



# **ANALYSIS OF DREAM HOSTEL TAMPERE WEBSITE**

with Experience Pyramid

Jari Moilanen

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TAMPEREEN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU  
Tampere University of Applied Sciences

## **ABSTRACT**

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The importance of internet in society today has grown rapidly. People use all kinds of services via internet and it has become so common and secure that they do not even think about it. Internet provides great possibilities for those who can take the best out of it. It also grants small time business owners inexpensive or even free marketing chances and availability for millions of users.

At the same time, tourism is growing and expanding rapidly. People travel more and more. Travelling is not a privilege anymore but accessible from rich to poor. The world is getting smaller and because of the recession even companies are more careful where they accommodate business travelling employees.

The purpose of this study is to explore the world of internet and tourism, especially hostelling. Combining the two industries and making it an experience benefits both. The subject was selected out of the writer's own interest and after four month's internship in a small tourism company which has received many awards and which challenges the traditional hotel chains.

Phenomenological analysis with the experience pyramid by Sanna Tarssanen is used to get a thorough view and to acknowledge the current situation of the website under analysis. Furthermore, after the analysis is conducted there are suggestions to help to give ideas on how to improve the holistic experience of the website in question.

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Key words: dream, hostel, experience, pyramid, virtual tourism

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The world has changed since Thomas Cook organised the first known one day group travel trip in 1841 (Thomas Cook, 2014). Nowadays people in developed and developing countries have more time and money to travel while the travelling itself has also become more and more affordable, granting the access even to the most remote places. For example, it is not seen as anything special in Europe if someone you know has been in other continent. Travel hungry customers who cannot afford to travel physically, can still dream about the next destination via internet.

Travelling and new technology has always been close to my heart and in today's world they are closer to each other than ever before. Tourism is already an enormous industry. International tourism has been increasing even due to the economic instability and the growth was stronger than expected with 4% international overnight stay growth resulting to over 1 billion tourists (United Nations World Tourism Organisations Barometer Volume 1, 2013.)

Internet has changed the way we live our daily lives and offers possibilities to save time and money. We can communicate with people who are thousands of kilometres away from us, we can virtually visit places we have never been to and we can share the experiences of our lives with a single click. Although internet is already a must-have for millions of people, still two-thirds of world population is without internet (ITU, 2013.)

These two industries combined have huge potential and they provide a platform also for the smaller companies, like Dream Hostel Tampere, to be seen and acknowledged while planning for the accommodating options before the actual trip. In this research I will analyse the current holistic experience of Dream Hostel Tampere website by using the experience pyramid by Sanna Tarssanen and Mika Kylänen. I also make suggestions for enhancing the holistic experience of the Dream Hostel Tampere website in order to stand out from the competition in the internet.

## 2 RESEARCH PLAN

### 2.1 Thesis topic

I chose to analyse the holistic experience of Dream Hostel Tampere website because before my interests were in travel industry, I liked to play around with new technologies. Nowadays it is inevitable that almost in all the industries there is at least some sort of connection to technical appliances and more increasingly, internet. According to International Telecommunication Union ITU, which works under the United Nations, more than one third of world's population is connected to internet (ITU, 2013). More importantly the nations with the highest internet penetration percentages are the nations who also have money to travel, so it goes without a saying that tourism business has to have visibility in internet to be successful.

I chose Dream Hostel Tampere because I was doing a four month internship there and felt like their view of the world as a company reflected a lot of mine too. I want to promote hostels as great option to be accommodated. I have also been staying in hostels before, longest period of time being five months straight and wanted to promote social and sustainable tourism that I think Dream Hostel Tampere is about. According to Eurostat tourism statistics from 2011, on holiday trips only around 10% were spent in hostels or other social accommodation (Eurostat, 2014).

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the Dream Hostel Tampere website by using experience pyramid created by Sanna Tarssanen, the CEO of House of Lapland, also known as LEO and to provide suggestions how to improve the website so that the visitors get a pleasant experience by visiting the site and thus leading to a possible booking from Dream Hostel Tampere's own website. Also different aspects of internet marketing, direct response communication and search engine optimization will be viewed to help in the analysis of the website. For a small company like Dream Hostel Tampere this can lead to a bigger profit, as the external booking sites usually take a certain percentage of each booking made through them.

## 2.2 Concepts and theory

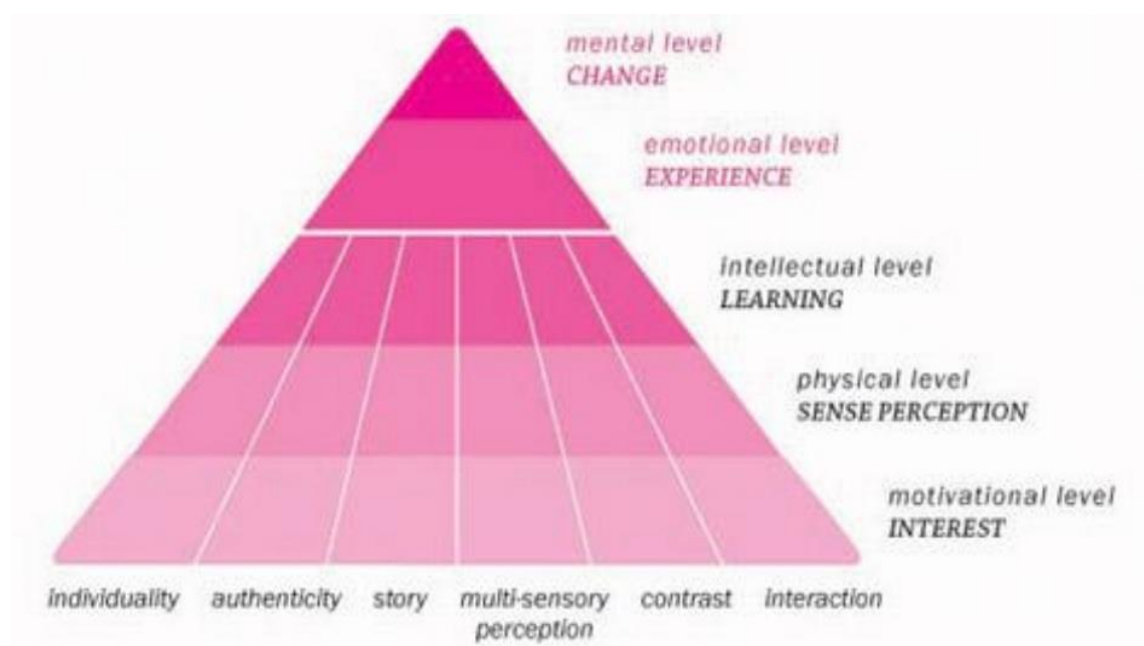
Main concepts of this thesis are hostels, experience, pre-experience, experience pyramid.

Definition of a hostel by Hostel Management website is the following: “A hostel is a budget-oriented, shared-room ("dormitory") accommodation that accepts individual travellers (typically backpackers) or groups for short-term stays, and that provides common areas and communal facilities.” (Hostel Management, 2014.)

Experience in tourism is hard to define as everyone is different and experiences vary from person to person, but generally speaking it can be described as an emotion that person feels after certain thing has happened.

Pre-experience is an experience where a person has an image and expectations of something that has not occurred yet. A good first impression can be achieved through careful planning of the website using multi-stimulus solutions.

Experience pyramid is a tool for developing or analysing services by Sanna Tarssanen, CEO of House of Lapland (Leo Finland, 2014.)



PICTURE 1. Experience pyramid (Tarssanen, 2005).

### **2.3 Research questions**

Research questions are questions to which I try to answer to with my research. Research questions form an important part of the thesis as they give structure to the thesis and they keep the thesis together.

Main research questions in this thesis are the following:

1. How is Dream Hostel Tampere website designed from the holistic experience point of view?
2. How could I improve the holistic experience in the Dream Hostel Tampere website?

In the first question I form the basis for this research by establishing a clear goal by using specific terms like holistic experience and website, which are one of the main terms in this research. Having a specific question helps to keep the research detailed and its objectives clear.

Second question leads from analysis to development. Having this question forces me to think the possible improvements to the Dream Hostel Tampere website and thus give ideas to Dream Hostel Tampere and also other companies who are willing to improve their website holistic experience.

### **2.4 Data and methods**

Data will be mainly collected from the Dream Hostel Tampere website but also from the literature relevant to the subject. Books and electronic sources are used.

In this research I am using phenomenological analysis which is part of qualitative analysis and described as experience of a person of certain phenomenon from his or her point of view (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2013.)

## 2.5 Research process

The research will continue in the next chapter where I go through the history of hostels in general and continue to Dream Hostel Tampere, its merits and main services they offer.

After the world of hostels has been clarified, I will continue to talk about experiences and its links to tourism. In this chapter we will go through the experience pyramid and its elements and levels.

Next I will briefly mention search engine optimization which is important to get the people to visit Dream Hostel Tampere website.

Once the hostels and the experience pyramid have been covered, the purpose is to link these two together and have a closer look to the website of Dream Hostel Tampere and analyse it from the perspective of holistic experience.

After the analysis I make my suggestions for Dream Hostel Tampere website based on various articles and literature. Aim is to provide suggestions that could actually be used by the Dream Hostel Tampere to offer holistic experience to visitor of their website and turn potential guests to actual guests.

Last chapter consists of my view about the research, what was my point, did I manage to answer the questions I asked for the research, putting everything together and coming to a conclusion.



### 3 HOSTELS AND DREAM HOSTEL TAMPERE

#### 3.1 About Hostels

The idea of hostelling emerged in Germany in 1909 when a school teacher realized the need for affordable accommodation, especially for youth. First hostel was established in 1912 in Altena Castle, Germany. Back then different tasks were required from the people staying at the hostel to keep the costs down. Nowadays the tasks required are kept to a minimum, usually only washing your own dishes is a must (HiHostels, 2011.)

Hostels are an inexpensive way to spend a night and learn about the destination. Hostelling is a communal form of accommodation so there are people sharing the same room but also other types of rooms are available, depending on the hostel. Rooms can be single-sex so only same gender travellers are allowed in the room or unisex, where mixed gender share the room (HiHostels, 2011.)

One of the oldest and most widely spread non-profit hostel organisation Hostelling International has evolved to be the symbolic ambassador of low cost accommodation, peace and social travel covering 4000 own hostels and more than 4 million international members. (HiHostels, 2011.)

I have my own experience of different hostels in different countries. I have stayed in hostels in Spain, Namibia and Latvia. The longest time I have lived in a hostel was five month time in Namibia, Africa. The everyday life there was faithful to the original idea of hostelling and most of the guests there were long-term guests who did chores for the hostel. Living in a hostel is a social way to accommodate oneself and I want to be promoting that kind of travelling as it adds another dimension to it.

### **3.2 Introduction to Dream Hostel Tampere**

Dream Hostel Tampere owner Ville Virkki had never before establishing the hostel, seriously thought that he would become an entrepreneur. The idea of the hostel emerged when he was travelling himself, spent time in hostels around the world and was thinking how could things be done better. The last nudge was when Virkki read about the acute hostel shortage in Tampere area. That was when he actually started to think about if it actually would make some sense to try. Three years later the Dream Hostel Tampere became reality (Ville Virkki, 2014.)

The original strategy of Dream Hostel Tampere was simple, they wanted to be an authentic hostel instead of just a cheap option for hotel. The rooms and the operations were all planned so that they could answer to the needs of international hostel guests. The biggest difference to the other accommodation services in Tampere is that the guest can get a bed instead of a room. This way the guests staying don't have to pay for the whole room if they only need a bed. (Ville Virkki, 2014.)

The challenges of Dream Hostel Tampere are international interest towards Tampere, ease of access by transportation and the knowledge of hostels in domestic markets (Ville Virkki, 2014). Previous are matters that Dream Hostel Tampere cannot tackle only by themselves, but with cooperation to other service providers in Tampere and Finland.

Future plan of Dream Hostel Tampere is to expand. In July of 2014 the Dream Hotel Tampere opened. It has the same entrance and reception with Dream Hostel Tampere and it focuses to attract the guests that like more privacy and hotel services. Long term plans are an opening of a restaurant part and later on another hostel to somewhere else in Finland or even abroad. (Ville Virkki, 2014.)

Dream Hostel Tampere is a relatively new hostel that is part of Hostelling International but independently owned, located close to train and bus station in Tampere, Finland. At the moment of writing they are the only design hostel in Tampere central area. Design can be seen throughout the hostel from fresh materials and colours to specified room names and artwork inside the room with links to Tampere area. The owners are young,

traveller minded couple who have international experience and have been abroad themselves many times (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)



PICTURE 2. Dream Hostel Tampere, common area (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014)

Dream Hostel Tampere has a total of 16 rooms which are of different sizes, bed counts and privacy. The room types are: two bed private room, four bed private room, six bed private room, four bed dormitory, six bed dormitory, ten bed dormitory and sixteen bed dormitory. All the rooms are also possible to be reserved as private rooms if they are empty at the time of making the reservation. For example, sporting teams prefer to stay in the same room to cut costs and for the team spirit so they reserve the sixteen bed dormitory as private room even though there is less than sixteen people in their team (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)

Dream Hostel Tampere has won many awards since it's opening in 2010, including "No. 1 Hostel In Finland" in 2010, 2012 and 2013 (Hoscar, 2014). Dream Hostel Tampere has also been listed as one of the top 10 luxury hostels in Europe by The Guardian magazine (The Guardian, 2013). As the young hostel has been so successful, the owner couple Ville and Eveliina Virkki got an invitation to Finnish Independence celebrations held in Tampere Exhibition Hall, only 50 footsteps away from the hostel (Yle Uutiset, 2013.)

Dream Hostel Tampere customers are of different background, age and social status: kids, young people, old people, individuals, groups, international and domestic travellers. International travellers mainly come from Russia, Japan, Italy and Germany. Although most of the guests are holiday travellers, there are also people who are business travellers or attend studies in Tampere area (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)

### 3.3 Services of Dream Hostel Tampere

Dream Hostel Tampere offers a variety of services. Free services include information about Tampere area, maps, boarding pass printing, wireless internet, bed sheets, coffee, tea, small library, board games, popcorn on Fridays, pea soup on Thursdays, guest kitchen, grill in summertime, luggage room and safety box. (Dream Hostel Tampere.b.)

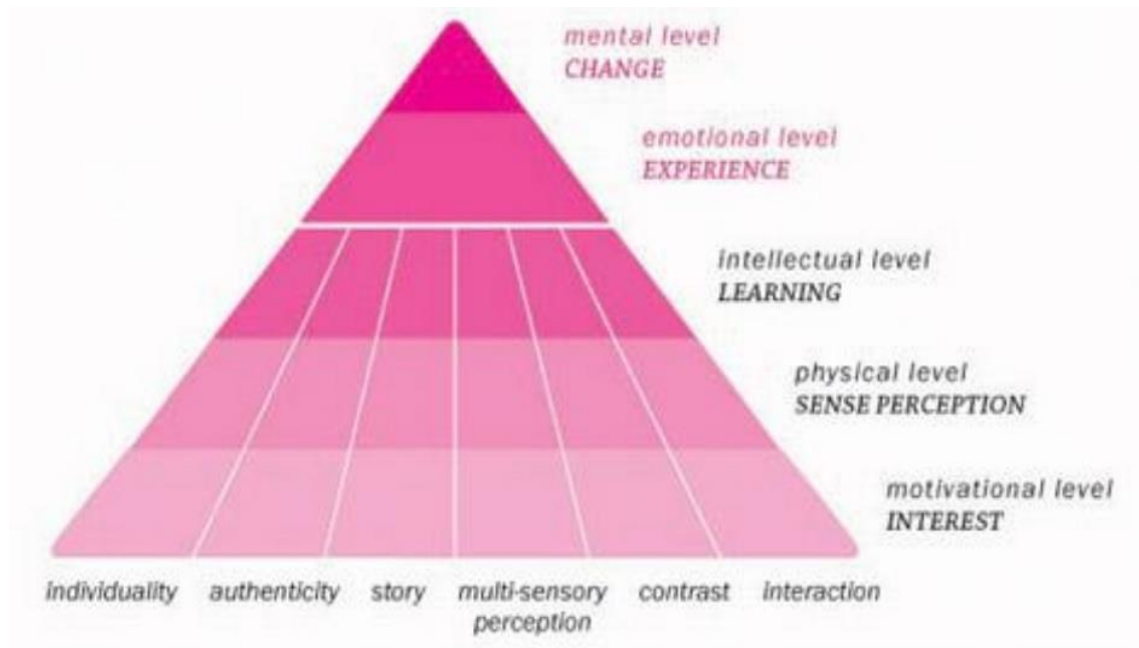
For a small nominal fee guests can use the other services like printing, laundry, mini-market, bikes, trips and tours, towel rental, breakfast for groups, car parking and late check-out. (Dream Hostel Tampere.b.)

As Dream Hostel Tampere is a small family owned private business, they can also be flexible and adapt to customer needs, depending on the case. During my four month training the owner Ville told me about a situation where the guest wanted to have specifically ready omelette for breakfast. Normally Dream Hostel Tampere doesn't serve breakfast for one, but that time Ville came a bit earlier to work and cooked the omelette for the guest without extra fee, only to provide value and individual service. (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014)

As the staff and the owners are young and dynamic with low hierarchies within the company also new services are under constant development. Dream Hostel Tampere cooperates closely with its business partners to provide discounts, events and new experiences to the guests staying there. (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)

## 4 EXPERIENCE PYRAMID

Experience pyramid consists of different elements and levels used to create or analyse experience of a service or a product. (Tarssanen, 2005.)



PICTURE 3. Experience pyramid (Tarssanen, 2005.)

### 4.1 Elements of experience pyramid

Elements of experience pyramid are the aspects mentioned in the horizontal axis: individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast, interaction. (Tarssanen, 2005.)

Individuality is the ability of a tourism business to provide the client with unique experience, which is not available elsewhere or is superior to the competitor. As the tourism industry has become so massive and competitive, the company needs to stand out from the rest which can be done by unique experiences. People are travelling more and more so it is getting harder to satisfy the need for something new and exciting. Designing unique experiences the related expenses increase as the experiences are expected to be special, flexible and something that guest never forgets (Tarssanen, 2005.)

Authenticity means that is the experience the customer experienced real and credible. (Tarssanen, 2005.) Concept of authenticity depends on the perspective. When talking about creating unique experiences, can something created for a tourist be authentic? For example, if a traveller pays to go to Lapland to hear old stories about Sámi people is that unauthentic? On the other hand would the same Sámi storyteller be in Lapland if no tourist would come there to hear their stories? Maybe the reality and thus authenticity of some Sámi people is that they are attracting tourists with their old way of life and the tourist flow keeps it alive? Edward Bruner (1994) leaves the decision for the customer to determine.

Story is in close relation to authenticity. Also the story has to be credible, although it can be a mix of fact and fiction (Tarssanen, 2005.) A good story can change the most common thing to the most interesting. For example, I was on a bus tour in Cape Town, South-Africa and the bus stopped next to a pile of stones. When the tour guide told the first stone in that pile was placed by Nelson Mandela, Nobel peace prize winner, the pile of stones was much more interesting.

Multi-sensory perception means that the experience is possible to be experienced in all the senses in most possible balance. On the other hand, there shouldn't be too much of anything which upsets the balance and thus can even make the experience negative (Tarssanen, 2005.)

Contrast is the possibility of a client to get a different perspective of oneself after experiencing unique, exciting and new experience. The background of a customer should be considered so the out of ordinary can be offered (Tarssanen, 2005.)

Interaction is the communication of the people taking part in the experience. Interaction can raise the value of the experience by having a social connection and thus sense of belonging with the people who want also to experience unique things even though they wouldn't have known beforehand (Tarssanen, 2005.)

## 4.2 Levels of experience

In the experience pyramid vertical axis are the levels of experience which are motivational, physical, intellectual, emotional and mental levels.

Motivational level is the first step as it raises awareness to the product. Already on this level all the unique experience requirements should be fulfilled to catch the customer interest (Tarssanen, 2005.)

Physical level is the stage where the willingness to try the product or service is crossed and the actual experience begins. In physical level the senses tell the customer how the experience itself feels and is the experience pleasant or not. Excluding the extreme sports where the sense of danger is part of the experience (Tarssanen, 2005.)

On intellectual level the physical experience is transformed to thought and a judgement is made if the experience fulfilled the expectations set for it. Good product allows the customer to learn something new, consciously or unconsciously. (Tarssanen, 2005.)

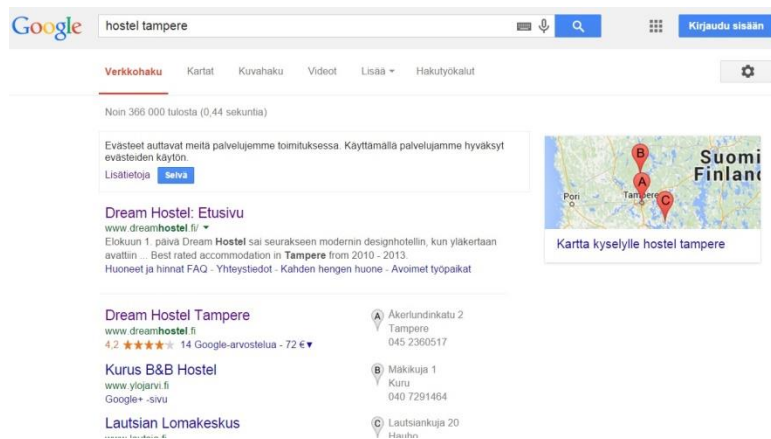
Emotional level is when the feeling of the experience takes over. The reaction is difficult to predict as people react differently, but if the basic elements have been taken into account when creating the experience the person should feel the joy, excitement and happiness (Tarssanen, 2005.)

Mental level is the last level in the experience pyramid. Mental level is achieved when a person unique experience has affected him in a way that changes his perceptive of the world and discovers something about himself that he didn't knew existed before. Changes can be radical and life changing where a former shy person is already next for the new adventure (Tarssanen, 2005.)

## 5 SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

This chapter focuses on the different aspects that are needed to take into account when company's website is in internet. This chapter explains the basics of Search Engine Optimization – SEO.

87 percent of website users use search engines as their first way to find new websites, which means more than 100 million searches each day (Levinson, Meyerson, Scarborough 2008, 104). The first ones on top of the search list are most visible thought to be the most trustworthy. Visitors who find their way to the website are ten times more likely to become actual customers than visitors who find their way to the website somehow else (Levinson, Meyerson, Scarborough 2008, 104). In order to enhance the full potential of the company's website, it is important to get potential guests to visit the website. Search engine optimization, SEO, is the tool to get the visibility for the company using different keywords in different search engines like Google, Yandex, Bing and so on. This is important, because new potential guests might not know exactly what they are looking for. Instead of typing a direct website address, potential guests might use keywords in search engines, for example “hostel, Tampere” to get a list of hostels in Tampere area.



PICTURE 4. Google search, hostel Tampere (Google Search Engine, 2014.)



As seen in the picture by typing “hostel Tampere” the first link shown is Dream Hostel Tampere official website, so the search engine optimization is done right in this case.

Nowadays websites use geographical tracking to give the best local search results for the user. In tourism business this is sometimes a bad thing as the last thing a user wants to get is the address of local hotels when he is travelling to another country. On the other hand, the more the user uses the same search engine, the more individualized content he gets. All the former search history from the same computer or account affects the search results so it is hard to say how the same search would display if done from another country or location.

There are also dedicated websites for accommodation services which have a search engine built inside them to look up only things matching certain criteria. These websites are called online travelling agencies and they take a royalty for each booking made through them. Examples of online travelling agencies are Hotels.com, Hostelworld.com and Booking.com. Below is an example how Dream Hostel Tampere shows in the online travelling agency booking.com.

**Dream Hostel Tampere** Reserve ❤

📍 Akerlundinkatu 2 A, 33100 Tampere, Finland – [Show map](#) 📄 Share

Available rooms   Facilities   House rules   See all **verified reviews**

❤ Save to a list  
Saved to 79 lists

**Property highlights**  
Latest booking: 3 hours ago  
📶 Free WiFi  
Places of interest:  
Tampere Hall (150 m)  
Sorsapuisto Park (250 m)

**Search**  
Destination/hotel name:  
  
 Business  Leisure  
Check-in date

**Fabulous 8.7** /10  
Score from 543 reviews

A very helpful staff, clean place, good kitchen facilities and well located.

👤 Maria, 🇫🇮 Finland

PICTURE 5. Dream Hostel Tampere on Booking.com (2014.)

## **6 IMPLEMENTING EXPERIENCE PYRAMID TO DREAM HOSTEL TAMPERE WEBSITE**

### **6.1 Experience economy**

Goods and services don't fulfil customer needs anymore. (Pine, Gilmore. 1999.) As people can afford to have their basic needs fulfilled, unique manufactured experiences put extra value in the basic product. This way the industrial product has evolved from initial production to experience.

Let's take a coffee bean as an example. Harvesters and traders of coffee bean sell the coffee beans as they are to manufacturers. Manufacturers produce packages of ready grinded coffee beans, in higher price. Restaurants serve the ready grinded coffee and the price goes even higher. Coffee beans become a service and experience. The more refined the product the higher value for the customer and thus a higher price is in order. (Pine, Gilmore 1999, 1.)

Experience is something that people define themselves and it is important that certain type of customers can be segmented and this way offer experiences that the customer soughs for. Nowadays many service providers offer too similar services. Experiences should be unique and stand out from the competition. Experiences are memories. (Pine, Gilmore 1999.) In case of accommodation business and Dream Hostel Tampere, the basic product is offering a place to sleep. Making sleeping an experience to remember is focusing on the small things that add up to good experience. Mattresses have to be in good shape, comfortable pillows and overall cleanliness has to be of high standard. To make the stay at Dream Hostel Tampere an experience to remember, different value adding services exist like mini-market, bike rentals, free information and so on.

## 6.2 History of virtual tourism

Internet is a modern day must. Internet has entwined to our everyday life and lots of possibilities are open for the effective use of the internet and in tourism business it means virtual tourism.

The roots of virtual tourism can be seen already before internet existed. Hand written text can be considered as the first step to virtual tourism as the person did not physically move but was still connected to different world by the speech and idea. Next step in virtual tourism that covered more people was the time of the invention of printed text, which made possible that a wider audience could be reached. Panorama paintings were next step in the virtual tourism evolution as they set the minds of the people who saw them to a whole new world, even though they have never been in that certain place. The motives to travel have remained the same to this day (Matala 2004, 48).

The first device for virtual tourism is said to be the stereoscope. It arrived to American households in the early twentieth century. It was possible to view three dimensional photos of different countries and local habitants. The biggest difference between panorama pictures and stereoscope was that stereoscope made it possible to view the pictures and mind travel in private space and without the disturbances of the surroundings. (Matala 2004, 49-50.)

After the stereoscope was introduced a series of inventions followed. Radio, gramophone and phone transferred the experience in real time to the person using the device. Television bumped the virtual tourism forward. (Matala 20014, 51).

Experience is the communication between the user and the device. (Sihvonen 1995a, 261-262). Nowadays there are a lot of different electronical devices with varying user interfaces. The challenge is to create the experience to all possible platforms so that wider audience can be reached.

### 6.3 User experience of Dream Hostel Tampere website

As experience is defined by the person, I established an interview with Suorsa (2014), student of computer sciences in the University of Tampere, about how he experienced the Dream Hostel Tampere website. It was first time for Suorsa to use the website.

First Suorsa (2014) mentions the clean and easy to use interface. He think it is easy to use for the first time visitor and that also visitor with not much technological abilities is able to find what they are looking for. Suorsa (2014) finds the overall usability of the website good.

Secondly Suorsa (2014) mentions that there are a lot of visual elements that catch the guests interest, for example the colourful pictures. According to Suorsa (2014) Dream Hostel Tampere website does have pictures and other visual elements in balance and it is not been overdone.

Suorsa (2014) does also find some place for improvement. The bike advertisement on the left sidebar seems that it can be clicked, but it does not open anything. Suorsa (2014) thinks it could be improved by making it clickable and leading to more information like how to rent it, can it be done beforehand and maybe pictures of the rental bikes.

Suorsa (2014) says that although the booking button takes to a different website, it would be good to have a link to the Dream Hostel Tampere home page. There is also some misdirecting in links of the website where the English site redirects back to Finnish without pressing the Finnish language button on top of the page.

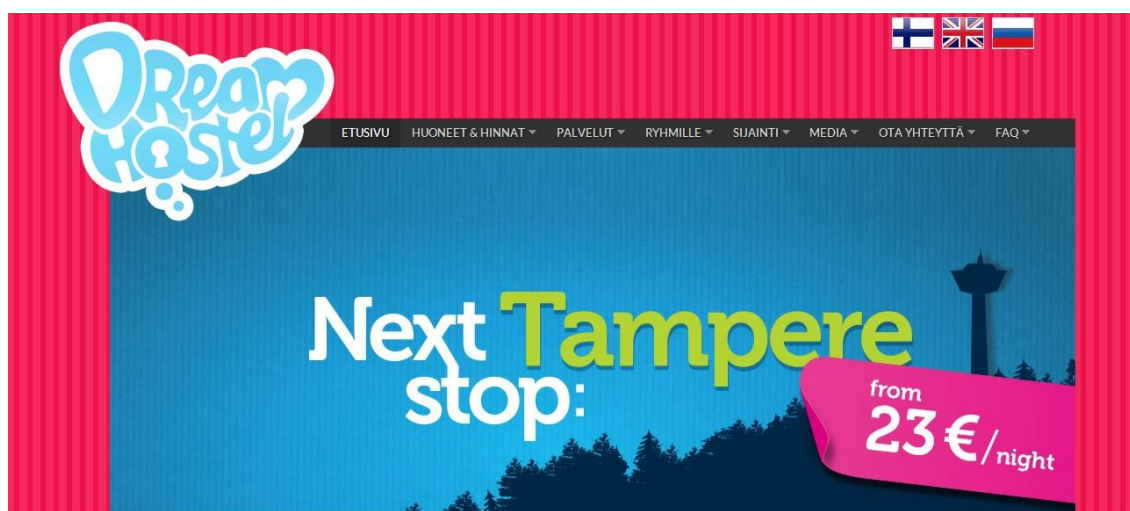
Overall Suorsa (2014) finds the Dream Hostel Tampere website a good website with many things done right, especially with getting the visitor to stay on the page. All the basic information and booking options are presented in easy to use way and thus he would consider booking a bed using the website. However due to some misdirected links and lack of more specific information the holistic experience suffers a bit.

## 6.4 Analysis of Dream Hostel Tampere website

Internet is one of the most important marketing tools for Dream Hostel Tampere, together with word of mouth. Through different online travel agencies, their own website and email comes more than half of all the reservations. The amount of reservations from Dream Hostel Tampere's own website is around one fourth of all online reservations. Website also has an important meaning as a business visibility and source of information (Ville Virkki, 2014.)

In this analysis I will focus on the motivational level and all its elements. I analyse how is Dream Hostel Tampere website design trying to arousing interest in the visitor and are there some things that could be improved to increase the amount of reservations made through their own website.

Dream Hostel Tampere only has Finnish internet domain (.fi) but not universal internet domain (.com) for their website so international visitors might mistype the address in the address bar of the internet browser and get forwarded to a site which has nothing to do with Dream Hostel Tampere. On the other hand visitors can find the Dream Hostel website by using search engines or online travel agencies like booking.com, hostelworld.com or similar. In case the traveller uses online travel agency to book, the design of search engine optimization needs improvement so that the interested guest would book the stay directly from Dream Hostel Tampere website.



PICTURE 6. Dream Hostel Tampere front page (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)

First visual look of the website gives the visitor an idea about the service and the credibility of the company. The more visually pleasing, the more credible the content feels to the visitor. (Tervakari, 2009.) In Dream Hostel Tampere website this is taken into account and the first look of the page gives an image of a smooth and functioning website. The layout of the page is pretty basic with logo on the upper left corner of the page, extra information on top of the page that redirects to the area of guests interest and different language versions in the upper right corner.

Use of more than three main colours is not desired as it makes a rainbow effect to the website and some visitors might look at the page and so the whole company, unprofessional (Levinson, Meyerson, Scarborough, 54). The three main colours in Dream Hostel Tampere website are blue, white and pink so they have not overdone it with the colours.

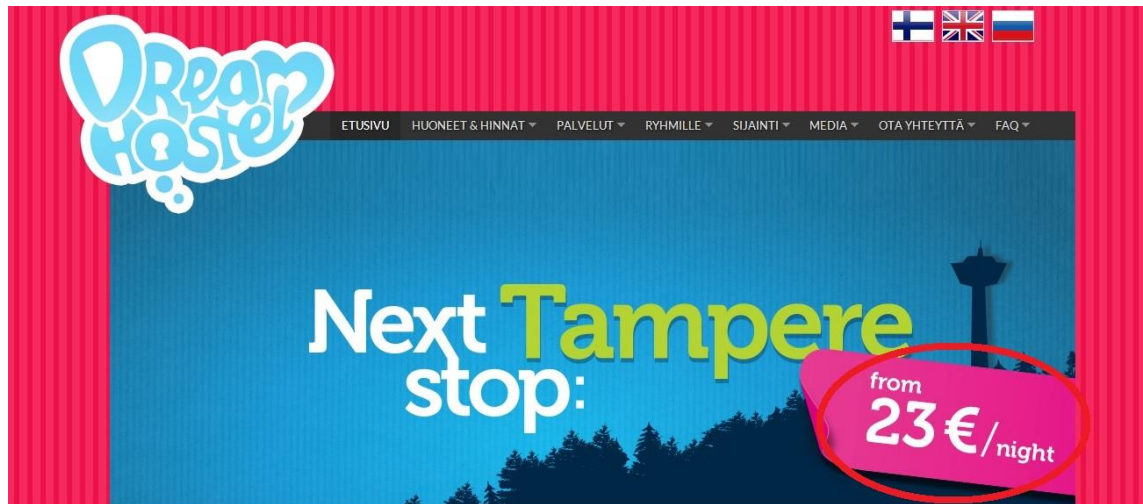
There are many ways and reasons to use specific colours as they affect your emotions, makes content more or less visible, make it easier for the eye and branding. (Levinson, Meyerson, Scarborough, 54.) Dream Hostel Tampere two coloured pink and red front page background is not too bright but colourful enough to catch the attention of the visitor and make a difference to the more conservative websites.

Blue colour arouses feelings of tranquillity, relaxation and sense of order (Levinson, Meyerson, Scarborough, 55.) Blue colour is mainly used in the Dream Hostel Tampere logo in the website but also in booking buttons, found on the right side of the page.



PICTURE 7. Dream Hostel Tampere logo (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)

Logo is a visual representation of the company and its values (Entrepreneur, 2014). The logo of Dream Hostel Tampere succeeds in delivering their core business idea, which is accommodating people by having hostel in the name itself. Also, there are connotations to sleeping. First, there is a word “dream” in the name. Second, there are two small bubbles to create a cartoon-like dreaming bubble. Third, the blue colour used arouses mellow feelings for the guests.



PICTURE 8. Dream Hostel Tampere, front page price (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014)

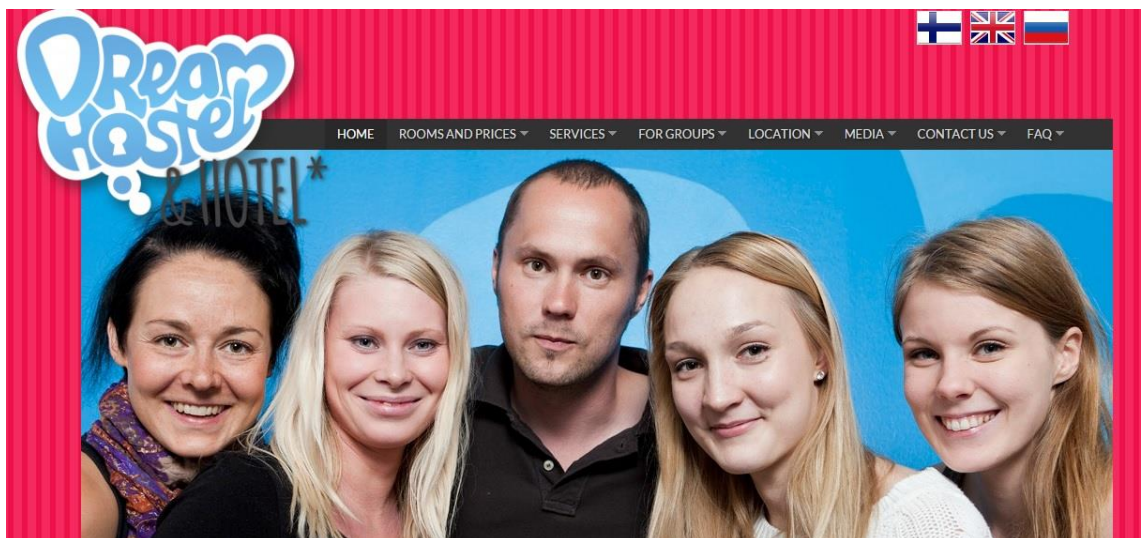
The starting price can be seen instantly so it is easy for the visitor to see where the price range starts from. Due to colourful pictures it is easy to already check how Dream Hostel Tampere looks from the inside. It cannot be seen in the picture but there is a slideshow of pictures that change automatically after been shown couple of seconds.

Interaction is communication between guest and the service provider (Tarssanen 2005, 12). The country flags in the upper right corner of the front page can be changed by clicking the flag. It will change the language of the site, helps to create interaction between the potential guests and they happen to understand the languages available. At the moment the languages offered are Finnish, English and Russian.

It is very user friendly to use distinctive colours with pictures and information on prices in three languages is shown to the visitor only by going to the front page and without the need of scrolling down the page.

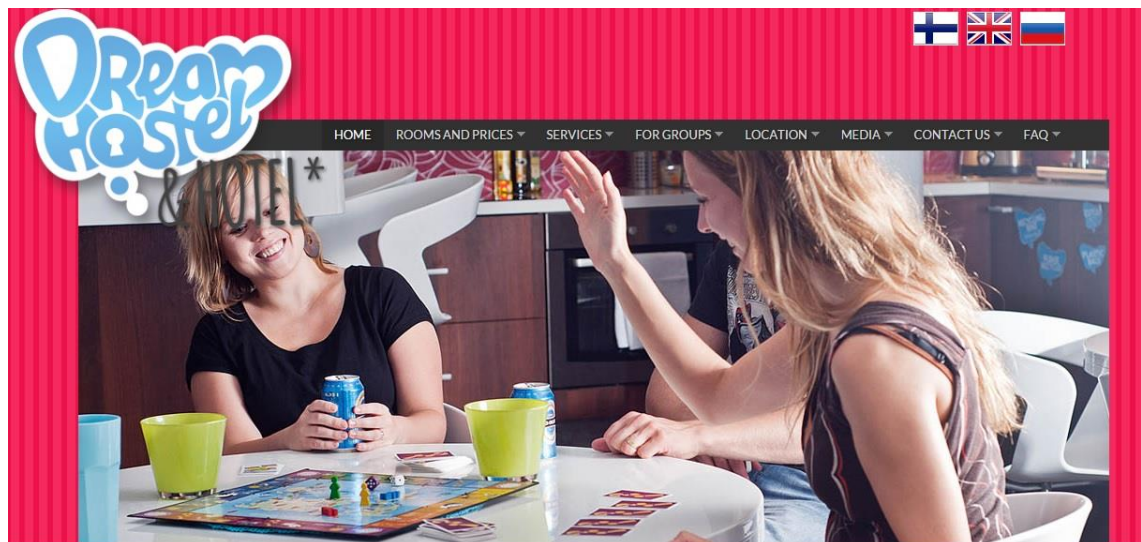
Individuality part of the experience pyramid in Dream Hostel Tampere website can be seen in the three language options offered. Using different languages does not show the same content. Scrolling down in the Finnish version the page shows an option to send an inquiry to the hostel. In the English version however there is the latest news regarding the hostel and further down an embedded link to Youtube video that contains a slide show of pictures from the hostel facilities, without sound.

Properly used artwork strengthens visitors' memories, feelings and catches their attention and links to pleasant emotions (Levinson, Meyerson, Scarborough, 55.) There are a lot of colourful pictures throughout the pages and in them are also people so the visitor gets a feeling of a social place with happy people. This creates authenticity and connects the guests to the staff and other guests and to the story of a people who actually were in Dream Hostel Tampere.



PICTURE 9. Dream Hostel Tampere, the staff (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014)





PICTURE 10. Dream Hostel Tampere, the guests (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014)

## Home

**Welcome!**  
Tampere Dream Hostel is a neat, tastefully designed and centrally located awards winning hostel.  
[Read more...](#)

**The little things work like magic »**  
DreamHostel went directly to my Top5 hostels! [Read more...](#)

**Rent A BIKE & explore TAMPERE**  
15€

**LOST IN MUSIC '14**  
MUSIC & MEDIA FINLAND PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS  
One of the best city festivals is just behind the corner, and we've got news for you! [Read more...](#)

**The most affordable Tampere Film Festival accommodation deal is here! »**  
We have the -10% discount when using the campaign code, but what else is there? Prepare yourself for a sweet deal! [Read more...](#)

**Dream Hostel brings the Love »**  
Region Tampere Finland introduces Love is All Bright, and Dream Staff is delighted to contribute! [Read more...](#)

**Book here!**  
@ info@dreamhostel.fi  
+358452360517  
[Book room or bed »](#)

- [Twin room »](#)  
from 62€ / night / room!
- [4 Bed Private Room »](#)  
from 89€ / night / room!
- [4 Bed Female-Only Dorm »](#)  
from 25€ / person / night!
- [4 Bed Mixed Dorm »](#)  
from 25€ / person / night!
- [10 Bed Mixed Dorm »](#)  
from 22€ / person / night!
- [16 Bed Mixed Dorm »](#)  
from 19.80€ / person / night!
- [Rooms & Prices - FAQ »](#)

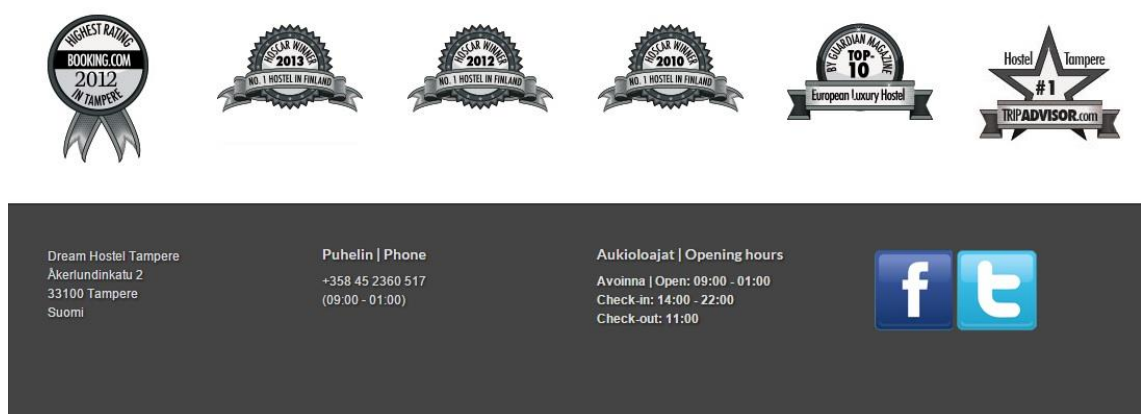
Hotel Dream Hostel Tampere Tampere Finland

PICTURE 11. Dream Hostel Tampere, home screen (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014)

By scrolling down the front page the visitor notices that the home screen is divided to three columns, left column, center column and right column. Left column contains a welcome message with the basic information about the hostel, behind the “Read more” button. Under the welcome message are the user reviews. They don’t change like in a slideshow presentation. Clicking the user review, visitor is redirected to a page which only has one user review. Below the guest reviews is a slideshow showing different services offered.

In the center column are the latest news and happenings related to Dream Hostel Tampere and Tampere area. This is a good way for the visitor to see if there is something interesting happening in Tampere area. This also provides a virtual place to advertise Dream Hostel Tampere or its business partners and grant discount prices.

On the right side of the website visitor can see many ways to interact with the hostel. In the right column visitor can find the booking section with email address, phone number and a booking button, which redirects to self-service online booking system. The booking section is on every tab of the website so the visitor does not need to navigate back to the front page after making a decision to book their stay.



PICTURE 12. Dream Hostel Tampere bottom page (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014)

On the bottom of the page is a social media links to Facebook and Twitter, which is good as it offers different channels to contact the hostel. Dream Hostel Tampere is active on the social media which makes them credible and tells visitors that they are still in business. If the resources allow, they could be more present in other social media services as well to create more visibility for the company. The physical address of Dream Hostel Tampere can be found from the bottom of the page along with the opening hours in Finnish time.

Many forms of interacting with the hostel ensures the availability to all types of customers as some might not have the possibility to call by phone or some might not have Facebook.

On the bottom of the website are the different merits that Dream Hostel Tampere has won during its years. Below are couple examples.




PICTURE 13. Top 10 European luxury hostel (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)



PICTURE 14. No. 1 Hostel in Finland (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014.)

On motivational level the product or service should give the resolution of something extraordinary and difference from visitors normal life. (Tarssanen, 2005.) Having the accomplishments in the website is a good idea as they act as a quality certificate and indicates that the hostel has done things rights. Prizes are an important part of the company image and an indicator that Dream Hostel Tampere has been ranked high not only in travel magazines and articles but amongst guests as well. It provides contrast from the normal accommodation service to the visitor. Guests are not going to any hostel but one of the best in Finland and even Europe which add up to the story and authenticity.

Easiness of booking is important to any accommodation business. People tend to reserve their accommodation beforehand to avoid stress of finding a room at the location. Many hotels and hostels have ways to cancel the reservation without or little loss of money in case plans change, usually just a call or email will do. This procedure lowers the bar to book a bed although plans are not yet certain.



**Tervetuloa palkittuun hostelliin!**  
Koe roppakaupalla kansainvälistä tunnelmaa ja rentoa menoaa uudessa nuoren pariskunnan pyörittämässä designhostellissa. [Lue lisää...](#)


**Privacy for two**  
This is room is perfect solution for couples or friends travelling together. This room is always sold as a room, so you can also book it for yourself, if you need more privacy.

The price includes bed linen and towels, wifi and tea and coffee around the clock. Our vast collection of board games, books and magazines, along with our common kitchen, are also at your disposal.

You can prepare breakfast at the hostel, or take a walk to a nearby café, where you can enjoy a discount breakfast in charismatic surroundings.

**Varaa tästä!**  
@ info@dreamhostel.fi  
☎ +358452360517  
[Varaa huone tai sänky »](#)

**Asiakasarviot »**  
"Great place. Staff most helpful and knowledgeable about the area. Walking distance to main center of town, parks, and river." [Read more...](#)






The bathrooms and showers can be found in the hallways, in the immediate vicinity of our rooms. Our premises are designed so that our guests feel comfortable and effortless during their stay – you won't have to wander around the hallways undressed. The bathrooms and showers are plentiful, there's no need to queue!

Every room has air-conditioning and central heating, ensuring a pleasant room temperature all year long. During a summer heat wave our rooms are nice and cool, and you won't feel cold in the heart of winter.

All our linens are approved by the Allergy and Asthma Federation. Even though we are very fond of animals, pets are not allowed in our hostel. The rooms feature high-quality plastic mats. Thus our rooms are suitable e.g. for people with dust allergies.

The hostel is also fully accessible for disabled people. There are no thresholds, making moving in a wheelchair highly practical both in our rooms and the hallways.

**Kahden hengen huone »**  
alk. 59,00€ / yö / huone!

**Neljän hengen huone »**  
alk. 89€ / yö / huone!

**Neljän hengen naisten huone »**  
alk. 27€ / yö / henkilö!

**Neljän hengen yhteishuone »**  
alk. 27€ / yö / henkilö!

**Kymmenen hengen huone »**  
alk. 24€ / yö / henkilö.

**16 hengen yhteishuone »**  
alk. 22€ / yö / henkilö!

PICTURE 15. Room types. (Dream Hostel Tampere, 2014c).

Dream Hostel Tampere has booking information in the website on the right side of screen. It shows the phone number, email address and online booking button. It makes clear to the visitor that if they want to book a bed they should use one of the three options. International symbols of phone and email eases the understanding and lowers language barriers.

Below the booking option is list of the room types available and the starting prices of bed or room per night. Visitor can click the room of choice and information about the room and what's included appears with colourful pictures to give a pleasant feeling. The information site also suggests different activities and is written in a story telling way. Visitor gets a cosy feeling and a multi-sensory perception. Maybe some soothing sounds could be added, depending on the room type. One downside in this part of the website is that the information is not fully translated so the story appears in English but information on the sides is mostly in Finnish.

All in all Dream Hostel Tampere website is quite unique from the rest of the Tampere area accommodation services. The most important thing is to get visitors to the website by using all the possible means in internet marketing: search engine optimization, keywords, redirecting and so on. There is room for improvement in the website to have a stronger and wider multi-sensory first impression that makes the site and booking more appealing.

## 6.5 Suggestion to Dream Hostel Tampere website

There will be more cell phone accounts than there are people by 2014 (Silicon India magazine, 2014). At the moment Dream Hostel Tampere does not have a lighter version of the website for mobile devices. Nowadays even the cheapest and simplest phones have the possibility to access internet and some people are used to carry a smart phone or a tablet while travelling instead of laptop. Maybe a lighter version of the website for mobile devices could help more visitors to gain information and book the room via Dream Hostel Tampere own booking service. Dream Hostel Tampere can be found from online travel agencies mobile versions.

Different mobile payment methods could be used to pay for the accommodation at Dream Hostel Tampere. Of course the downside for this is that short time travellers are not probably going to buy the mobile services from the local operators and it is too expensive to use their existing mobile subscriptions abroad. One way to counter this is the free to use wireless internet connection that they have in Dream Hostel Tampere. Usually smart phones have the wireless internet receiver integrated.

One of the biggest travel booking service Expedia accepts Bitcoins for hotel reservations (CoinDesk, 2014.) Individuality is user friendliness, flexibility and tailored products or services to specific customer needs. (Tarssanen 2005, 11). Other ways to pay for the stay could also include Bitcoin, a crypto currency that exists virtually. This would improve the uniqueness of Dream Hostel Tampere service.

More language options could be added for user friendliness and flexibility, depending on the resources, as the content in the website is done by the Dream Hostel Tampere staff. At least the basic information which doesn't change could be in more languages as the websites usually offer language packages for certain price and installing them doesn't require much of technical skills or it can be outsourced as a project work.

There are differences in the content but it can be a good thing if the customized content is tailored to the specific language group. For example, Dream Hostel Tampere could make a survey what guests from different language groups want to see on the first sight and if the answers have a certain pattern, Dream Hostel Tampere could design their

website so that the needs and interests of different language groups are taken into account.

Placing of some information could be reconsidered. Booking button could be on top of the page as there is free space to make sure all visitors notice the most important information at first sight.

Authenticity means the credibility of the product (Tarssanen 2005, 10.) Automation of all the reviews from different sources could show up as a slide show so that the visitor can base their opinion in user created content, which adds up to the authenticity and credibility of the website. If the reviews are shown in the Dream Hostel Tampere website with the source, guests would not need to go to other website to search for the reviews themselves. There could be a virtual guest book, where guests can leave their comments and experiences for others to see.

Multi-sensory perception means that product can be experienced in as many senses as possible (Tarssanen 2005, 11). In case of a website, some senses are not possible to transit in today's technology, for example smell. Dream Hostel Tampere website is could maybe add a virtual tour inside the hostel in a fashion of Google Maps Street View. Using such technology allows the guests to move virtually inside the hostel and check the facilities even before they book anything. It could be connected to the map of Tampere area so that guests could also virtually tour the Tampere area and see information of the different sights Tampere has to offer. Adding sound to the website to create a certain mood would also be preferred to have a holistic experience. Presentational video with musical elements of the history and services of Dream Hostel Tampere could be added to the website to arouse the interest of a potential guest. Presentational video could also go viral on the internet and attract more web traffic to Dream Hostel Tampere website.

## 7 DISCUSSION

We all live in the time of internet and it cannot be escaped, especially if you are a business. That is why a careful design of the website is necessary for the company to be successful. In the tourism industry there are many different aspects to consider and sometimes smaller companies due to their limited resources forget it. At the same time, smaller companies have the low bureaucracy which helps to make decisions faster.

As the tourism businesses want to stand out from the rest, they also need to stand out in the internet. Hooking the customers before they have even visited the place is extremely important as it is always harder to change mind of someone to use an alternative service who think they got the best value for their money already somewhere else.

Travellers of today are more willing and capable of individual travel as the travelling has become accessible to a larger number of people. Travellers want new experiences and sleeping in a hostel instead of a hotel is one. When people are more confident in their own ability to take care of themselves, I believe that communal accommodation will gain popularity due to its cost-effectiveness, social aspects and quality of the accommodation.

I made this research to help Dream Hostel Tampere and other tourism businesses to realise the potential the internet offers and the importance of continuous work for customer satisfaction, even before they have used the service. Holistic experience and adding value is an important aspect of tomorrow's tourism.

I am extremely happy about the subject of my thesis but not with the outcome. As I was doing my four month internship in the Dream Hostel Tampere I think I could have helped them more with my research. More additions could have been made to the research like usability analysis, research on the user satisfaction and more specified usage statistics.

This research has good outcomes too. I believe it taught me to think in a larger perspective, analytically and self critically. I am proud of what I could do in the middle of working and in English. I think the research can help Dream Hostel Tampere to rethink

their website and use some of the notices to improve the holistic experience of their website.



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## **APPENDIXES**

### Appendix 1. Email interview questions

- 1. Kuinka päädyit perustamaan Dream Hostel Tampereen?**
- 2. Dream Hostel Tampereen strategia ja keskeinen liiketoimintamallinne?**
- 3. Dream Hostel Tampereen haasteet?**
- 4. Kuinka tärkeä markkinointiväline Internet on Dream Hostel Tampereelle?**
- 5. Kuinka tärkeä varauskanava Dream Hostel Tampereen oma nettisivu on?**
- 6. Dream Hostel Tampereen tulevaisuuden suunnitelmat?**