey by 1012 times. The data obtained from the survey is used in this study to get insight of what potential spa customers want from the spa experience, destination, and the booking process. The survey aimed also to find more information of the demographics of the potential customers. The results of the survey are observed through Moodboard, FSSF chart, Trend analysis and Futures wheel tools.

Spa Industry Futures Research Survey

Follow up statistics	Respondent statistics	
Show / Hide rows	Show: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> % 	
	Total	
	(N)	%
Submitted responses: Public weblink	25	86
Survey opened by respondents	1012	3489
Started responding	29	100

Chart 5. Kati Marienberg-Usher, 2023. Survey by Webropol.



KOHDERYHMAKYSLEY FB
SPA INDUSTRY
FUTURES RESEARCH SURVEY

Kyselyn otsikot

Gender, age, cultural heritage& ethnicity in the beginning as defining the demographics
Which of these spa destinations would you consider traveling to...
What kind of spa related services you want to use in the spa destination...
Outcomes of the spa experience...
Spa services/ offerings in my holiday the spa destination are to me...
Which of these keywords in your online searches for spa destination would you use...
Choosing a spa destination, what is meaningful for me...
When choosing a spa destination i would like to experience....

Kyselyssä selvitetään Facebook kylpyläkulttuuriin liittyvien ryhmien kautta, miten kylpyläpalveluiden potentiaaliset käyttäjät mieltävät alan nykyisyyttä ja tulevaisuutta. Tuloksia käytetään vertailumateriaalina analyysivaiheessa, jossa selvitetään mm. matkailun tulevaisuuden trendien vaikutuksia ja etsitään muita alan kehittymiseen ja muuntautumiseen vaikuttavia muuttujia. Kyselyssä on käytetään monivalintaa ja omin sanoin kuvailua.



Figure 5. Highlighting the titles of the survey – screenshot taken from my presentation, due which it is also partially in Finnish language.

The following clusters and word clouds have been created by Webropol analysing tool from the open questions in the Facebook group survey. I used these answers in my own analysing processes to understand and explore the motivations and the expectations of the potential spa customers of the future.

Examine

Question:

☒ What are the long-lasting results to your wellbeing? ☒ Does the short-term relief match your expectations? ☒ What is important for you to return to the spa? ☒ The relevance of the quantity and variety of offerings in spa environment for you? ☒ What are your expectations regarding the professional staff in spa environment?

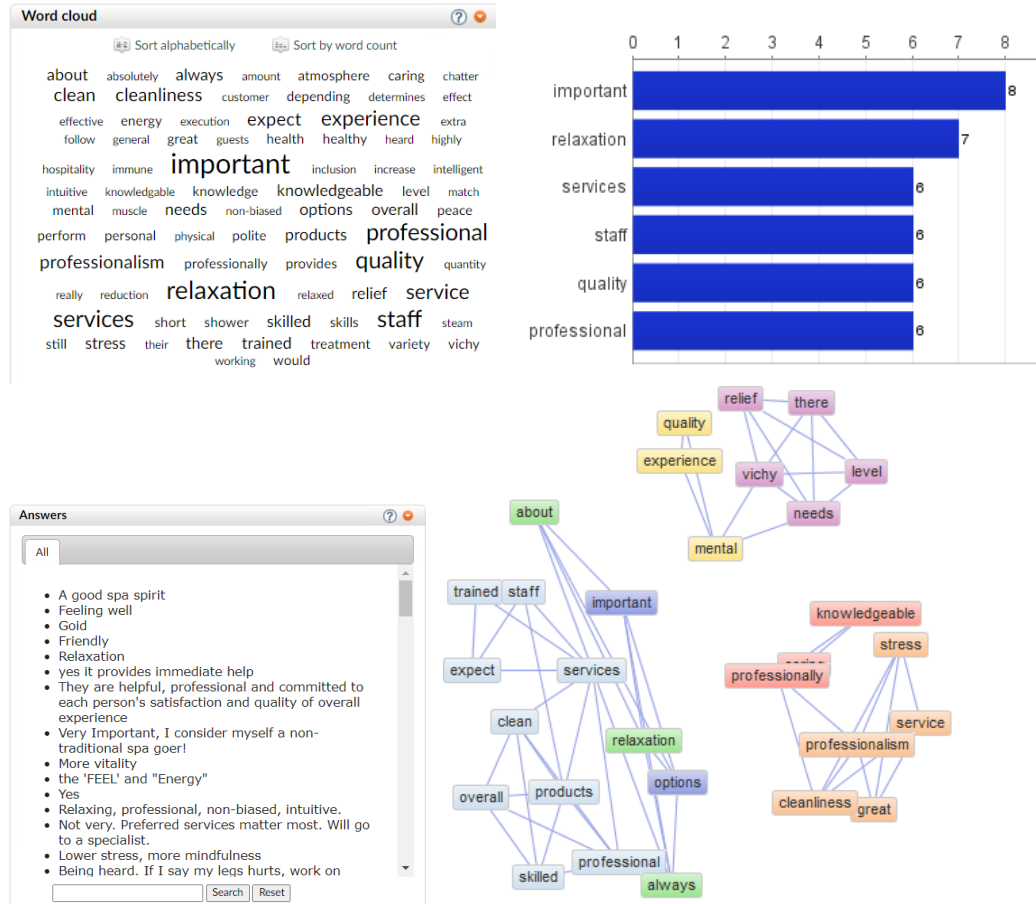


Figure 6. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Survey by Webropol, Result from the “write in your own words” part.

7.2 Moodboard

This visual board of images gives a chance to view the results of data collection from the survey, the mega trends, and previous studies, in a compact form. It aims to create the customer journey from the planning, booking and actual travel and accommodation experiences with indication of the outcomes of the spa experience.

The pictures in the Moodboard, representing the general attributes important to the spa going clientele, were chosen according to the survey results and worldwide trends, indicating presence of African Spa 56%, North American Spa 56%, European Spas from 28% to 64% and Asian Spa, popularity, with the emphasis on Mediterranean Spa environments giving the highest score in the survey results by 64%. Another point of view was given to the demographics to the survey participants, stating 88% answers came from women, 12 % from men and age group 46-58 had the highest score by 52%, ages 59-85 delivering 32% of the answers. The answers were 42% Caucasian and 54% African cultural heritage ethnicity. This is becoming visible by the pictures of African and Caucasian background origin women in the spa environment. Other findings that were highlighted in the survey results were most popular destination experiences: old, traditional method, like thermal water treatments with 88% and added multisensory elements by 71%. Tastes, scents, clean air, nature with all its elements, including sounds and the overall cleanliness, tranquility, and soul (spirit) – body - holistic relaxing, is accentuated in the “feel” of the Moodboard.

The water element comes out as quite an elementary part of the spa experience, despite the clear interest on other spa related services in the spa destination. Thus, the thermal and mineral water therapies got 76% user interest and massage and manipulation therapy methods were just a bit more popular with 80% potential users. Other significant services to interest spa clientele appeared to be aromatherapy (56%), spa treatments for body (76%) and face (72%) and meditation and mindfulness by 60%. CAM (Complementary and Alternative Medicine) holistic approach got 48 %, same as herbal methods. Close by was ayurveda by 44%. Luxury wellness spa services created interest in 52%, the same percentage as Pilates, Qigong, Yoga etc. practices and Energy Healing ~ Reiki. Spiritual/ religious practices was given 46% importance as well as futuristic energy healing innovations, using electromagnetics, light, and sound. Art/ Installations/ Feng Shui for sensory stimulation reached 42% interest. All other suggested Futuristic tools, apps/ New innovative medical devices in my body (technological wellness)/ Biohacking methods/ Wellness metaverse (AR, merged reality, haptics) – received much less interest (4% - 21%).

The word cloud from writing in your own words, by Webropol bought up important factors in word forms highlighted as: professionalism, overall, relief, relaxation, service, quality, trained staff, clean or cleanliness, experience, options, expect, energy and knowledgeable. Hence, the creation of the Moodboard took in tunes of all of these in visual form, to create harmonics of colors, aesthetics, atmosphere, the spa feeling of meditative and happiness within, activities, treatments, and the travel map on behind other visuals, with the mention of Travelmyth and Travel. Services, which showed less interest were excluded from the Moodboard. These were: Standard Medicine services (0%), Sports facilities and Gym (12%), Hair Salon services (12%), Weight Control Wellness services (24%), and treks in nature (36%). (Global Wellness Summit, 2020-2023; Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023; Canva, 2023; Facebook Group Survey by Webropol, 2023.)

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7.3 FSSF chart

The meaning of this chart framework is to organize the data obtained from various sources regarding spa industry. Processing all kinds of signals and observations, according to the information gathered, helps to form a deeper understanding of what is important and why people plan and choose the spa destination, and why they think to invest on the spa services.

In this Future Signals Sense-making Framework chart the data is obtained from the Facebook group survey, from the global wellness trends, (Wellness Summit, 2020-2023), from online social media discussions, world news and Travelmyth company database. Moreover, it is assessed and organized according to the known structure of the framework (Kuosa, T., 2020). The observations are reflected through evaluation whether the collected future-related information is diverse enough or do we need to continue looking for more data. Following this principle, I chose to make sure the information used here was from varied sources, so I added also social media platforms and world news observations, to indicate the existence of our human reality, general knowledge bubble, presence in the world. This way it is possible connect the trends and the business better into the study subject, to form a larger picture of the spa industry importance from the company perspective.

In summary, the FSSF analysis suggests valuable insights for the hotel and spa meta search engine company, with both emerging opportunities and potential challenges driven by societal shifts, technological advancements, and changing values. The company can capitalize on the convergence of these weak signals, drivers, and mega-trends to shape its strategies for the evolving spa industry.

A. <i>Weak Signals,</i>	<u><i>Seed of change</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metaverse emerging to wellbeing from games. 	<u><i>Business as usual</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No big changes in spa industry since the recent
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direct observations of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to try odd things on increase. Mind expansion. Life is now. • Gathering stuff disinterest people. • Money power loosens grip, do it anyway. • Normal careers transform to distance work or hybrid. • Back to the beginnings of spa with thermal water and natural, authenticity seekers. 	<p>decades major transformation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water element in spa environment is still the cornerstone of business. • Booking systems and search of information is mostly digital, yet that happened two decades ago already. • Old packaging of spa and hotel combos may still attract older generations for a decade towards future.
B. Drivers, ushering to change	<p><u>Push factors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic resources • political turmoil • community spirit • technical innovations • organizational support worldwide • Stress relief is searched by all generations. • New generations lifestyles, demand of change. 	<p><u>Pull factors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People look for balance in their individual lives. • People vision of freedom to choose lifestyle, have better overall health. • People live longer and want quality of life, great health, and fitness till old age. Biohacking. • Authentic, thermal water spas, smaller villages travel, and nature related travel is on the rise.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick shares via blogs/ vlogs, influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure in many spas already exists
<p><i>C. Mega trends, historic and beliefs, economics etc.</i></p>	<p><u><i>Weights that slow down change</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shutdowns i.e., Covid19 pandemic. • Wars with economic, financial and resettlement challenges. • Distracting demands from opposing religious/ cultural backgrounds. • Beliefs of spa is luxurious and only rich can afford. Other limiting beliefs, taboos, and restrictions to use spas or travel freely. • Bureaucracy, rules, laws, restrictions to provide for ex. CAM in co-operation of other medical treatments. • Earthquakes and floods, strange weather conditions in different parts of the world. 	<p><u><i>Trends and structural changes</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work nomads and distance work creates new ways of living and traveling. Timing the work anywhere, anytime, and not waiting for pension. Communities. Crowdsourcing. • Loneliness counterbalanced by new community spirit action with art, organizational and global ideas. Loneliness and mental health issues recognized through generations. • Water elements and nature important for stress relief. • Values directed to personal and universal purpose and gratification from within. • Quest for quality of life and meaningful living, liking your work. • Distrust to old political systems.

Chart 6. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Modified according to Kuosa, T., 2020.

7.4 Trend analysis charts

The trend analysis process was created according to the model: “Trend Impact Analysis” of Gordon, T. J., 2009, applied by Finnish researcher, Kuosa, T., in the ELLO-HANKE, KymiTechnology, introduction to futures research methods guide. I chose five interesting trends according to the findings of Global Wellness Trends, from 4 years’ timeframe 2020- 2023, which were then arranged sub-categories and analysed through their impact to the spa industry. In addition to this data, I also utilized my survey results and used my knowledge of spa and wellbeing trade to support the process of choosing the trends, which were explored further. FSSF preliminary analysis tool indications were also used to observe all general variables and factors in history and present, giving deeper background insight choosing the trends and analysing their impact to my study subject, spa industry and category importance to Travelmyth company.

7.4.1 Trend 1 – Water and Multisensory Experiences

Water element and the use of thermal and mineral water treatments, creates strong foundation to spa industry business. This trend is confirmed in all the searched data, I have studied in the past months. Here the water offerings combine with the emerging, innovative multisensory experiences, with the timeless sensations created by water in spa, and the visual offerings of the surrounding environments. Introduction of multisensory elements to spa experience gives opportunity to create deeper experiences and long-term holistic outcomes to spa clientele. For example, the scents bring aromatherapy benefits and birdsong with other pleasant nature sounds, to aid the stress relief.

In the search for deeper relaxation, this trend creates pathways also to life-style changes, re-designing spa to different generations of people, and may arguably bring new life to older, smaller spa villages by relatively small investments in the spa offerings and atmosphere. Therefore, the foundation is in water element

offerings, and the added value comes from the multisensory elements, creating desired long-term outcomes and thus, more loyalty from customers, as they get more value for their investment. Quality in all levels of auxiliary services, and necessary education, will pave the structures of future spa, to support the novel innovations of technology, existing discreetly on the background.

Technology is appreciated and respected, when it helps people to achieve more value, more relaxation, ease for their lives, but people in general try to avoid too much technology when relaxing, so all these innovations are better to be on the background, unseen, with subtle and uplifting effect, not to intimidate stress of being monitored and supervised through technology. In the survey the medical technological innovations did not create interest, but the sensory and other more holistic ideas did. Same tendency has been present in the past four years of trends. New generations, used to technology since birth and experienced in the gaming industry, may arguably change this interest altogether. Similarly, another strong all-encompassing trend is experiencing authentic nature, resulting stress relief and balance with technology. Therefore, I draw the conclusion, the innovative technologies are more acceptable, when they are useful and valuable, and do not limit freedom or free will to live lives according to individual choices.



Figure 8. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Canva. Trend analysis chart.

7.4.2 Trend 2 – The Authentic and Natural Experiences

Second larger trend emphasises the authenticity as general attribute, with nature, increasing the spa experience satisfaction by adding this element to its offerings. It gives more answers to different generation expectations and varying demands, creates community spirit through activities, and it is part of the dynamics of change through environmentalism, sustainability and adapting to new technology. The discussion about the need and interest for natural environments, has shown signs of deeper importance while looking for the balance in life.

Introducing art has been observed to have a beneficial outcome, both city and countryside surroundings. Besides managing relaxation and energising in all levels of existence, the aim is to gain overall benefits from the spa stay. Holistic practises include various elements forming connection to nature. In general, the

need to support balancing the mundane stress-related issues, while aiming to find long-term solutions to the wellbeing of the individual and the communities, has been increasing potential.

On the other hand, the company investments developing spa environments, create more work and customer satisfaction to the areas where spas are situated. Gardens maintenance and other vegetation and water elements inside and outside, creates continuous jobs. Cleanliness, professionalism, compassion, and quality is important to the clientele, including creating good reputation and instant recommendations to promote spa offerings and prevent dissatisfaction to do the opposite. These things are not new factors to spa industry, yet the speed of which the clients can share their experiences, is. Social media has immense power. The hotel and other meta search engines providing information about spas, hotels, and auxiliary services, need to pay attention to this. The different generations are arguably coming closer to each other within this trend of nature and genuine experiencing.

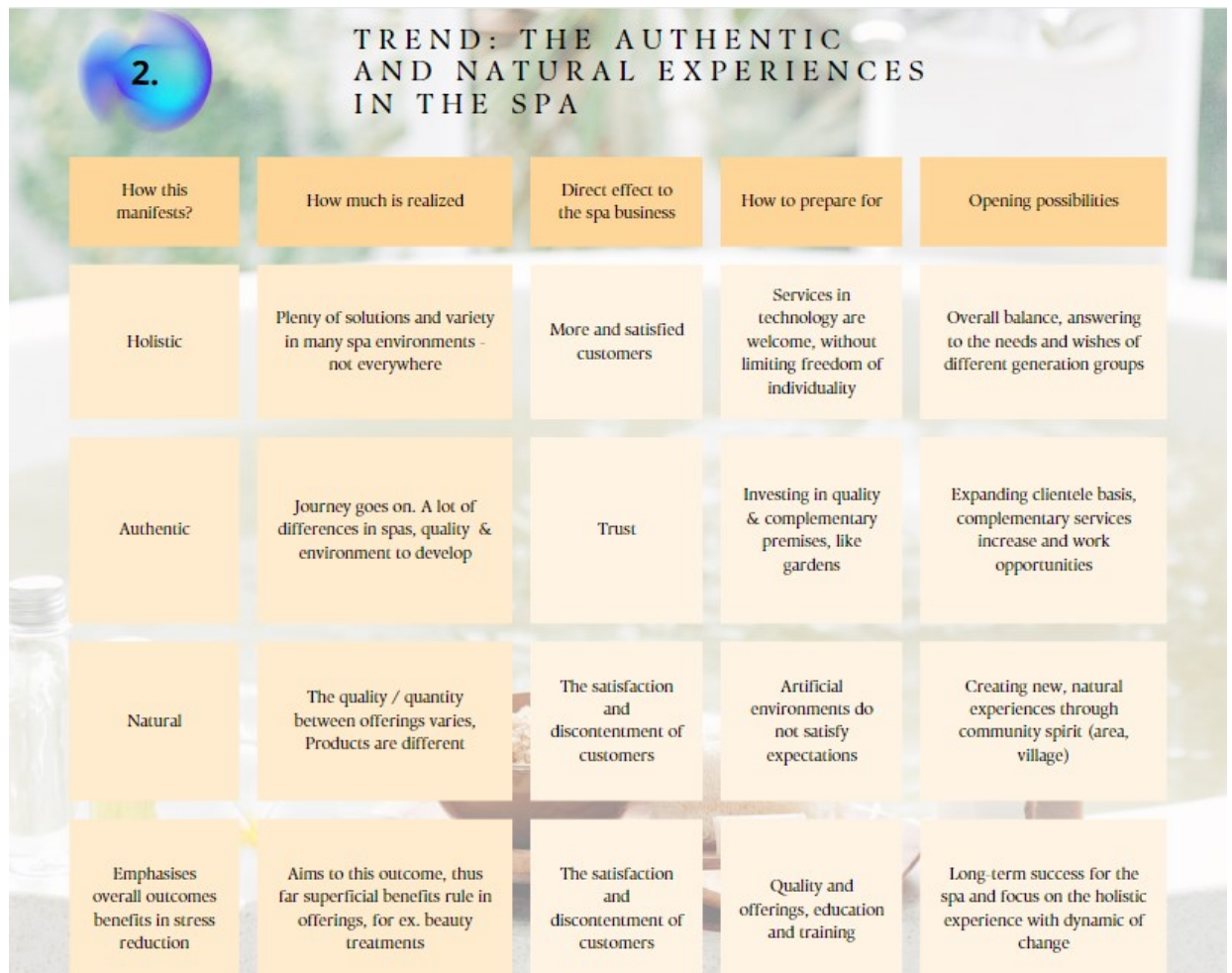


Figure 9. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Canva. Trend analysis chart.

7.4.3 Trend 3 – Holistic and Spiritual Wellbeing

Holistic wellbeing is one of the big emerging trends and this creates a demand for myriad of other services and treatments within the spa industry. Spiritual wellbeing is incorporated to most holistic treatments and even into the whole outcomes of the spa experiences at increasing pace. The hectic life and challenges with issues of stress are behind this development. Softer values, looking inside to the capacity of our minds, finding solace in the spiritual practices, and searching ways to find lasting balance to relax actively, has been the counterforce of demanding working life, constant, big changes in the social and technological structures of the world we live in.



Figure 10. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Canva. Trend analysis chart.

7.4.4 Trend 4 – Community Spirit as Counterforce for Loneliness

Loneliness and mental health issues are raised to awareness, resulting more people to openly search solutions, self-worth, “soul purpose”, healing from traumas – to find their place in the world. People are introduced to new ways to connect with other people as well as overcoming loneliness issues. We do not need to be biologically related to find the “soul family” or share time with different age people. Besides, the mental health is closely connected to loneliness issues and therefore, the new community spirit thinking has potential to help healing these problems affecting large base of individuals in the world. Seasonality issues can be seen to benefit from introducing new kind of customers and ideas to spa environments, all year round, and possibly utilizing less busy weekdays to support local area people by providing them tailor-made services.

This trend for community spirit as counterforce to loneliness in all generations, is creating a demand for novel spa encounters, groups formed in spas for example, encouraging to marketing and supply changes in the future. This trend has potential to fortify local communities by creating interreactions with people of all social and cultural backgrounds. It is also present in the ideas, like, for example, old people homes joined together with orphanages to give human beings needing interaction and affection, chances to meet and help each other, to feel wanted, loved, and supported.

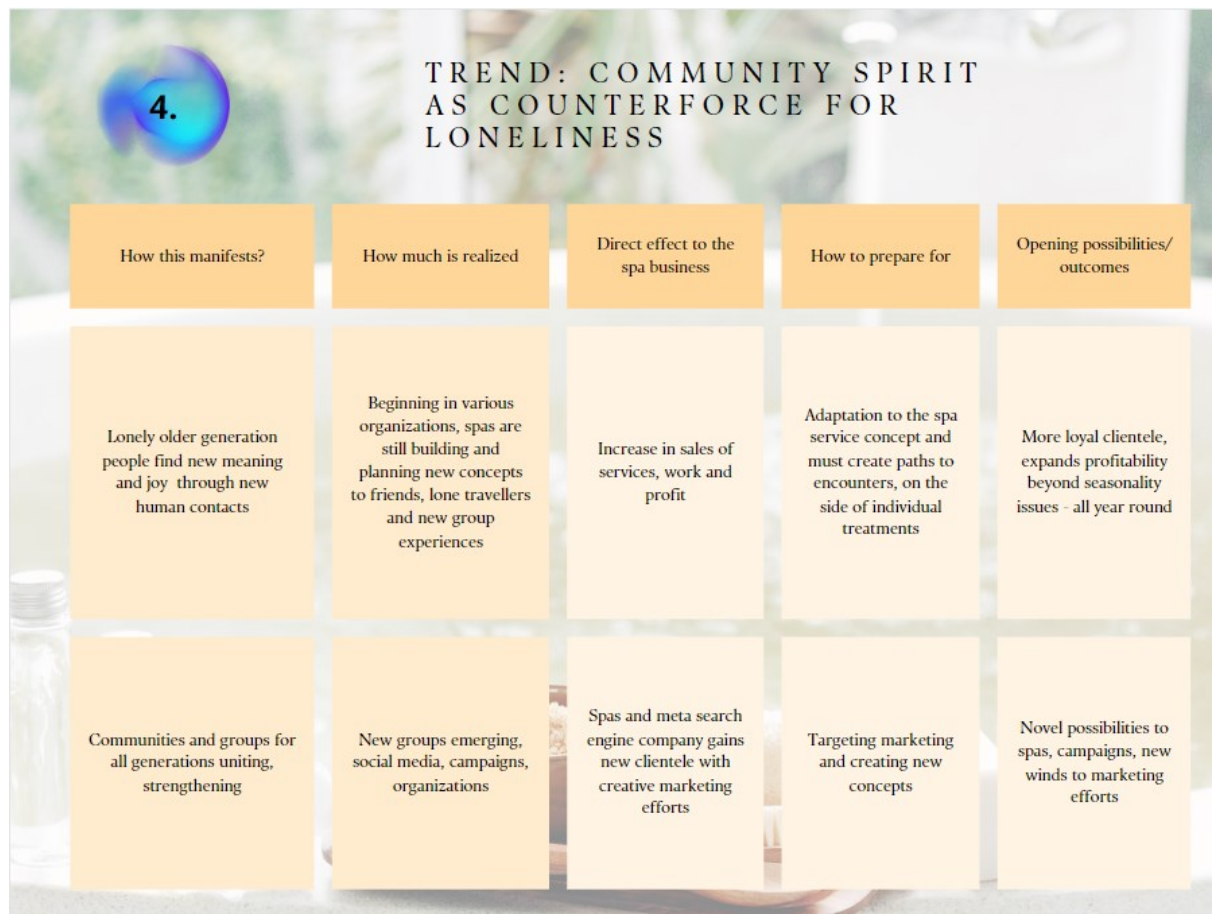


Figure 11. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Canva. Trend analysis chart.

7.4.5 Trend 5 – Novel Travel and Destinations with Special Interest

Lastly, I explored the trend for special interest destination travel, and novel ways of travel and work practices, affecting the spa industry. This trend includes working nomads, volunteering and new communities emerging with strong

emphasis to use digital media in their work and free time. The nature and quest for authentic experiences is present in the background and the technology is utilized to create desired lifestyle and income. There are indications of different expectations in this novel travel group in comparison to the general spa user clientele in the past. Using technology and online searches, booking systems, these people know a lot, have experienced more than most. This poses questions of the suitability of the offerings and the nature of values. Arguably the possibility to do work exchange in the spa or other organization/ company, connected to spa environments, may please these people, who want to give back to the community.

To point out one significant observation, luxurious settings, prices, and pretenses of wealth, seem to create less interest in future for the larger audience in new generations. This may well be due to the deeper sense of inner abundance and “value for the money” thinking. Therefore, for example, when living costs have risen in the past years and sustainability issues have become more important, the general attitudes turn against wasting resources. In addition, the nature preservation, carbon footprint issues and other environmental concerns are everyday topics in the world.



Figure 12. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Canva. Trend analysis chart.

7.5 Futures Wheel

Futures Wheel method was developed by Jerome Glenn, 2009, and it is a structured mind map type observing method of visualizing the future. The tool gives the possibility to organize, understand and outline different viewpoints of future and possible repercussions. The primary impacts are arranged around the major phenomenon, trend or question observed. Inside the circumference the eight areas most affected by the observed phenomenon “spa and future”, surround in their own clusters. In this analysis they are travel, activities, nearby areas& environment, values& attitudes, technological development, education, medical treatment and taking care of health. Next level outwards display the consequences of the primary impacts in secondary layer of cluster. The futures wheel continues to third layer, unraveling the implications to future possibilities. In

this analysis, I utilized the data from the trend analysis, FSSF analysis chart, as well as observations from previous studies, and the survey results.



Figure 13. Marienberg-Usher, K., 2023. Canva. Futures Wheel.

8 DISCUSSION

The research objectives of this study have been to explore main attributes of all generations, within lifestyle behaviour and interest towards spa tourism.

Moreover, it has been to investigate the challenges the spa industry will face in

the future due to different generations' expectations, changes in cultural, technological, and value-oriented factors: spiritual, holistic, and material offerings - and expectations and their outcomes. In addition, the observations have aimed to evaluate current marketing and visibility efforts in Travelmyth Company and create a platform to find out how to improve both effectively according to the results and conclusions of this study. In the completion of the study, I have given the above-mentioned objectives a lot of focus and I have approached these broad subjects on various angles, from the viewpoint of a customer, company, spa, and wellbeing industry as well taken into consideration previous research on spas and background theories.

The research guidelines to this study have been the question of the future importance of the spa category, which is currently one of the most popular categories of Travelmyth business environment. This has included the exploration of the myriad of changes, phenomena, which are occurring in the variables of cultural, generations, socioeconomics, and values of potential customers. It has searched answers to the research questions: Will the category importance stay the same or change in either direction? Observing the analyses of this study, which are recommended actions to invest within the company? In the following sub-chapters I have given these questions answers according to the findings of this multifaceted research work.

8.1 Interpretation of the Results

The process of analysing the results and exploring the meaning of the results has been performed by layering the futuristic method tools and investigating the results through each method separately. Further interpretation of the results to the commissioner, is done through 8cell SWOT and customer journey, to adjust the outcomes of the results to the company marketing purposes.

8.1.1 FSSF (Future Signals Sense-making Framework)

Emerging trends found in the assessment of this chart are the wellness metaverse and a willingness to explore unconventional experiences indicate a changing mindset toward virtual and real-world activities. Simultaneously, disinterest in material possessions suggests a shift towards experience consumption, which is supported by changing attitudes towards money and the transformation of values in careers, highlighted by evolving consumer behaviors and work structures. The desire to return to spa origins, emphasizing on authenticity and nature, signifies a growing interest in traditional wellness practices.

Drivers of change bring forward the economic, political, and community factors acting as catalysts pushing for change across various sectors. The technological innovations and organizational support play pivotal roles in driving industry transformations. Moreover, the stress relief as a universal need, combined with changing lifestyles, pulls individuals towards wellbeing-oriented changes. In addition, all digital influence, quick sharing in social media platforms, news, and influencers shape consumer preferences and choices.

Challenges and influences slowing change present themselves as factors like shutdowns, wars, cultural differences. Limiting beliefs act as barriers, slowing down the pace of change. Structural changes, such as the rise of work nomad's lifestyle and the recognition of mental health issues, influence societal dynamics.

8.1.2 Trend analysis

Summary of Spa Industry Trends:

Trend 1 – Water and Multisensory Experiences:

The water element, particularly thermal and mineral water treatments, forms a foundational aspect of the spa industry. Multisensory experiences, combining water sensations with aromatherapy and nature sounds, offer deeper and more holistic spa experiences. Technology, when subtle and supportive, enhances value and relaxation; however, excessive visibility may deter clients. A balance

between technology and nature is crucial, especially for new generations familiar with technology since birth.

Trend 2 – The Authentic and Natural Experiences in the Spa:

Emphasis on authenticity and nature in spa experiences satisfies a diverse range of generational demands. Community spirit, environmental sustainability, and adapting to new technology are integral parts of this trend. Social media amplifies the speed at which clients can share experiences, influencing reputation and recommendations.

Trend 3 – Holistic and Spiritual Wellbeing:

Holistic wellbeing is a prominent trend, driven by the need for balance in response to hectic and stressful lifestyles. Spiritual wellbeing is increasingly integrated into holistic treatments and spa experiences. The trend reflects a counterforce to the demanding nature of work and constant changes in societal and technological structures.

Trend 4 – Community Spirit as Counterforce for Loneliness:

Rising awareness of loneliness and mental health issues prompts people to openly seek solutions. Community spirit serves as a counterforce, creating a demand for novel spa encounters, group experiences, and marketing changes. Initiatives like combining old people's homes with orphanages exemplify efforts to foster human connection across generations.

Trend 5 – Novel Travel and Destinations with Special Interest:

Special interest destination travel, involving working nomads and new communities, impacts the spa industry. Technology is used for work and leisure, with a focus on authentic experiences and lifestyle creation. Luxurious settings

and high prices may be less appealing to a larger audience, as inner abundance, and value-for-money thinking gain importance.

8.1.3 The Futures Wheel

The Futures wheel begins in the center of Spa and Future. That and the first layer of clusters form the primary level, which consist, in this analysis clusters, of travel, caring for health, medical treatments, technological development, education, values and attitudes, environment/ near areas and activities. The analysis radiates from primary level to secondary level and multiplies in connectivity with other factors forming consequences in between the secondary and tertiary levels.

Traveling and transportation are of major importance to the spa industry as customers need to find their way to the spa destination. Before this is possible, the services of hotel and spa destination information providers, like Travelmyth hotel and services meta search engine company, are used in connection with the airline and other transportations providers. Planning and booking process ends to actual booking sites of accommodation, additional services, and spa destination services.

Activities has been considered important as the trends and survey results have indicated long time interest to try and test new methods of physical and spiritual exercises in spa environments as well as provide continuation services to those who wish to practice during the spa stay. Activities provide more work opportunities in the spa destination, both in the spa and in the neighborhood areas. Outcome is improved life quality and wellbeing for the spa customers and the workers.

Next the near areas and the environment impact is analysed. Work opportunities individual or project basis creates success in the spa destination area. Other co-operation with the spa and local businesses is likely to happen and expand the success.

Furthermore, the values and attitudes follow in this layer. In this cluster, the observations highlighted the community spirit, volunteer work organizations and interest to compassion, authentic interactions, and cultural exchange with genuine care for the environment and people living in the destination.

To continue this a bit further, it is good to point out that the quality of services and the attitudes of the staff, were mentioned in the Facebook group survey I made and in previous studies, as very important factor to come back to the spa and to feel satisfied of the investment on the spa holiday.

Technological development is part of any business nowadays and travel and tourism business depends on the digital services these days, either directly from providers to customers or using various kinds of travel agents, mostly online. Thus, the importance of the usefulness of the software and other equipment and tools and platforms to the companies, needs to be up-to-date and follow new evolution of the applications, innovative learning artificial intelligence, other methods like hologram and haptic technology.

The experiencing itself is under major changes in the future, hence the mention of augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR) and metaverse technologies opening new ways to save nature and be part of many deeper level experiences. Spas could even attract new generations by virtually created areas for experiencing safe adventures mountain climbing, or rafting, mountaineering, paragliding, and safaris, for example. After virtual adventures the tranquil spa life gains even more value in contrast. Of course, this is one of the expansion ideas, answering the future potential customer preferences. Furthermore, spa environments could use the AR/ VR/ Wellness Metaverse to create the feel of “real India” for Ayurvedic treatments, meditate in the atmosphere of an ashram, Hawaiian ritual massage, Polynesian dances classes in an island setting, Tai Chi in China and customize the other experiences offered. Or there can be combination of culture, art experiences the way people may “walk into the art, historical era” and experience also treatments in this realm of reality. Possibilities

of this kind of experiencing are limited to imagination and technology. (Chao et al, 2013.)

The searches and bookings follow certain known processes developed to common use in the past two decades. The next twenty or thirty years will most likely bring new ideas to this area of expertise and the companies working in the field will be most affected by any changes in this regard. Searches may include the pre-purchase sensory tours on chosen area of interest.

Education and the vitality of it comes clearly out in the previous studies on the outcomes of the spa experiences and in my survey results. Arguably the knowledge and the skills are achieved by education of the staff as well as leadership skills in spas, in the organizations connected to spas and other wellbeing travel field businesses. Co-operations between institutions, universities, trade education in country specific and international levels, are founded in the cornerstone of knowledge, skills and innovations, and act as drivers towards the future people create. More high-level education directed to spa management and creativity management, will be important to find. Wellbeing Tourism education, including CAM (Complementary and alternative medicine), need to be recognised and criteria created in European and World level. Media management and knowledge is crucial, from the company perspective and the consumer point of view as people will need more practical learning on this matter.

Especially for the spa environment and their specific services, the next clusters separate caring for health and medical treatment. Both arguably aim towards the health of people, living quality life into old age. Trends lead the way of integrative and complementary medicine approach, including known terminology of CAM (Complementary and alternative medicine) all of which promote the holistic and mind, body, soul healing aspects. Many medical treatment facilities in spas are present for the sake of certain interventions needing medical professionals to perform and supervise the procedures. These methods include healing the physical body and beauty related treatments. The holistic approach on the other hand, investigates healing the body, mind, and spirit as they are known to have a

close connection. The healing with these methods, integrated or not with the modern medicine approach, gives longer lasting positive outcomes to the whole health of the individual and usually inspires to positive lifestyle changes. Post pandemic recovery centres idea has been researched to help the victims of more severe or long symptomatic illness. Some spas are more equipped to do this kind of work, especially some of the larger traditional spa destinations in Eastern Europe.

Taking care of health includes holistic healthcare of mind, body and spirit, meditation, and mindfulness, with yoga, qigong, ayurveda, massages, water element treatments, various forms of exercise, being in connection with nature and multisensory experiences. In between these two healthcare systems more integrative co-operation is in demand, while the spa environment is presented as a good place to begin this positive work. The spas may be less intertwined with large pharmaceutical companies, controlling the western medicine industry, and may act as mediator to develop co-operation. Outcomes of the holistic care are valuable changes to lifestyle, overall sense of wellbeing and improved quality of life. Appreciation and mutual respect with established co-operation, will add up to the satisfaction of the customer, and create again more loyalty and revenue, this time to the spa and all other businesses involved in the planning and searching and booking processes.

Global changes follow the larger scale of work and technological evolution towards more intelligent diagnostics, distant or hybrid work, freedom to live and travel anywhere in the world. This is again connected to new technologies emerging, the goodwill of people voting against the wars and joining forces to prevent catastrophise like devastating earthquakes, floods, and tsunamis through new technologies, intelligent solutions to living areas and nature protection.

8.2 Discussion of the Findings

For finding deeper roots and causes of the chosen research area, I have investigated the important factors concerning the study subject of spas and spa

category future. To begin with I ask: What motivates people to choose a spa holiday? Nowadays the spa visits' purpose has been mostly for relaxation and pampering basis. Large part of the spa and hotel holidays also emphasizes marketing to the luxurious spa holiday offerings, with an expensive image to prevent expansion of clientele. Further back on time, traditional spa healing had medical background and people from different socio-economic status visited water healing spa centres to find long-term solutions to their health-related challenges in life. According to the findings of this study there is a detectable tendency to want authenticity, quality, professional services, value for money, and deeper experiences, including the nature and water elements.

The underlying reasons may vary for personal preferences but observing the general patterns, in the need of balancing individual lives amongst constant mundane stress-related issues, people seek for solutions to manage stress and find lasting balance, regardless of the socioeconomic, generation, or cultural background. Hence, the holistic, long-lasting positive lifestyle outcomes, can create deeper sense of overall wellbeing, health, success, and loyalty in return.

Trends point out that the technology is accepted on the background, giving discreet benefits to the spa holiday, like in the multisensory soundscapes. Instead, for example the implanted medical health monitoring tech used in the body, did not receive interest in the performed survey, so this kind of use of technology needs time to prove its value and purpose. Booking methods and testing the possible spa holidays in more interactive ways gives potential for technological experimentations. When a trend grows through masses of people, the different ideas are more acceptable and adaptable and the curiosity to try new innovative technology is high in the younger generations. In general demographics of spa customers, this kind of development will take time and most likely positive examples of the beneficial usage of the technology in the world.

Very clear indication is the water and all treatments using this element. Thus, instead of having recreational spa use for family fun (more common in Nordic countries), the older, genuine way to benefit overall health through the mineral

water spa services, has begun to re-create interest. Even more so, people tend to have desires to deeper lifestyle changes now than in many decades before. Purpose of life and the quest to find ways to better health and overall relaxation of the mind, body, and spirit with strong aspects on nature as resource, have gained huge interest. Spirituality, also without religious tendencies, is valued and sought after. Authenticity of any experience is on demand throughout of the trends and on findings in the analysis processes.

The indications of the trend analysis and the survey results, suggests the need to find answers and solutions to modern day stress and mental health related challenges in human life. Related to this, the question is: Do people prefer to find deeper impact on their lives through holistic approach by integrative, complementary, and traditional medicine with possible outcomes as lasting changes in their lifestyles, or stick to the usual medicinal and exercise practises? Analyses indicate that the emphasis is going to keep on directing the demand towards holistic and integrative medicine and overall whole experiences and learning a new way of life. Proceeding in the same way and expecting different results does not work, so change is inevitable. The search for new kind of methods has also begun to expand to energy healing and more immaterial practises in the wellbeing industry.

How much do the income levels and attitudes of different generations affect the possible choice of a spa visit? Moreover, how the purchasing behaviour and preferences of the spa experience, impact the future of offerings in the spa industry? The stress and the impact on peoples' lives, is crucial in creating the demand. The stress is present in every socio-economic status nowadays and affects many generations of people. These questions are important indicators as the value for money suggest more demand for quality and point out the importance of the outcomes. The pricing of the offerings does matter to people nowadays economic crisis and there is indicators this way of thinking is not going to change soon. All these factors will define how much more frequent spa visits and combinations of service offerings interest people.

Another way to look at the forming of trends and what influences the choices of the potential customers is to ask whether the underlying hidden or open attitudes or beliefs, in cultural, socio-economic, and political views, guide the choices, or just individual preferences? The influencers and social media does have impact to people's behaviour and even the in the creation of trends. Quick sharing and the instant feedback gives active online users quite a bit of power, though the constant messaging and texting is also one of the stress factors of modern way of communication. Cultural impact is still quite significant guiding the choices of the destinations, where people travel to. Political views and restrictions and even wars may have influence due to the country of origin, where the spa is located.

8.3 Implications of the study

To begin exploring any repercussions to the customer journey from the planning, booking, travel and experiencing the spa and its environments, I made variation of SWOT analysis with the 8-cell SWOT. Besides providing understanding for the meta search engine business area, the analysis gives ideas and indications from different perspectives, considering spa related business opportunities. In the following analysis the implications of this study of the Future aspects of the Spa Category importance to Travelmyth business environment, has been translated to suggest a wide variety of possibilities and development ideas for the benefit of the company strategic and marketing management planning.

8.3.1 8-cell SWOT analysis for a hotel and spa meta search engine company

Strengths

- Advantageous algorithms for personalized spa recommendations.
- Integration with emerging technologies like AR/VR for virtual spa experiences.
- User-friendly interface for seamless spa search, discovery and booking.
- Positive customer reviews and high satisfaction rates.

- Unique selling propositions such as exclusive spa partnerships.
- Customized packages and loyalty programs for users.
- Healthy financial reserves for strategic investments.
- Strong brand presence in key markets.
- Positive media coverage and awards for innovation.
- Customer relationship management system for personalized customer interactions.
- Loyalty programs and incentives for repeat customers and bookings
- Established partnerships with numerous spas and spa hotels globally.
- Robust technology infrastructure for efficient meta search.

Weaknesses

- Reliance on partnerships may limit the reach in some regions.
- Limited brand recognition in certain regions.
- Difficulty in competing with well-established competitors.
- Cultural differences impacting user experience in certain markets.
- High initial costs associated with technology development.
- Dependence on continuous technological advancements.
- Difficulty in adapting to diverse user preferences.
- Potential difficulty in communicating unique value propositions.
- High costs associated with maintaining exclusivity.
- Dependency on Customer Relationship Management software reliability.
- Balancing personalization without intruding on user privacy.
- Vulnerability to economic downturns impacting travel and leisure spending.

Opportunities

- Strategic partnerships for mutual financial benefits.
- Exploring additional revenue streams like advertising.
- Utilizing data analytics for more targeted promotions.
- Building a community around the hotel and spa search engine.
- Niche marketing to specific target demographics.
- Expanding partnerships to offer exclusive services.
- Untapped spa markets in emerging economies.
- Potential to offer localized experiences and deals.

- Early adoption of new technologies for a competitive edge.
- Potential for partnerships with tech companies for joint ventures.
- Collaborations with design experts for interface enhancements.
- User feedback for continuous improvement.
- Strategic marketing campaigns to enhance brand awareness.
- Sponsorships and partnerships with events in untapped markets

Threats

- Negative online reviews impacting reputation.
- Rapid changes in user preferences.
- Economic instability impacting the disposable income of potential customers.
- Intense competition leading to pricing problems.
- Rapid technological changes making current solutions obsolete.
- Vulnerability to cyber threats.
- Imitation by competitors reducing differentiators.
- Changing consumer preferences affecting exclusivity.
- Data breaches impacting customer trust.
- Negative publicity regarding privacy concerns.
- Negative publicity impacting brand reputation.
- Intense competition from global competitors.
- Economic downturn impacting travel and leisure spending.

Exploit (Strengths + Opportunities)

- Leverage established global partnerships to enter untapped markets.
- Utilize robust technology for personalized, targeted spa experiences.

Repair, Develop (Weaknesses + Opportunities)

- Allocate resources for expanding partnerships in regions with limited reach.
- Develop a strategy for continuous improvement in user feedback.

Prepare, Anticipate (Strengths + Threats)

- Develop contingency plans for increased global competition.
- Stay financially agile to navigate economic downturns impacting spending.

Prevent, Avoid (Weaknesses + Threats)

- Implement measures to prevent negative online reviews affecting reputation.

8.3.2 Customer journey to spa hotel experience

This example of experiencing of the customer journey is in a form of a list to imagine the way a potential spa visitor may perceive the process of planning and booking, traveling, and staying in the spa. In addition, it reflects to the outcomes of this process, both short-term and long-term and the way the spa infrastructures, and neighboring area supports the visitor experience.

- Pre-visit images and marketing message information from the spa category search and or the social media advertisement.
- Pre-visit information provided by the meta search engine services by categories.
- Possible AR/ VR simulation to pre-visit the possible destination spa.
- Making choices, proceeding, and directed to bookings.
- Confirmation on all bookings.
- Journey to destination spa, various agents providing services. Taxis, trains, airport services, air travel, car rentals, road conditions.
- Arrival to the spa destination and finding booked accommodation, places to eat. Initial welcome to the destination.
- Introduction to amenities, activities and attractions in the destination spa and the district.
- Participating in the spa days schedule and reserved treatments and program.
- Environment and infrastructure of the spa business.
- Farewell, outcomes of the spa visit.
- Return journey home.
- After visit contacts, customer reviews and sharing memories. Loyalty programs.

8.3.3 Overall implications

The potential customers and what motivates people to choose the spa experience, is the one to focus, as without the people using the services, the study and spa and wellbeing industry with its multifaceted service provider agents, in online, brick and mortar, social media platforms, sites and search engines, would not matter. The quality of the service chain from start to finish is in key role. The professional and targeted offerings providing holistic, nature-centric, and authentic service outcomes, will result in more loyal and satisfied customers.

9 CONCLUSION

This study has been focusing on the wellbeing/ wellness tourism motivations and sought answers to why people choose different spas and spa hotels, and the outcomes importance, after the participation to the treatments and experiences in the chosen spa. The research has explored on what is important to the future spa travellers, and what kind of spa destinations, locations, and services they want to use and furthermore, why they people choose to go to the spa destinations. The results in this study point out that the water element remains the foundation of the spa destination. What is new, is the demand for authenticity, community spirit and spirituality in a larger scale.

The difficult challenges of mental health and loneliness issues have emerged to everyday discussions and awareness of this has inspired to find solutions beyond the norm of societal services. Besides this development, involving community spirit to create interreaction between people has become popular and the novel ways of living and traveling have increased in short time of two decades, changing the thinking of careers and work.

Investments in authenticity, natural surroundings, and community-building initiatives can lead to increased customer satisfaction and positive sharing through social media and influencers. The spa business can benefit from innovative approach to technology, ensuring it enhances rather than

overshadows the holistic spa experience. Recognizing the demand for holistic and spiritual wellbeing, spa offerings emphasis needs to focus on this as well as to the need for long-term outcomes and overall balance. Sustainable and value-driven practices become important as societal concerns about the environment and resource preservation influence consumer preferences. Hence, the materialistic values and high-end luxury in expensive offerings is trending to diminish demand in the future.

The spa as destination market has many elements which the emerging or present trends support. The futures research as a scientific study field offers a rapidly evolving cross-scientific discipline, seeking answers through human behaviour, interactions, technological developments, and evolution in nature.

According to the results and conclusions of the analyses, the main aspects of this study are the changes in trends and value structures that are driving the demand towards community spirit and experiencing authenticity. In addition, the holistic self-improvement of the individual, with emphasis on freedom of choice, long-term outcomes, and importance of the natural resources, will continue to expand.

The reflections suggest that the spa category will continue to play an important role in the future, although the content of the different emphasis of the category will evolve from luxury to holistic and sustainable in the future.

9.1 Summary of Key results

The shift in trends towards authentic, more nature-centric experiences for larger demographic groups of travellers', suggest affordable stays in destinations, welcoming more diverse clientele to the spa visits. Results in trend analyses indicate the high-end luxury spas, may diminish interest, when the sustainability, community spirit and environmental values change the way people think and act in their lives.

The opportunities for the hotel and spa meta search engine company indicate that the emphasis on authentic, nature-centered experiences need to align with the company's search services. Moreover, the recognition of the importance of water elements and nature as stress relief, correlates with the company's huge database on category offerings, providing a market advantage. There is also indication to create innovative services and partnerships as potential future customers from new generations, have increasing willingness to experimental experiences. Future customers demand quality services, are conscious of the money they have invested and place expectations on the outcomes of the experiences, including positive long-term lifestyle changes, with emphasis on spiritual and holistic wellbeing.

Strategic considerations for the Travelmyth company include possibility to leverage technological advancements to enhance user experiences and stay ahead of the industry changes. Furthermore, collaboration with spa destinations emphasizing authenticity and nature could strengthen the company's offerings' market position, and in general the marketing efforts should focus into the rising demand for holistic wellbeing travel. The adaptation to novel work structures, such as distance work, community spirit, and volunteering, can influence the seasonality in positive way by increasing the quieter week time and seasons usage of the spa destinations and change the overall nature of the spa bookings, involving the target group marketing efforts.

Furthermore, the 8cell SWOT analysis provides valuable insights, how to capitalize on emerging trends, ideates how to answer to challenges in the evolving spa trade markets, and stay ahead of the competitors.

9.2 Development suggestions for commissioners

The major potential customers are those who want to find solutions to their problems, in holistic way, using wide variety of the spa destination services, so focusing the marketing efforts on these target groups is recommended. They are interested in self-development and overall balance of the body, mind, and spirit,

and reflect their choices and experiences actively in social media. Spa environment experiences, as well as marketing efforts can be directed to larger audience as the true luxury users are marginal, small group of high earners, or inherited money and thus outsource their search and other arrangements on regular basis. Exclusive services for this niche group users of spa services can be a profitable possibility, nevertheless, in accordance with the company resources (Costa et al., 2013; Future Foundation, Amadeus, 2015; Travelmyth, 2023.)

Another suggestion is to re-invent, at least partially, the social media marketing efforts to possible and affordable, visual images with clear messages, emphasizing on values that matter to the potential future customers. Presenting different levels of affordable, uplifting, authentic and natural in the marketing visuals, creates true interest to book a stay, not just gape and dream, which often happens, resulting dismissal very quickly as not possible. Therefore, suggestions need to focus on possible marketing solutions for various customers from different generation bases. Factors affecting future marketing are the affordable choices and good quality of service outcomes throughout the offering lines. Monitoring this development may take another technological leap to success. Communication and sharing online and posts in social media need scheduling and active launches with explorative multitarget marketing management plan, which is also monitored weekly, to react quickly and allow flexible changes to take place when appropriate.

9.3 Limitations of the Study

Spa industry is a part of the dynamically expanding wellbeing tourism industry; therefore, this study has been outlined to investigate the spa environment and the future possibilities and challenges of this wellbeing business area. The focus on this research has been exploratory approach, to localize, recognize and understand trends, signals, factors, and phenomena, in larger context in the

wellbeing market and reflect it through the Travelmyth business, and the spa category.

This study effort was targeted to spa category future importance and the direction this area of the wellbeing tourism industry may take in near and far-reaching future. Research gap exists on many areas on the wellbeing industry offerings and the outcomes. The spa industry and the agents in between can benefit on various new research concerning the customers journey and quality control issues.

9.4 Reliability and Ethical Aspects

The resources and references used in this research are from professional and primary printed and online sources, and originate from the background research in Kaakkuri, Finna, University of South-Eastern Finland online library services, and other searches in well-known databases like the following: Google Scholar, Theseus, Science Direct, Pub med, Scopus, Web of Science, ResearchGate and Elsevier. In addition, I found information online from Sitra and Visit Finland sites, Facebook target group survey, social media platforms, world news and my studies in the South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences.

Specific emphasis in this study was given to most recent sources of research during the six months of background work, including active observations on media discussions in different platforms. The observations from older research and other information were primarily used according to relevance and stability of the data. The reliability of this research is based on use of professional and well-known research and pioneering futurists' study data, which I perused extensively, months before the actual writing process began. The scope of this study and the fact that I have only once before done any research in futures research methods in the first research methodology course, may limit the reliability. Also, this scope of study would benefit an expert panel of researchers work in co-operation.

Personally, during this process, I was missing a research partner to brainstorm, ideate and explore processes together on many occasions.

Choosing the exact methods and tools in this study, took a lot of pondering, merely by extent of the field and the subject. I decided to participate to new courses last spring, to understand better the future innovations and their repercussions in future and how to choose the method tools that complement each other. Futuristic study is constantly evolving and demands regular updating of the available information. Further research and studies are recommended to peruse this matter in greater detail.

The survey on Facebook target groups seemed a great idea, yet it may need a different question base or incentive to get more people interested to answer. The survey I designed and shared in over 60 Facebook target groups produced a low quantity of complete answers (25), while 29 people begun it, but did not complete it, even the interest to open the survey 1012 times, was established. The survey may have given better results in participation using other channel of data collection or combination of social media. (Facebook Group Survey, Webropol, 2023.)

9.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The world has entered the intelligent technological innovation revolution, and the pace of it is quicker than ever in written history. Therefore, it is crucial to humanity, to map, to investigate and to test a great deal in the research field with all methods available. Besides, to make observations, implications, and challenge various arguments on what the future brings forward, people need to prepare for the changes and understand the repercussions of various decisions and choices. The implications of the technological advancements will need expert advice to the ethical and legal issues utilizing the technologies, whilst protecting all aspects of humanity.

Specifically, the changes in the spa industry in the past three decades have been huge, and according to my searches and findings, the research on spa, is almost entirely from Eastern Europe and Spain with a few deeper visions from Asia and Germany. Therefore, more research is needed to help exploring the consequences of human activities forming the future, in the field of ever-expanding wellbeing and wellness tourism, to which spa industry elementally belongs.

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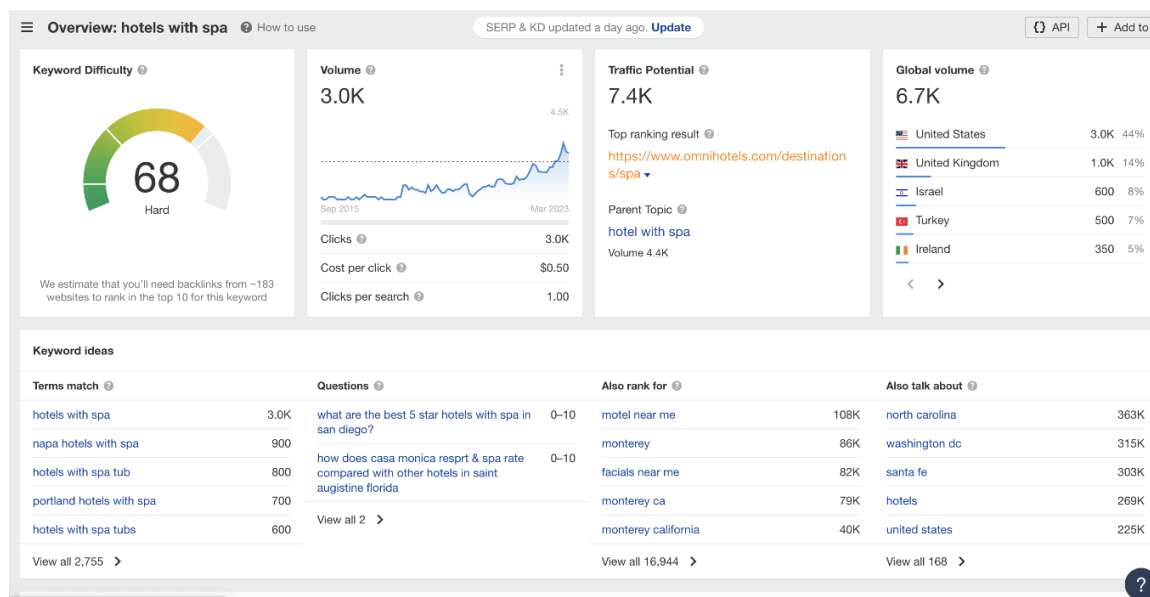
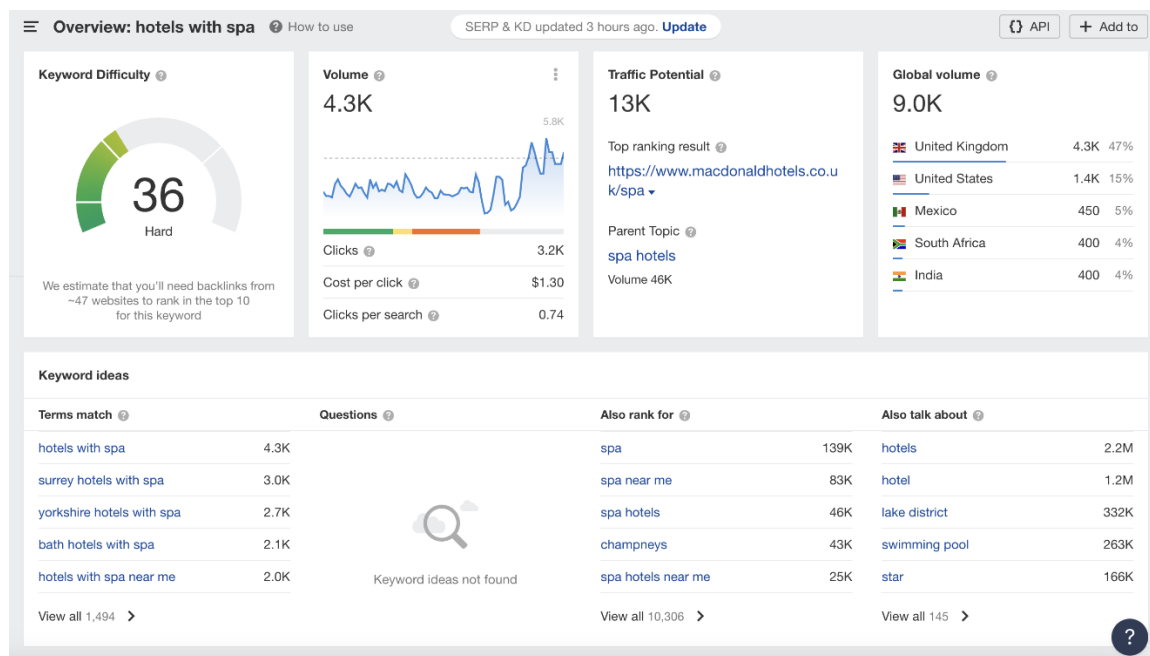
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Webropol Facebook Target Group Survey Questionnaire



Spa Industry Futures Research Survey

1. I am

☐ Woman

☐ Man

☐ Other

2. My age is

☐ 18-30

☐ 31-45

☐ 46-58

☐ 59-85

☐ 86+

3. My cultural heritage and ethnicity is

☐ Asian

☐ Caucasian

☐ African

☐ Hispanic

☐ Other

4. Which of these Spa destinations would you consider traveling to? Choose 1-3 from below.

☐ Eastern European Spa

☐ Central European Spa

☐ Mediterranean Region Spa

- ☐ UK Spa
- ☐ Asian Spa
- ☐ Oceanian Spa
- ☐ North American Spa
- ☐ South American Spa
- ☐ Middle American Spa
- ☐ African Spa
- ☐ None of the above

5. What kind of wellbeing and spa related services you want to use in the spa destination? You may choose as many as you like.

- ☐ Ayurveda
- ☐ Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) - Holistic Medicare methods
- ☐ Aromatherapy
- ☐ Phytotherapy (Herbal methods)
- ☐ Standard Medicine services
- ☐ Meditation / Mindfulness
- ☐ Qigong, Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, etc.
- ☐ Energy Healing methods (Reiki)
- ☐ Sports facilities and Gym
- ☐ Spa treatments for the body
- ☐ Spa treatments for the face
- ☐ Luxury Wellness Spa services
- ☐ Weight Control Wellness services
- ☐ Hair Salon services
- ☐ Massage and Manipulation therapy methods
- ☐ Treks in nature
- ☐ Thermal and mineral water therapies
- ☐ None of the above

6. Outcomes of the spa experience - write in your own words

What are the long-lasting results to your wellbeing?

Does the short-term relief match your expectations? _____

What is important for you to return to the spa? _____

The relevance of the quantity and variety of offerings in spa environment for you? _____

What are your expectations regarding the professional staff in spa environment? _____

7. Spa services / offerings in my holiday spa destination are to me - choose one from below.

- ☐ Useful and important
- ☐ Not relevant or useful
- ☐ I have no opinion

8. Which of these keywords in your online searches for spa destination would you use? You may choose many and / or write your own.

- ☐ Hotels with spa facilities
- ☐ Hotels with spa treatments
- ☐ Hotels with spa services
- ☐ Hotels with spa rooms
- ☐ Hotels with baths in rooms
- ☐ Hotels with private hot tubs
- ☐ Hotels with spa
- ☐ Hotels with spa near me
- ☐ Other _____

9. Choosing a spa destination, what is meaningful to me - choose 3 most relevant from below.

- ☐ Value for money
- ☐ Outcomes of the spa experience giving me long-lasting relief / results
- ☐ Luxurious environment and additional wellness services
- ☐ All-inclusive option offered

-
- ☐ Destination region has other interesting offerings to explore and enjoy
 - ☐ Rewinding and relaxation in different environment apart from my mundane life

10. When choosing a spa destination, I would like to experience - you may choose as many as is meaningful to you.

- ☐ Old, traditional methods, like thermal water treatments
- ☐ Religious / spiritual practices
- ☐ Futuristic tools and apps
- ☐ New, innovative medical devices implanted in my body (technological wellness)
- ☐ Futuristic energy healing innovations -using electromagnetics, light and sound
- ☐ Art, installations / feng shui environments for sensory stimulation
- ☐ Biohacking methods to "eternal youth"
- ☐ Wellness metaverse (AR, merged reality, haptics)
- ☐ Added multisensory elements (scents, sounds, taste, touch, visual)

Overview

☐ Show advanced statistics

Questions

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 1	I am
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 2	My age is
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 3	My cultural heritage and ethnicity is
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 4	Which of these Spa destinations would you consider traveling to? Choose 1-3 from below.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 5	What kind of wellbeing and spa related services you want to use in the spa destination? You may choose as many as you like.
<input type="checkbox"/> Question 6	Outcomes of the spa experience - write in your own words: What are the long-lasting results to your wellbeing?
<input type="checkbox"/> Question 7	Outcomes of the spa experience - write in your own words: Does the short-term relief match your expectations?
<input type="checkbox"/> Question 8	Outcomes of the spa experience - write in your own words: What is important for you to return to the spa?
<input type="checkbox"/> Question 9	Outcomes of the spa experience - write in your own words: The relevance of the quantity and variety of offerings in spa environi
<input type="checkbox"/> Question 10	Outcomes of the spa experience - write in your own words: What are your expectations regarding the professional staff in spa e
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 11	Spa services / offerings in my holiday spa destination are to me - choose one from below.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 12	Which of these keywords in your online searches for spa destination would you use? You may choose many and / or write your
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 13	Choosing a spa destination, what is meaningful to me - choose 3 most relevant from below.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question 14	When choosing a spa destination, I would like to experience - you may choose as many as is meaningful to you.

Select all

Statistics

Question	Count	Average	Confidence interval	Median	Standard deviation
1. I am	25	1.12	0.99 – 1.25	1	0.33
2. My age is	25	3.16	2.89 – 3.43	3	0.69
3. My cultural heritage and ethnicity is	27	2.93	2.55 – 3.3	3	1
4. Which of these Spa destinations would you consider traveling to? Choose 1-3 from below.	95	5.48	4.9 – 6.07	5	2.89
5. What kind of wellbeing and spa related services you want to use in the spa destination? You may choose as many as you like.	200	9.34	8.64 – 10.04	10	5.03
11. Spa services / offerings in my holiday spa destination are to me - choose one from below.	24	1.33	1.05 – 1.61	1	0.7
12. Which of these keywords in your online searches for spa destination would you use? You may choose many and / or write your own.	77	4.09	3.54 – 4.65	3	2.48
13. Choosing a spa destination, what is meaningful to me - choose 3 most relevant from below.	68	3.13	2.68 – 3.58	2.5	1.89
14. When choosing a spa destination, I would like to experience - you may choose as many as is meaningful to you.	80	4.61	3.94 – 5.28	5	3.06

Correlations

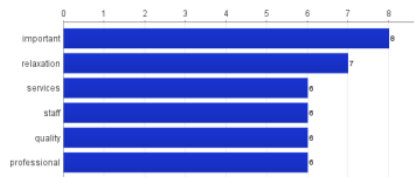
	1	2	3	4	5	11	12	13	14
1	1	0.09	-0.24	-0.04	-0.45	-0.15	0.03	-0.14	0.14
2	0.09	1	-0.18	0.14	0.07	-0.21	-0.19	-0.33	-0.25
3	-0.24	-0.18	1	-0.16	-0.36	0.04	0.18	0.19	0.09
4	-0.04	0.14	-0.16	1	0.09	-0.15	-0.11	-0.3	-0.29
5	-0.45	0.07	-0.36	0.09	1	0.25	0.11	-0.16	-0.17
11	-0.15	-0.21	0.04	-0.15	0.25	1	-0.1	0	0.28
12	0.03	-0.19	0.18	-0.11	0.11	-0.1	1	-0.16	-0.12
13	-0.14	-0.33	0.19	-0.3	-0.16	0	-0.16	1	0.09
14	0.14	-0.25	0.09	-0.29	-0.17	0.28	-0.12	0.09	1

Outcomes of the spa experience - write in your own words

Word cloud

about absolutely always amount atmosphere caring chatter clean cleanliness customer depending
determines effect effective energy evocation **expect experience** extra follow general great guests
health healthy heard highly hospitality immune **important** inclusion increase intelligent intuitive
knowledgeable knowledge knowledgeable level match mental muscle needs non-biased options overall
peace perform personal physical polite products **professional professionalism**
professionally provides **quality** quantity really reduction **relaxation** relaxed relief service
services short shower skilled skills staff steam still stress their there trained treatment
variety vichy working would

Words



Word map



All

- A good spa spirit
- Feeling well
- Good
- Friendly
- Relaxation
- yes it provides immediate help
- They are helpful, professional and committed to each person's satisfaction and quality of overall experience
- Very Important. I consider myself a non-traditional spa goer!
- More vitality
- the "FEEL" and "Energy"
- Yes
- Relaxing, professional, non-biased, intuitive.
- Not very. Preferred services matter most. Will go to a specialist.
- Lower stress, more mindfulness
- Being heard. If I say my legs hurts, work on them, not just the extra muscle you found in my chest
- result
- less stress
- important
- good education
- relaxation
- Not always
- High
- Very
- Relaxation
- Professional clean affordable knowledge of staff
- Most often it does. There have been rare occasions it did not because of staff.
- Pleasant, caring, knowledgeable and professionalism
- The look and feel, cleanliness, professionalism of staff, service and skills. I
- Healthy mind and body.
- I'll take quality over quantity.
- Yes
- Great customer service
- Yes
- Peace
- Great atmosphere
- Effective treatments
- Increase energy, stress reduction
- No
- To perform professionally and skillfully and be knowledgeable
- Yes
- Hospitality
- Peace and relax
- It's important
- They should be polite and intelligent
- Yes
- Skill of therapists; quality of thermal bathing experience.
- Improved mental clarity and immune system

- Quality of offerings is key.
- Licensed, skilled, and professional behavior
- Yes.
- Good atmosphere and environment
- Increases general wellbeing
- Of course it is important
- Kind service and skills to perform the work
- Yes
- affordability
- relaxation
- very important
- I expect them to not ask too many personal questions.
- relief
- Not always
- That they listen to and follow through on my needs, that they be clean, that they limit chatter, and don't try to sell me products.
- It's important if I am staying more than a week, a reasonable variety of options would be welcomed.
- Ability to get and stay fully relaxed for more than a day after the experience.
- Laid back atmosphere, cleanliness, no sales pitches for products
- Somewhat, for temporary
- Clean, smell fresh, energetically grounded
- It would depend on what the spa offers. It needs to have a good flow. I've seen spas with a wet room but no Vichy shower or a Vichy shower but a short pointless Vichy shower experience that moves fast
- Physical & metaphysical health, if done right
- Spa that offer everything from massage, to spa pools, to a wet room with a Vichy shower. A complete feel of relaxation and actual noticeable benefits
- ??
- They enjoying doing what they do.
- ??
- My overall health.. ??
- The methods are working.
- I wish there was more long term relief
- To act professionally
- I'd rather have less done well than too many
- Knowing that I have a habit of self care
- Worth the time & money
- Most of the time.
- Very professional, yet personable, knowledgeable, polite and kind.
- I like a variety of options, but it's more important that the technician or Medical staff are very skilled in their field.
- Better Mental Healthcare and quality of life
- Anesthetics, cleanliness, professionalism, kindness and inclusion.
- yes the short term relief matches
- Depending on my choice of services, caring and attentive but I'm ok with the large spas also
- Not really I'm looking for certain services that apply.
- Healthy mindset, healthy body.
- My outcome determines my return. If the care has a longtime effect that I'm still talking about. I'm returning
- Sometimes. Depends on the level of service and if the flexibility - if I book a treatment weeks ago, is that still the service I need when I arrive? Sometimes, but sometimes my needs have changed and there is not flexibility at the destination to match the change.
- I expect professional staff to be well trained and knowledgeable about the services and products they are providing to the guests.

- I am not worried if a spa has a huge menu, more worried with mastery of execution of the services they provide.
- The learning I take with me. Each experience provides an opportunity to learn something.
- Clean. Treatment provider is skilled and well trained. Service, not just spa but overall service, was anticipatory and executed with care.
- Yes
- Care and knowledge
- Very relevant
- To feel good
- Personal relationship with masseuse
- Cleanliness, amount of services received
- Im always thinking about relaxation techniques and where to go to receive them.
- I don't understand this question
- Depending on the spa, I expect a certain level of professionalism.
- Yes, it does.
- Absolutely
- Expect high quality highly trained staff.
- Extremely important. I enjoy options.
- Self care and relaxation
- Amenities, saunas, steam rooms, baths