

**Marketing in a Local Company Targeting
Foreign Customers:**

Case Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen

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| <p>Abstract</p> <p>The objective of this thesis work was to find ways the case company could reach foreign customers better. The company has potential to be a great touristic attraction. The aim of this research was to discover the marketing communication efforts needed to increase the visibility of the company and thus the number of foreign customers visiting the store.</p> <p>The process started with defining marketing communication and examining the marketing communication process. This preliminary research was made based on literature and online sources. Considering a modern perspective on tourism marketing, social media and popular travelling websites were used as source material and their functions were presented. The theoretical part of the thesis deals with challenges of marketing communication, such as the word of mouth effect and cultural differences.</p> <p>Concerning the case company Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen, the third chapter covers its history and current situation. As background information, the international environment in Kuopio is also discussed regarding permanent citizens, exchange students and tourists. A survey research was made to meet the case company's needs. The aim was to discover how and when tourists search information. The results indicated that the information search takes place largely before the travel, and the most popular sources are websites, social media and recommendations from friends and family.</p> <p>Finally, a marketing communication strategy for Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen is presented based on all research done earlier in this thesis. Using social media and other online channels are strongly recommended to the case company for their affordability and accessibility. Further, the strategy advises the company to utilize the personnel and long history of the bakery in marketing. Also, excellent customer service is a key element in successful marketing communication.</p> | | | |
| Keywords Marketing communication, tourism, social media | | | |

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1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to research the possibilities to reach and communicate with foreign customers in a local company based in Kuopio Finland. The objective is to design a marketing strategy for a Kuopio-based bakery Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen, including a brochure presenting the bakery's products in English. The product brochure will be adjusted to the findings of the research and created in respect of the strategy composed. It can be used as marketing material and a communication tool between the personnel and the international customers.

The whole project is targeted at foreign consumers who are interested in experiencing local specialties of the Savo area. The emphasis will be on reaching and communicating with the tourists and foreign people who are already in the Kuopio area. The aim of the thesis is to conclude with theories and practical solutions that can be applied to local SMEs of other fields as well. When the project is finished, the purpose is to provide the bakery with an easily applicable marketing strategy targeting foreign customers. The strategy is also to be suitable for the company's current resources.

This topic was discovered while working at the Hanna Partanen bakery in the summer 2016. The summer employees discovered a need for promotional material in foreign languages. Particularly during the high season in the summer, multiple travellers and representatives of foreign media visit the bakery. They are interested in the local specialties that the bakery produces. Also, the long traditions of Hanna Partanen attracts visitors.

Having worked at the bakery shop in the summer, the employees encountered many foreign customers: travellers, other expats, and even a German film crew making a documentary. Perttu Partanen (2017), the CEO of Hanna Partanen, tells that interested foreign media comes to the bakery approximately every other year. Additionally, Finnish media crews visit yearly.

However, they cannot gain much information of the baking process or the ingredients due to the poor language skills of the staff and a lack of resources at the bakery. There were also numerous requests for instructions or information leaflets on the products in English. The customers could only be told shortly about the products, which is very time consuming and does not give much clarification for the customer.

Hence, there is a very potential sector in the bakery's functions to be researched and improved. The company has a genuine need for such a research work. There is a possibility to improve targeting at foreign customers and serving them. There can also be seen a greater opportunity in this area. The bakery is situated very centrally in Kuopio so even more travellers could potentially be reached by investing in marketing.

The research process includes a quantitative research questionnaire studying travellers' needs and wants. Additional information will be collected studying literature and electronic sources on the subject. The project will be executed in cooperation with the bakery Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen. The CEO and the staff of the bakery will be cooperated with. They will be a useful source of information as well as other material.

Concept and vocabulary definitions

Company / business: any profiting enterprise or touristic attraction or activity or non-profit organization

Application: a software designed for a mobile devise such as smart phone or tablet computer

2 MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Philip Kotler (2017, 4-5) sees marketing as satisfying customer needs, and managing markets to bring about exchanges and relationships for the purpose of creating value and satisfying needs and wants. Thus, it can be concluded that understanding customers' needs, opinions and desires is the core of marketing and the requirement to be successful in business. After finding a solution to the customer's problem, it needs to be communicated to the customer so a sale can be made.

One of the fundamental concepts of modern marketing is the marketing mix: a combination of tools that are in the company's control. They are essential components that the company can use to influence and increase the demand of its product. Philip Kotler (2017, 49-51) introduces a set of elements that are most commonly used to describe the marketing mix called the 4 Ps. It includes the product, its price, the sales places, and promotion. Product covers all products and services that the company attempts to sell directly or on the side of a main product or service. Price is what the customer ultimately pays to own the product. The price should correspond with the customer's conception of the product's value. Place includes everything related to making the product available to consumers. Place does not only mean the physical shelf at a store where the product is placed. For example, the accessibility, logistics and the location of the final sales site also must be considered. Promotion consists of activities that intend to communicate the product features to the potential customers and persuade them to buy the product.

However, the 4 Ps are only portraying the seller's viewpoint. Kotler (2017, 50-51) mentions Robert Lauterborn who suggests in his article in Advertising Age (1990) that in addition to the seller, the consumer should be considered using what he calls the 4 Cs. They are: customer needs and wants, cost to the customer, convenience, and communication. Instead of a certain product, customers wish to find a solution to their problem. The cost to the customer is not only the selling price. In addition, they like to know the total price of using and disposing of the product. Further, consumers rather buy a product that is easily available for them than bother for something inconvenient. Finally, customers appreciate communication where they are heard as well instead of one-way advertising by the company.

This thesis will concentrate on promotion and communication out of the marketing mix. Communication with potential customers is at the centre of marketing activities.

Communication tools are the way to reach consumers and convince them to buy a specific product. Yet, before communicating is sensible or possible, the suitable target audience must be selected. This means the company should do market segmenting and targeting in order to define who could most potentially purchase their product. Otherwise, the resources used in marketing communication might be directed to places which do not generate the wanted results. (McCabe 2009, 144.)

According to Scott McCabe (2009, 6), marketing communication is meaningful exchange of information that aims at bringing benefits and direct or indirect profit to the company. Messages that a company sends to the consumers must be acknowledged and responded to in order to be meaningful and beneficial. Further, Heli Isohookana (2007, 91) says that for marketing communication to bring results to the company, it must be well and systematically planned. In the end, marketing communication, being an important part of marketing, aims to reach potential new customers and keep old customers interested and this way bring actual profit to the company in sales. Marketing communication utilizes remarkably the market research results.

2.1 Marketing communication process

McCabe (2009, 7) also states that companies need to understand where and when consumers access information and how they respond. Therefore, research is a relevant phase in marketing communication process. Later he continues further (2009, 89-90) with six basic questions which companies should be able to answer: who are their customers, when do they buy and receive messages, why do they buy, what do they prefer, where do they buy and receive messages, and which methods do they use to purchase the product. By answering these questions, a company is actually doing primary segmentation.

Furthermore, other conceptions of marketing communication consider segmentation an essential first step in the process. There are many similar models of the marketing communication process. Altogether, Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong, Lloyd C. Harris and Nigel Piercy present six steps in developing effective communications:

1. identify the target audience
2. determine the communication objectives
3. design the message
4. select the communication channels

5. select the message source
6. measure the communications' results process
(Kotler et. al. 2017, 414-420.).

Heli Isohookana (2007, 94) presents the process in a somewhat more compact form. The four steps are: analysis of current situation, planning, execution, monitoring. The current situation analysis adds a level of research prior to Kotler's model. Isohookana concludes that the first step requires constant research and information collection. Only with a comprehensive understanding of the company's present situation can effective marketing communication be planned. This model's planning and execution steps include the first five steps of Kotler's model. The final step of measuring and monitoring the results is important as well and can be found in both models. Additionally, Isohookana (2007, 95) and Bergström and Leppänen (2015, 306) add budgeting to the marketing communication process. Isohookana places budgeting right after determining the communication objectives in the process.

Identifying the target audience

Segmenting the customer base is just as important in marketing communication as in other sections of marketing, thus it is important to determine the target audience to start with. The audience has a major effect on the rest of the steps in marketing communication process. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 414.)

Kotler (2017, 414) and Seija Bergström and Arja Leppänen (2015, 301) notify that the targeted audience can contain both new potential customers and existing customers. They continue that in addition to buyers, the target group can contain people who influence the purchase decision. Further, the target audience can consist of private persons, public institutions, other companies or associations.

Determining the communication objectives

Next, Kotler (2017, 414) continues that the desired results of the marketing communication objectives should be defined. A result can for example be increasing the sales of a certain product or persuading customers to visit a new store. This gives a clearer picture of what should be done and what is the best way to proceed. For determining the communication objectives, Kotler introduces the idea of buyer-

readiness stages. There are six different stages that illustrate the process which a customer usually goes through when purchasing a product or a service. The steps are: awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase. Kotler proposes that these stages should be considered in marketing communication and the customer should be guided through them to the final purchase. Of course, the most important stages are dependent on the case of each company.

In addition to Kotler's buyer readiness stages, Seija Bergström and Arja Leppänen (2015, 302-303) and Heli Isohookana (2007, 99) regard the classic AIDAS and DAGMAR models useful in determining the objectives of the marketing communication process. AIDAS consists of attention, interest, desire, action, and satisfaction. DAGMAR on the other hand stems from defining advertising goals for measured advertising results and consists of awareness, comprehension, conviction, and action.

TABLE 1. Three tools for determining communication objectives (Dahlen, Lange 2003, 95)

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|------------|------------|--------------|----------|
| AIDAS | attention | interest | desire | action | satisfaction | |
| DAGMAR | awareness | comprehension | conviction | action | | |
| Kotler | awareness | knowledge | liking | preference | conviction | purchase |

The awareness or attention stage aims at informing consumers about the product. Sometimes only the company name might be familiar to the public but they have never heard of any products. Often with a lack of awareness, effective marketing communication might be only spreading the company or product name or telling what sort of a service is offered. The idea is only to make the audience aware of the existence of a product or service. The next stage, knowledge, is topical when the company and product or service name are fairly well-known. However, the audience is not familiar with the functions, features or content of the product or service. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 414-415.) The comprehension stage in the DAGMAR model is similar to Kotler's knowledge. (Isohookana 2007, 99)

A common factor in the AIDAS model and Kotler's model of the buyer-readiness process is the interest and liking stage (Dahlen, Lange 2003, 95). Once the company and its product and brand are familiar to the audience, the company should make sure that the audience has a positive attitude and perception of the company's brand.

It is very important for a company to have a likeable brand and image. The preference stage appears only in Kotler's model, and it concerns the competition situation. Company must ensure that its product is not only likeable but also preferred by the customers in comparison with the competing similar products. If the consumers like the product but still prefer the competitor's corresponding product, the company can alter the features to better fit consumer preferences. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 415.)

Conviction is the final stage before the final purchase action stage in the DAGMAR and Kotler's model. In AIDAS model the desire stage could be considered the same as conviction. The consumers might like the product and even prefer it to the competing products. However, they still may not see why that particular product is worth purchasing. In this case, the company needs to emphasize the advantages of the product compared to competitors and convince the customers of the superiority of their product. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 415.)

The final stage in the sequence is purchase or action. When the consumers have gone through all the stages up to conviction but have not yet made the final purchase, they need to be invited to buy. The company can for example make special offers or arrange product trials to lure customers visit or approach them personally via mail or by calling. Eventually, the aim of marketing communication is to reach the purchase stage regardless of which stage the target audience is at. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 415.)

Budgeting

The execution stage in Isohookana's marketing communication process includes the concrete plans for execution containing budget, schedule, message design, and communication channels and sources (Isohookana 2007, 94). Isohookana divides the marketing budget into three segments. They are planning costs, execution costs and monitoring costs. Planning includes the cost of both the marketing personnel and the bought services from for example advertising agencies. Execution covers cost of the media and other communication channels used. Finally, monitoring costs come from measuring the results of marketing communication.

According to Bergström and Leppänen (2015, 306-307), marketing can be budgeted for example in four basic ways: what can be afforded (affordable method), a certain

share of turnover (percentage-of-sales method), the same amount as competitors (competitive-parity method), or according to the objective of communication (objective-and-task method). Even though the affordable method might seem rational, it might not always be enough of an investment. For example, when opening a new company more communication effort will be needed. The percentage-of-sales method is easy to calculate and monitor. The difficulty with it comes from deciding which year's turnover is used as a reference. If the marketing communication budget is based on the previous year, it might not be suitable for the current situation as the market might have changed and the need for marketing communication is not the same anymore.

When using the competitive-parity method the budget is based on the budgets of the closest competitors in the field of business. Following the competitors will not essentially lead to better success. Their business idea and operations might be very different despite of the same field, so similar marketing communication and budgeting does not work for everyone. The objective-and-task method requires calculating the cost of communication methods which will provide a set objective. This method is very centred to a certain task and requires thorough planning. The objectives and the desired outcome should be well planned and calculated before budgeting. (Bergström & Leppänen 2015, 307-308)

Designing the message

Further, the marketing message should be planned so that the recipient understands it the way that is intended.

“Ideally, the message should get Attention, hold Interest, arouse Desire and obtain Action” (Kotler et. al. 2017, 415).

This model is the same commonly known AIDA model as associated with Determining the communication objectives. There are three parts in designing a marketing message: message content, message structure and message format. The content covers what needs to be communicated, and structure and format concern the way of expressing the content. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 415.) (Isohookana 2007, 105-106.)

The content of a marketing message can be either rationally, emotionally or morally appealing. Rational reasoning emphasizes the product's functions which differentiate it from others and makes it better than competing products. Emotional content appeals to the consumer's feelings and evokes positive or negative emotions in the consumer. The message can promote either positive experiences, such as love, joy or success, or more negative sensations, like guilt or shame of not acting as the community expects. Both positive and negative emotions can be used as a combination to accomplish a more thorough approach. The third moral appeal attempts to arouse the sense of right and wrong in the consumer. Thus, the message strives to generate for example a purchase of an environmentally friendly or gender equality supporting product. Whether the appeal is rational, emotional or moral, it gives the customer the motivation to buy the product. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 416.) The content should also be adjusted to the channel which will be used in marketing. The amount of information that can be transmitted on a television commercial is much smaller than in a personal sales situation. (Isohookana 2007, 106.)

There are three structural issues to consider when designing a marketing message. Firstly, the message creator can either draw a conclusion in the message or let the audience come to their own conclusion. Sometimes an already concluded message might be more attractive to a customer who is not particularly motivated. On the other hand, if a customer is potentially interested in the product, a message with an open end and no conclusion stimulates the customer better to eventually buy the product. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 417.)

The next issue concerns the strengths and weaknesses of the product. Often, communicating only the strengths is the best solution as the attention is not drawn to the flaws. However, depending on the case sometimes mentioning some weaknesses is also beneficial. Finally, the last structural issue is the order of the information in the message. The most important arguments at the beginning draws attention. However, the rest of the message might seem blunt. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 417.)

The types of message format can be categorised into three groups: print, sound, and film or live presentation. Various aspects must be considered in all the different formats. In print format the most essential elements are colours, illustrations and texts. In addition, arranging the elements appropriately is crucial. In formats where only sound delivers the message, the voices, noises, tones and words must be chosen to suit the purpose. The film or live presentation format combines the

requirements for written and audio formats, and additionally the appearance of the presenter is important. Thus, it is the most demanding message format. Additionally, the message can be communicated on the product or its package. In this case, important factors are shape, size, colour, scent, and texture. (Kotler et. al. 2002, 638 & 2017, 417.) (Isohookana 2007, 107.)

Additionally, the message should be relevant to the customers to catch their interest. The product and message must bring value to the target audience. The message should also contain new information as it stimulates the audience better. Further, it should correlate with the customer's recent purchases and offer additional products to those bought earlier. The customer's attention is easier drawn to messages relate to their recent acquisitions. All in all, the message should make an impact on the audience using the afore mentioned methods. (Kotler et. al. 2002, 639.) (Isohookana 2007, 105-107.)

Selecting the communication channels

Next, selecting the appropriate communication channels and source is crucial in reaching the target audience. Kotler (2017, 417) divides the communication channels into two basic groups: personal channels and non-personal channels.

Personal communication channels include communication in both directions: from the company to the potential customer and back. The methods enable giving feedback, thus it is very personal and often happens between only two people. Typical personal communication channels are for example telephone, mail, email, Internet chats, and face to face communication. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 417-418.)

However, all personal communication channels are not in the control of the company. Personal communication channels outside the company could be unknown to the potential customer such as independent experts, consumer advocates, consumer buying guides, or the potential customer's family, friends and acquaintances who recommend the product. The latter is generally known as the word of mouth. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 418.)

Particularly when buying expensive products for long term use, consumers often like to hear opinions from people who they know and can trust. The trustworthy person can also be a celebrity in a commercial or on social media praising the product. In

some product categories, it is common to use bloggers in advertising. The companies send bloggers newly released products and hope that the products will be presented in the blog. Popular blogs can have hundreds of thousands of readers who appreciate the blogger's opinions and seek inspiration from the blog texts. Thus, advertising via bloggers can be extremely effective. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 418.)

Contrary to personal communication, non-personal communication only flows one way and does not enable feedback or contact. Non-personal communication channels are major media, atmospheres and events. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 418.)

Major media covers print media such as newspapers, broadcast media such as radio and television, display media such as signs and posters, and online media such as websites and social media. Atmospheres comprehend environments that are designed to support the company's important values and give the correct impression of the product sold. For example, banks are designed to come across reliable and convincing. Finally, events are planned occasions aiming to communicate messages to selected audience. They are usually organized by a company itself. Events can be for example press conferences, exhibits and grand openings. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 418-419.)

In addition to the direct effect that non-personal communication channels have, major media also has an indirect effect on the consumers. So-called opinion leaders are often the first ones whom the communication reaches. They are the first customers who try the product and then recommend it to other consumers. Thus, it would be wise to target the opinion leaders with major media advertising. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 419.)

Selecting the message source

The specific distributor of the message impacts the recipient. The credibility and likability of for example a magazine or a radio channel compares to the reliability of the company advertising. In addition, the company, its brand and the person delivering the message can make a major difference regarding how the message is received and responded to. A credible person to deliver a message is often an expert in the field of the product or a well-known attractive celebrity with a good reputation. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 419.)

Experts are used in advertising to convince the consumers of the superior quality of the product. Any expert will not be influential. The person needs to genuinely appreciate the product and stand behind the message to be credible and convincing. Generally, doctors are regarded experts and their opinions are valued extremely high. Thus, doctors and other health care professionals are used in advertising particularly pharmaceuticals, healthy food and other health related products. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 419.)

Opposed to experts' valued opinions, celebrities are used in advertising for their attractiveness. Whether an actor, a singer or a model is physically attractive or an attractive personality, in certain product categories the attractiveness is enough to initiate the purchase. However, possible scandals and negative publicity the celebrity might have is likely to decrease the credibility and push the consumers away from the brand. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 419.)

Measuring the results

Finally, the concrete results of the whole communication process must be measured in order for it to be effective. Measuring the results includes both evaluating and utilizing the measured results. If the results are not as hoped, parts of the process can be adjusted to function better. Now the company should find out whether the consumers saw the message, how many times they saw it, how well they remember it, whether they liked it, how they reacted to it, and how it changed their perception of the company. Since the ultimate aim of marketing communication is increasing sales, the company should also measure whether the message has inspired consumers to visit the store or even purchase the product. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 419-420.) (Isohookana 2007, 116.)

2.2 Challenges of marketing communication

Scott McCabe notes (2009, 8) that even though marketing communication is a crucial function in any company, it is not in the direct control of the organisation. He adds that marketing communication includes proactive and reactive elements, and thus timing is central. However, mastering marketing communication even slightly gives a company a competitive advantage. A company can choose to make a TV-commercial, but whether the consumer sees the commercial or not is not in the

power of the company. Also, external operators are free to spread information which might not correspond to the organization's strategy. If an organization can use this information to their advantage, they are managing marketing communication rather well.

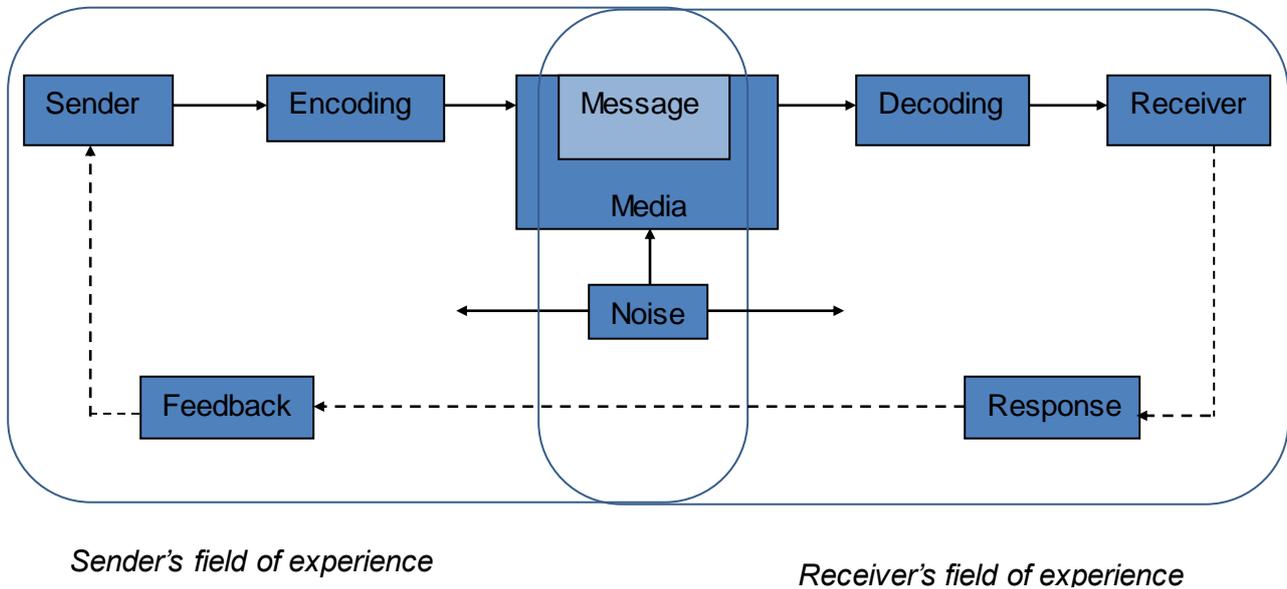


FIGURE 1. Elements in the marketing communication process (Kotler et. al. 2017, 413)

Figure 1 shows the process of marketing communication both from the sender's side and the recipient's side. The six-step process earlier described can also be connected to this Figure. Additionally, it shows some fundamental challenges and issues of marketing communication.

Sender in Figure 1 represents the company communicating a message. Encoding corresponds to designing the message content, structure and format. The message in Figure 1 is the designed message which will be communicated to the audience, whereas the receiver stands for the audience. Media covers the communication channels and message source chosen to send the message to the receiver. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 413.)

The choice of media offers a remarkable challenge. According to John and Linda Stanley (2015, 182-183), there are three main types of consumers when it comes to searching for information: traditional, digital and connected consumers. The traditional consumers find the needed information in traditional media, such as printed advertisements, newspaper advertisements and magazine articles. Digital

consumers utilize the best of both traditional and online sources. They might look for additional information in online sources after seeing a printed advertisement. Finally, connected consumers are accustomed to find everything they need online and particularly using a mobile device. They do not even think of the possibility of traditional media. Thus, reaching the potential customers requires carefully selecting the correct media.

Next, major challenges are faced in the receiver's field of experience with decoding and response. Decoding is the interpretation of the message that the receiver makes. Thus, encoding is tightly connected to decoding. If the designed message is understood differently from what is intended, the objectives of marketing communication are not filled and there might not be a reaction to the message. Further in Figure 1, once the audience has decoded the message they have various responses and reactions to it. The response which marketing communication eventually wishes to produce is a purchase. However, the reactions can vary from ignoring the message to becoming interested in the company or the product. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 413-414.)

Final element in the model illustrated in Figure 1 is feedback which equals to measuring the results of the marketing communication process. The measured result will flow back to the company who was the original sender of the message. Based on the results, the sender can adjust the message and start the process again. Thus, the loop is closed and marketing communication becomes a continuous process. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 414.)

In the centre of Figure 1 noise is distracting every other function. Noise comes from outside the process and thus creates unexpected situations and disturbances. Due to noise, the receiver might not get the same message that the sender sends. (Kotler et. al. 2017, 414.)

Altogether, marketing communication should be planned and coordinated as well as possible to be most effective (McCabe 2009, 9). If the communication towards the customers is not planned, the messages will most likely not reach the correct audience that might become interested in the product. Doing research and targeting appropriate audience increases the possibility to reach potential buyers. Further, occasional communication might cause sudden peaks in sales but is hardly the best way to maintain customer relationships the way regular and systematic operations do.

2.2.1 Word of mouth

An excellent and affordable method of marketing communication and a reliable source of information is always the word of mouth (McCabe 2009, 4). John and Linda Stanley (2015, 204) consider word of mouth the best marketing tool available. By providing a customer with an exceptional experience, the company will presumably get free advertisement when the customer shares the experience with friends. However, positive experiences are not the only ones that spread among customers. Negative customer service experiences are communicated forward to friends and family as well.

Word of mouth effect is very closely associated to the dedication of the personnel of a company and the quality of customer service. The Stanleys (2015, 204-205) present five “keys to success” regarding the role of staff in word of mouth marketing. They are: recruitment, setting standards, training the team, empowerment policy, and mystery shop audit. The first step towards exceptional customer service experiences is recruiting dedicated and enthusiastic personnel. Equally important is giving the personnel the tools to work with by setting standards which guide them in their work. To ensure that the skills of the staff develop and preserve the high standards, the staff should be trained continuously. The empowerment policy means setting standards for the company and ensuring that the employees are aware of them. This way all employees will manage customer service situations similarly and with confidence. Finally, the mystery shop audit is a tool to monitor the set standards and the skills of the personnel in customer service situations.

Peer reviews and experiences are regarded more reliable and thus they have a major role in consumers’ decision making. The word-of-mouth effect is much more effective than traditional marketing messages, so the phenomenon should be seriously considered. (Bergström & Leppänen 2015, 115.)

2.2.2 Cultural differences

Particularly differences in cultures and languages create misunderstandings easily. Meanings for verbal and non-verbal symbols vary from culture to culture and are

affected by it. Hence, tourists should be provided practical and relevant information on the services available as are in an unfamiliar environment when they travel (McCabe 2009, 2). Even English can be interpreted various ways depending on the message, recipient's mother tongue and culture. In fact, a concept called ethnocentrism suggests that people reflect and compare everything to their own culture. Thus, the customs and habits of people from very different cultures may be regarded as wrong or odd. Additionally, modern linguists argue that the language of a culture expresses the world view and non-verbal components of the culture. Thus, receiving the same message that is communicated is challenging in an intercultural context. (Neuliep 2012; 5-6, 14, 32-33, 238.)

Neuliep (2012, 13) presents an idea that languages are codes which are composed of symbols, i.e. alphabet. Even if the alphabet is the same between two languages, the coded words are not automatically universally understandable. In addition to the content of language, the style of communicating varies depending on the culture. The style of communication includes the tones and manner of speech. These are the fundamental reasons why language is the number one factor which creates barriers in communication and understanding messages.

Particularly Finnish seems to be difficult to learn and understand for foreigners. In his blog post in Kotus-blogi, adjunct professor of Finnish language and special expert in the Institute for the Languages of Finland, Vesa Heikkinen (2016) reflects the difficulties of Finnish language. He comes to the conclusion that Finnish is not a particularly hard language to learn: it is only often very different from the mother tongue of the person learning it. Many Germanic languages use many similar words so the message can be interpreted even if the language is not quite the same. This is not the case with Finnish and most of the languages in the world. Hence, challenges arise if Finnish is used in communicating with foreign customers.

2.3 Social media in marketing communication

Philip Kotler (2017, 410) tells that digital advertising increased by 11,9% in 2016 in Europe. According to Seija Bergström and Arja Leppänen (2015, 312), online media covered almost a quarter of all advertising in Finland already in 2014. Internet is rapidly taking over space from traditional media and particularly television. James W. Neuliep (2012, 3) mentions that due to technological development, and particularly Internet, communication across the world becomes constantly easier. As new devise

as it is, mobile phone is a norm in certain parts of the world, and a status symbol for the rest of the world. Travelling applications and social media are quickly becoming the most important channels of information amongst travellers (Stanley & Stanley 2015; 206, 216). Destinations are easy to research prior to a vacation as there are plenty of reviews about sights worth visiting and they are easily available. Further, research during the trip becomes effortless with only internet access and a mobile device which are both easily available for anyone today.

There are mobile applications and websites dedicated to traveling and discovering the world, such as Tripadvisor or Lonely Planet. In addition, websites where users can write reviews about local companies, such as Yelp or Google maps reviews, are sought after by travellers. Finally, social media applications are becoming more popular when researching travel destinations. Particularly Instagram has suitable features for discovering new places. These platforms can be used to acquire more visibility for a business and thus more visitors. According to Wendy Taylor (2015) from The Business Journals, reviews written about a company are one factor defining how high in the Google search results the company will be listed. She stresses that for good results, there should be many reviews and they must be positive. Hence, requesting for reviews from satisfied customers is worthwhile.

Travelling website Eyefortravel (2013) shares ideas of how a business can receive positive feedback on reviews written about them. The main point is to invest in the personnel. Committed employees will make the customer experience exceptional. Essentially, the theory presented on Eyefortravel comes back to the word of mouth effect. The starting step is to recruit the correct people to serve customers, and next the employees will have to be trained constantly to keep up with changes in the business field. In social media and mobile applications, the possibilities are endless so this chapter will concentrate on the most popular ones in travelling. Next, three travel applications and websites: Tripadvisor, Yelp and Lonely Planet, and one social media platform: Instagram, will be presented.

2.3.1 Tripadvisor

Tripadvisor is a travelling website and application for smart phones founded in 2000. It is the world's largest travelling site. It has received numerous awards since 2006. On Tripadvisor, a traveller can find everything from flights and hotels to restaurants and other attractions. The search engine finds results by category or location. There

are 56 different language and country combinations available. Tripadvisor is accessible in all of the official languages in certain countries; like in English and French in Canada. Also, prices can be shown in all the currencies corresponding to the countries available. (Tripadvisor 2017.)

Consumers can in fact book hotel rooms, holiday rental apartments and flights via Tripadvisor. Hotel and apartment booking is done directly on Tripadvisor in cooperation with Booking.com, and by redirecting customers to other booking sites. Flight booking happens only by redirecting. Restaurants, activities and attractions can be searched very specifically. In addition, visitors can write reviews and describe their experiences at companies or attractions when they have registered as a user. Often the information and reviews are also written in English, which makes the research effortless. It is very popular to find information on Tripadvisor because of the visitor reviews. (Tripadvisor 2017.)

Even though Tripadvisor is established on peer reviews, a business or an attraction can promote itself as well. Restaurants, accommodation options, airlines and touristic activities or attractions can be listed on Tripadvisor by the owner or manager as long as they correspond to Tripadvisor's guidelines. An organization or a company can fill in an extensive description and relevant information including pictures. Also, companies or other touristic attractions can for example update their basic information and opening hours when needed on their own page on Tripadvisor. On the contrary, usually a webpage of a small company has the essential information only in the local language. (Tripadvisor 2017.)

Tripadvisor stickers

Tripadvisor awards well reviewed companies with various special stickers. They also have an online sticker which can be acquired free of charge. A sticker is a so-called stamp of approval from Tripadvisor and it is very much wanted both on the company's door and on their website. A company can receive five different stickers from Tripadvisor: Traveller's Choice Awards, Certificate of Excellence, Hall of Fame, Recommended on, and Reviewed. Jill Krasny of Travel and Leisure magazine (2016) clarifies how the stickers work and what they actually mean.

Krasny (2016) tells that the Tripadvisor stickers, launched in 2007, aim to increase the number of visitors in the business. The Reviewed sticker is the only one available for any company who is reviewed on Tripadvisor. It can be placed either as a

concrete sticker on the company's door or as an electronic logo link to Tripadvisor on the company's website. The other four stickers are awarded to companies according to their success on Tripadvisor. (Krasny 2016.)

The Traveller's Choice Awards are assigned to businesses once a year according to traveller reviews. Businesses who have an average rating of 4 out of five or higher from users and manage to hold the rating over a period of 12 months receive the Traveller's Choice Award. According to Krasny (2016), Tripadvisor says that the Traveller's Choice Award "indicates a property is among the best in the world". Additionally, a minimum number of ratings is required. However, Tripadvisor does not share the information publicly. (Krasny 2016.)

The Certificate of Excellence is very similar to the Traveller's Choice Award. The requirements are the same in both: ratings above 4 out of 5 for 12 consecutive months and a certain number of ratings. The difference between the two awards is in the number of companies receiving the award. The Traveller's Choice Award is rewarded only to the very best companies whereas a bigger proportion of the companies on Tripadvisor receive the Certificate of Excellence. (Krasny 2016.)

The Hall of Fame was opened in 2015, the fifth anniversary of the Certificate of Excellence. Tripadvisor has accepted members to the Hall of Fame only once. In 2015, all companies who had received the Certificate of Excellence Award every year since 2010, accepted the Hall of Fame sticker on their door. (Krasny 2016.)

The lowest level of the awards from Tripadvisor is the Recommended on Tripadvisor. This sticker has the lowest criteria out of the four. To receive the Recommended on Tripadvisor sticker, a company must have an average rating of at least 3.5 out of 5. There is no requirement for holding the rating for a certain time. (Krasny 2016.)

2.3.2 Yelp

Yelp was founded in 2004 to advise people and help them find great and exceptional businesses in their local area or a place they are visiting. Like Tripadvisor, Yelp is both a web site and a mobile application. The companies on Yelp can be anything from mechanics and hairstylists to cafés and clothing stores. Companies on Yelp are divided in four main categories: restaurants, nightlife, local services and delivery. There are also over 20 more specific categories available. Yelp is accessible in many

European countries as well as in North-America, some Asian and South-American countries, and Australia. It is also translated into many languages. (Yelp 2017.)

The Yelp search works based on a category or a location. The main page offers recently added review in the user's area. Writing a review about a company, requires registration as a Yelp user. This keeps the reviews more appropriate and correlates with the Yelp philosophy that the reviews come from genuine will to share an opinion. Registered users can also participate in conversations on Yelp forum. Additionally, Yelp offers a possibility to inform about temporal events, such as festivals, concerts, exhibitions, sports, lectures, and trade fairs. Their automated software finds the most useful, qualified and topical reviews of all to recommend to the users daily. (Yelp 2017.)

Furthermore, the site offers companies interesting opportunities. Any company manager can acquire a company account thus they can reclaim the review page of the company. In addition, advertising on Yelp is possible. However, advertising does not provide the company with any benefits concerning reviews written by Yelp members. Paying for an advertisement does not give the company the right to manipulate reviews written about it. Yelp appears to be very strict about the advertising principles. It is an important value for the company that the reviews are honest and genuine. (Yelp 2017.)

2.3.3 Lonely Planet

Lonely Planet was founded in 1972 by Tony and Maureen Wheeler in Britain, when they decided to write a travel guide about their travels through Europe and Asia. Since then Lonely Planet has become the most popular travel publisher in the world. They publish travel books and magazines, and own a television production company which produces travelling programmes. Currently Lonely Planet is also a website. The founders are still to this day strongly included in the operations of Lonely Planet. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

The basic philosophy at Lonely Planet includes sharing own experiences. Lonely Planet authors always write from experience and no reviews can be bought. They tell what they want to share with the audience so the books include no advertisements. Lonely Planet primarily provides practical information and tips concerning various travelling destinations. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

The website introduces a wide range of destinations which are arranged by continent and by activity, like food and drink, adventure travel, and art and culture. Every country has its own page with general information and places worth visiting. Further information, such as local currency, weather, transportation and language, can be found in the survival guide for the country. The country page also sells travel guide books and offers a discussion forum for registered users of Lonely Planet. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

Furthermore, Lonely Planet website offers bookings for adventure tours, airport transfers, car rentals, flights, hotels, insurances, and sightseeing tours. All of these possibilities are extremely well guided with instructions and online customer support. In addition, Lonely Planet suggests options suitable for various customers and gives tips and advice regarding the booking. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

In Lonely Planet online shop, a customer can buy numerous books and other printed products. It sells travel guide books both in hard copy and e-book format. Additionally, they have for example children's travel books, phrasebooks in different languages and calendars. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

The newest addition to the website is a travel blog targeted at children. It includes blog posts about traveling as a family, competitions for kids, stories around the world, and tutorial videos. Together they inspire children to be creative, make them interested in traveling and help them survive for example in the London Underground. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

Moreover, Lonely Planet lists businesses in travelling destinations on their website. A business manager can ask for a listing on Lonely Planet. Next, a Lonely Planet author will visit the business when they are around the area. After this, the business might be listed on the website if Lonely Planet finds it suitable. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

In 2016 Lonely Planet launched a mobile application called Guides by Lonely Planet (Adweek, 2016). The application is concentrated on the original idea of Lonely Planet. The user can find travel guides to various cities around the world. A city guide includes stories written by Lonely Planet writers, recommendations, survival vocabulary, and information about currency and price level of the city. Lonely Planet gives recommendations for example for restaurants, accommodation options, activities and shopping possibilities. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

The Guides application also offers city maps which can be downloaded and used offline without Internet connection. If an Internet connection is available, the 'near me' function tells where the user is located. Thus, navigating in an unknown city becomes very convenient. Additionally, the maps are marked with all the recommendations of places worth visiting. (Lonely Planet 2017.)

2.3.4 Instagram

Instagram is a mobile application founded in October 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, former Stanford University students. Previously, Systrom worked for social network service Twitter and online search engine Google, and Krieger was a designer for instant messaging website Meebo. The main function on Instagram is publishing photos. (Instagram 2017.)

Instagram is a mobile application for sharing pictures and short videos. Each user can open an account and gain followers who will see the published photos automatically. Instagram's characteristic tagging system allows the users to mark any words of interest with the hashtag sign (#) to describe the pictures. Thus, any user can discover any picture by searching for interesting topics. The same policy is also used for example on Twitter and Facebook. Acquiring followers and this way advertising a user profile and a company works largely by tagging. For example, using a certain brand or city name as a hashtag word is very common. Another way to tag on Instagram is using the user names. Instagram user can tag another user by adding an at sign (@) in front of the user name tagged or by using the picture tagging function. When tagged in a picture, a user will receive a notification. Hence, user tagging can be utilised as very precise targeting. (Instagram 2017.)

Instagram supports companies with business functions. A company's profile page can be converted into a business page. There is a possibility to include opening hours and contact information easily and clearly in a company profile. Instagram also offers companies paid advertising. The company's posts or advertisements will be shown to other Instagram users in their picture feed whether they follow the company in question or not. (Instagram 2017.)

Furthermore, there is yet another means of advertising a company can apply free of charge. It is possible to find Instagram users who are potentially interested in the

company's services and start following them. The user might visit the company's profile page and become interested. Searching new followers is not the most efficient way to advertise. (Instagram 2017.)

Instagram profile can also be connected to a Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Swarm and Flickr profile. This means that the user can easily share the Instagram pictures also via these five other communities at once. Today, it is popular to have a widget link to Instagram, Facebook and other social media profile pages on a company webpage. It might help interested new customers find the company in social media and become their followers in social media. (Instagram 2017.)

3 RESEARCH

This chapter aims to present the case company Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen. Further, the international environment in the city of Kuopio will be discussed. Additionally, a questionnaire survey about communication channels used when travelling will be presented and the results will be analysed.

3.1 Case company introduction

Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen is the first and oldest kalakukko bakery in the world (Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen Oy 2015). It is a traditional bakery based in the city of Kuopio, and has a significant position in the locals' hearts and in business life of the area. The central location and the status of the original kalakukko bakery makes Hanna Partanen an interesting touristic attraction. This thesis aims to give suggestions to develop the marketing activities of the bakery.

According to Kauppalehti (2017), in 2016, the company's turnover was 1,439 million euros with a net income of 0,44 million euros. They are highly self-sufficient with an equity ratio of 93,1 %. ROI (return on investment) was 41,1% which indicates that Hanna Partanen's operation is extremely profitable. Even though the growth was slightly negative with -0,8%, there is no reason to be alarmed as the economy in Finland is experiencing difficulties.

Partanen first started selling kalakukkos in the Kuopio market place in 1929, and two years later in 1931 the bakery was officially opened at the Partanen family home on Kasarmikatu. Ever since the company has operated at the same original premises. Hanna Partanen passed away in 1969, yet the bakery has remained a family business and her heirs still manage and own the company to this day. They have 10 to 20 employees depending on the season. During the high season in the summer and before Christmas, additional help is recruited. (Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen Oy 2015.)

According to Perttu Partanen (2017), the CEO of Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen, during the Summer months, June, July and August, the number of customers is approximately twice as big as in other times. Over the year there are a few busy holiday seasons at the bakery. They are Mid-Summer, Christmas and Easter starting from the busiest.

Due to the long process of baking a kalakukko, the bakery shop is open from early in the morning until late in the evening. The last kalakukkos of the day come out of the oven around eight o'clock in the evening. There is also a sales wagon in the marketplace in Kuopio city centre selling Hanna Partanen products daily. As Hanna Partanen has become known nation-wide, deliveries around Finland are also possible. Fish store Rosendahl in Hakaniemi market hall in Helsinki sells the kalakukkos occasionally. However, there is no regular sales of Hanna Partanen products elsewhere in Finland outside Kuopio. (Partanen 2017.)

3.2 Products

Originally the bakery manufactured only kalakukkos. Through the years the selection has increased to cover a variety of different fillings for the kukko pasties. The product range has also diversified. Today, the bakery produces daily Karelian pies, meat pasties, doughnuts filled with jam, and ring doughnuts. (Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen 2015.)



IMAGE 1. Jam filled doughnut, meat pie and Karelian pie.
(Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen 2015)

The original kalakukko is made with either vendace or perch, and bacon. The filling is covered with a thick layer of rye bread dough all around. The kukkos are baked nearly nine hours to make them juicy and tasty.

Other kukko fillings that Hanna Partanen offers are rainbow trout, beef and pork meat, rutabaga, and vegetable mixture containing rutabaga, carrot, zucchini and leek.

In addition, small mini kukkos are made of vendace, and larger and long-shaped feast kukkos are made to order with any filling. Perttu Partanen (2017) tells that the



IMAGE 2. Vendace kukko opened. (Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen 2015)

vegetable mixture filling was included in the assortment about 15 years ago. He continues that the trend of vegetarianism and fitness lifestyle has enhanced the demand for vegetable filled kukkos.

According to the online magazine Kielikello (1997) of Institute for the Languages of Finland, the name 'kukko' likely derives from words that mean 'hill'. This would be explained by the hill-like shape of the product. It is sometimes also believed to stem from the Finnish word for rooster.

Karelian pies are traditional pasties from Karelia area in Eastern Finland and Finnish-Russian border area. They are made of a thin rye crust filled with rice porridge, and then baked in a hot oven. Hanna Partanen added the Karelian pies to the product selection in 1940s alongside kalakukko. (Partanen 2017.)

Next the assortment was enlarged with jam filled doughnuts and meat pies in 1960s. The jam filled doughnuts are available in apple and raspberry flavour coated with sugar. The meat pie is made of doughnut dough and filled with ground meat, rice and boiled eggs. (Partanen 2017.)

3.3 Foreigners in Kuopio

According to the statistics of the city of Kuopio, in 2015 there were 2691 foreigners living in Kuopio; that is 2,4% of the entire population. Figure 2 shows that the biggest groups of foreign nationalities were Russian (627), Estonian (254), Myanmar (170) and Thai (107). Hence, nearly one third of foreigners living in Kuopio were from Finland's neighbouring countries: Russia (23,3%) and Estonia (9,4%). The next biggest groups were from Asian countries and Middle-East. In top 14 there are only three European countries apart from Estonia: Spain, Germany and Great-Britain, all with under 2,5% share. (Tilastokeskus 2017.)

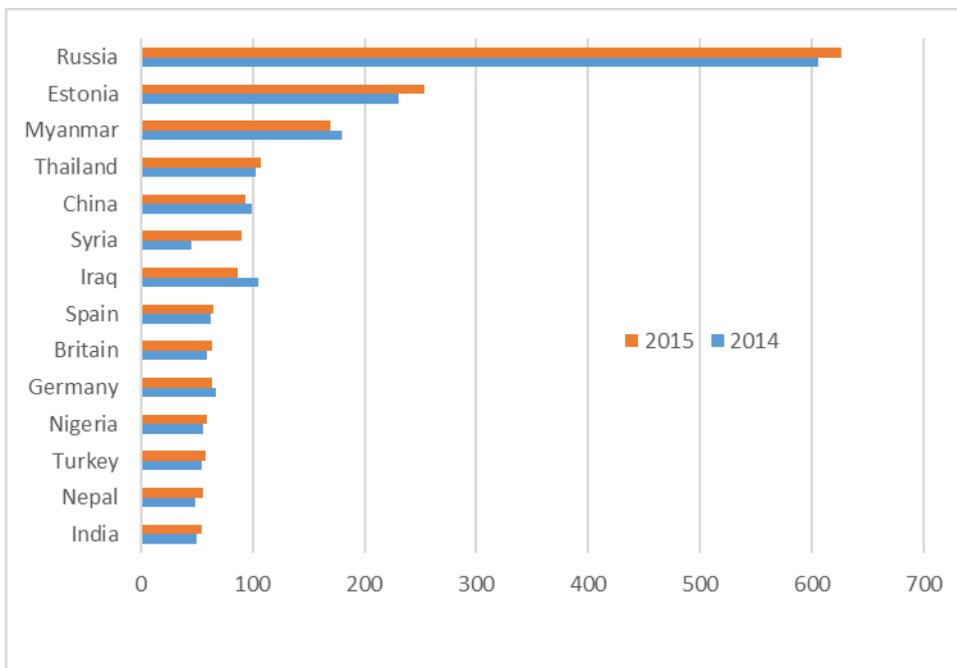


FIGURE 2. Foreigners living in Kuopio according to nationality.
(Tilastokeskus 2016) (2015 n=2691, 2014 n=2516)

In addition to the permanent foreign residents, many foreign tourists visit the city for a shorter period. In 2016, out of all tourists, 10,6% were foreign. A total of 58 361 foreign people stayed overnight in Kuopio. The most of tourists visiting Kuopio came from Russia, Germany, Estonia, the USA and Sweden. The portion of Russian tourists was a third of the total and thus remarkably bigger compared to any other nationality. Whereas the second biggest group of tourists came from Germany (8,4%). Further, the number of tourists from Estonia and the USA is only slightly smaller (8,1% and 7,7%). (Tilastokeskus 2017.)

There has been significant growth in the number of American tourists visiting Kuopio. The increase from 2015 to 2016 was astonishing 200,3%. During the same period, the other four of the biggest nationality groups somewhat decreased. In addition to the American tourists, there was remarkable change only in the number of German tourists, which decreased by 27%. (Tilastokeskus 2017.)

TABLE 2. Foreign people's overnight visits in Kuopio in 2015 and 2016. (Tilastokeskus 2017)

| | 2015 | 2016 | Change | Change (%) |
|--|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Kuopio total | 526 015 | 549 970 | 23 955 | 4,60 % |
| Tahko | 97 564 | 115 307 | 17 743 | 18,20 % |
| Elsewhere in Kuopio | 428 451 | 434 663 | 6 212 | 1,40 % |
| Based on nationality | | | | |
| Finland | 464 182 | 491 609 | 27 427 | 5,90 % |
| Russia | 20 417 | 19 266 | -1 151 | -5,60 % |
| USA | 1 501 | 4 507 | 3 006 | 200,30 % |
| Estonia | 4 762 | 4 750 | -12 | -0,30 % |
| Germany | 6 786 | 4 951 | -1 835 | -27 % |
| Sweden | 2 936 | 2 700 | -236 | -8,00 % |
| Other countries | 25 431 | 22 187 | -3 244 | -12,80 % |
| Foreigners total | 61 833 | 58 361 | -3 472 | -5,60 % |
| Foreigners' proportion of total | 11,80 % | 10,60 % | | |

Visit Finland (2016, 63) has researched the age variation of foreign tourists who travel to Finland. The age groups 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 cover nearly three quarters of foreign travellers in Finland, and each of the three groups has an approximately equal share. The oldest age group, over 64, covers only 5% of foreign travellers. Finally, the two remaining groups are 15-24 and 55-63, and they each include 11% of the foreigners travelling to Finland.

Further, every year hundreds of exchange students live and study in Kuopio. Unlike tourists, exchange students mainly come from Europe. In 2013, a total of 7255 university students came to Finland with the help of Erasmus+ programme. Those students covered three quarters of all exchange students. In 2015, 3,1% of all university students in Eastern Finland were exchange students (CIMO 2015).

In addition to exchange students, each year many foreign degree students start their studies at the Kuopio campuses of Savonia University of Applied Sciences and University of Eastern Finland. The proportion of foreign degree students out of all students in North Savo was 5,1% in 2014. That year 131 new foreign degree students started in the schools of North Savo area. (Tilastokeskus 2014.) In Finland, the most common home countries of foreign degree students in 2015 were Russia (3045), Vietnam (1913), China (1806) and Nepal (1204). On places from five to ten with more than 500 but less than 1000 students were Estonia, Pakistan, India, Germany, Iran and Nigeria. (Tilastokeskus 2016.)

3.4 Research survey

This research questionnaire aims to discover what types of attractions travellers like to visit at the destination and how they usually search for information about their traveling destination. The research will be useful when constructing a marketing communication strategy for the case company. The findings of this research can be used in defining the best suitable channels and point of time to communicate with the potential customers. The research is also looking to provide support for the assumption that social media is used increasingly in tourism marketing and as a source of information when travelling.

The hypothesis is that the factors effecting communication habits the most will be age and cultural aspects. Further, social media, internet and mobile applications will probably have a substantial role in information search. The sampling of respondents will be emphasized rather much to young adults as they are eager to explore the world. In addition, exchange students are a big portion of foreign customers in local businesses. Regarding the nationality of the respondents, there is a possibility to reach a fairly large range. On the other hand, gender will not be a significantly influencing factor.

The research will be conducted using quantitative methods since the desired outcome is a generalized picture of the situation. Instead of precise individual opinions, the research intends to find common alignments in the respondents' habits of searching for information. The aim is to measure behaviour and attitudes. A quantitative research often intends to find support for a theory. In order to obtain unbiased results with a large sampling and meet the needs and aims of the research

project, quantitative survey will be the best research method for this case. (Cooper & Schindler 2011, 161-164.)

Cooper and Schindler (2011, 163) describe quantitative research methods as descriptive and predictive. They state that the best suitable sampling would be a large group of people randomly chosen. The result will be the more reliable and objective the less the researcher selects who will give responses. When doing quantitative research, the researcher should not be in direct contact with the respondents. Thus, objectivity of the results is increased. The best suitable method to accomplish this is a questionnaire survey that is sent to a group of respondents via email or regular mail. Often, to keep the research anonymous, the names of the respondents are not collected. As quantitative research consists of pre-defined questions with mostly pre-defined alternative answers, the results will be processed numerically. Mathematical methods will be used to find correlations with theories.

The questions for the research were created based on the most relevant issues in planning marketing communication. The company needs to know who their customers are, when they receive messages, and where they receive messages. The questions of the research asked where the respondent likes to travel, where and when they find information about the destination, what they like to do at the destination, and whether they like to eat local food.

The first three questions about age, gender and nationality of the respondent will provide background information and assist in segmentation. Next, asking about the respondent's travel destinations and preferred attractions expands the background information and helps distinguish the relevant information regarding the case company. The respondent can choose more than one travel destination and attraction he or she likes to visit.

The questions about local food is specifically designed to fit the case company as their products are very typical to the area and certainly new to foreign visitors. The rest of the survey questions are planned to help build better marketing communication for the case company. The survey includes questions about the point of time and means of finding information. It is important to know what channels travellers use to search for information and whether they do it before their travel or during it. The respondent can choose more than one channel he or she uses to find information when travelling.

The responses to the questions were collected with a Google questionnaire form which was shared to potential respondents via Facebook. The survey was open for respondents from 28 February to 13 March 2017. The audience for the questionnaire consisted largely of university students around the world including students who have spent an exchange semester abroad. The sample also contains people from various parts of Finland. Thus, the sampling acquired will be versatile regarding the nationality of respondents. There is also a possibility to receive responses from people in many age groups. The request to share the survey to friends will potentially extend the sampling. Along the question form there was a cover letter to explain the purpose of the research and request for responses. It also stated who is conducting the research and presented the case company briefly.

3.4.1 Result analysis and findings

The total number of responses is 109. Figure 3 describes the age distribution of the respondents. Over 80% of the respondents are from 18 to 25 years old. The other four age groups are represented rather equally. The second youngest age group, from 26 to 35, is also the second biggest with 7,3% of the respondents. The groups from 36 to 45 and 46 to 60 both cover around 4% of the respondents. The smallest group is the over 60-year-olds with just under 2% of the respondents.

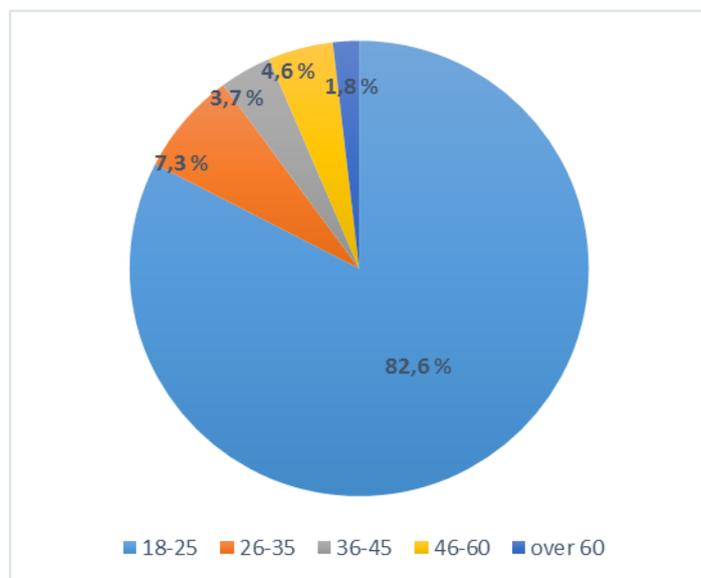


FIGURE 3. Age distribution of the respondents (n=109)

The gender of the respondents is emphasized on female as Figure 4 shows. 85% of the respondents are female, that is 93 respondents. A significantly smaller number of

the respondents (15) are male; that equals 14%. Additionally, one respondent has chosen the alternative Other for gender.

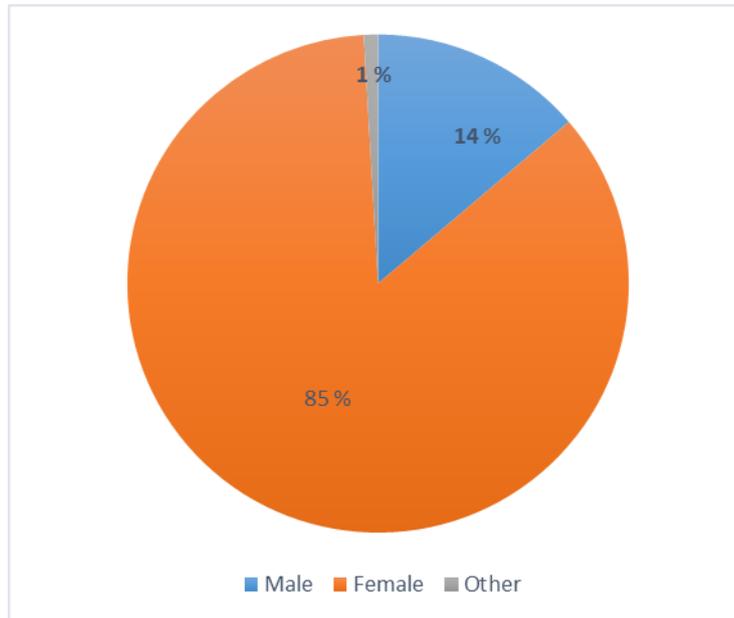


FIGURE 4. Gender distribution of the respondents (n=109)

The respondents of the research have a total of 14 different nationalities around the world. The biggest groups of nationalities are Canadian (59), Finnish (15) and British (10). Other nationalities with less than ten respondents are: American, Australian, Caucasian, Czech, French, German, Italian, Mauritian, Portuguese, Taiwanese, and Ukrainian.

The survey has two questions about the respondents' preferred travelling destinations. First, in question 4 they were asked whether they like to travel to big or small cities, country side, beach or far or close to home. Next, question 7 specified the attractions which the respondents like to visit at the destination. The alternatives include famous touristic attractions, restaurants, cafés and other places that serve food, museums and historical places, shopping centres, and cultural events. In addition, the respondents had the possibility to choose the option 'other' where they had written for example various kinds of nature attractions, national parks, bars, and exploring in the streets.

Both these questions could be answered with more than one alternative. Most popular destinations are big cities with 82 responses. Beach (60 responses) and

small cities (48 responses) come next leaving country side last with 21 responses. A significantly bigger portion prefers to travel far from home to a very different culture rather than close to home. 66 respondents chose a destination far from home, whereas 23 prefer destinations close to home. Because the respondents could choose more than one alternative, some might have chosen both far from and close to home and some chose neither.

The two most popular attractions with nearly equal number of responses (over 80) are best known touristic attractions and restaurants, cafés and other places that serve food. The next two are museums and historical places, and cultural events. They both were chosen by just over 60 respondents. The least popular alternative is shopping centres with 29 responses. The alternative 'other' was chosen 15 times and the answers mostly include nature attractions.

Two questions in the survey are specifically designed to fit the case company. In question 9, the respondents were first asked whether they want to taste local food at their travelling destination. Further, in question 10 they told if they only eat local food during their travels or if they rather have familiar food or a combination of both. Initially, nearly each respondent wants to try local food during their travels. 106 respondents answered yes to question 9 and only 3 answered no. Question 10 had 4 alternative answers. However, only the two first alternatives were chosen by the respondents. 60% of the respondents told that they only eat local food when travelling and 40% selected the alternative 'I try local food a little and then stick to what I know'.

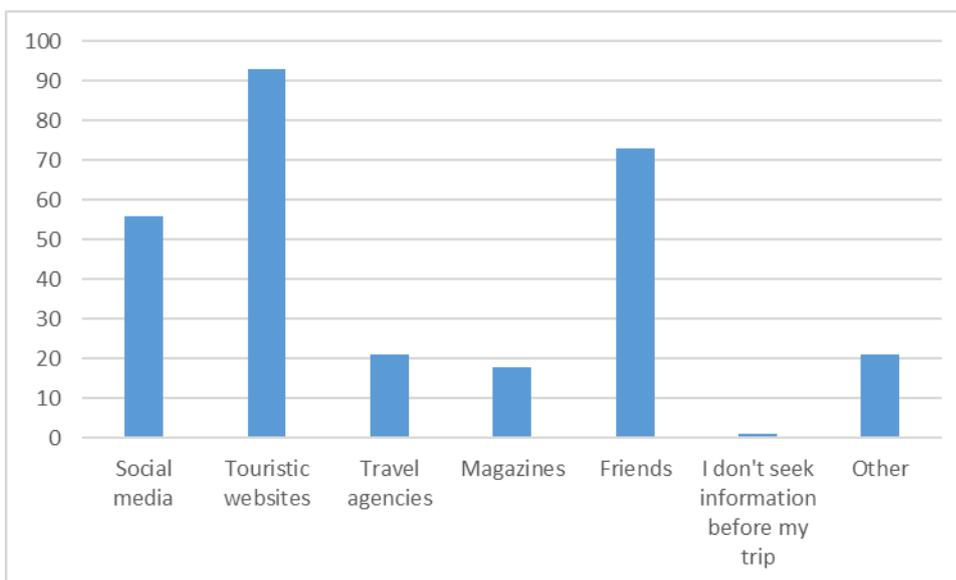


FIGURE 5. Information sources used before a trip (n=283)

Figure 5 describes the sources which the respondents use to find information before they go on a trip. In this question, more than one alternative could be chosen. Thus, the total number of responses is more than 109. According to Figure 5, nearly everyone searches for information beforehand. Only one respondent chose the alternative 'I don't seek information before my trip'. Among the most common sources there are the two online sources: touristic websites and social media. 85% of the respondents chose touristic websites as one of their answers, and half of the respondents use social media in information search. Thus, the online sources are worth considering in marketing communication with tourists.

Next, recommendations from friends are the second most popular source of information after online sources. Nearly 70% of the respondents ask their friends, which is in fact more than the use of social media. Here the word of mouth effect becomes very important. When the tourists and other customers are provided with excellent customer service and experience at the company, they will recommend the place for their friends.

The more old-fashioned options, travel agencies and magazines, have their users as well but their share is remarkably smaller compared to online sources: both under 20%. The respondents gave some further alternative sources in the option 'other', none of which has a significant importance in frequency. They include many online sources, such as Google, blogs, Pinterest and forums. There is also one very traditional source listed in the alternative other: books.

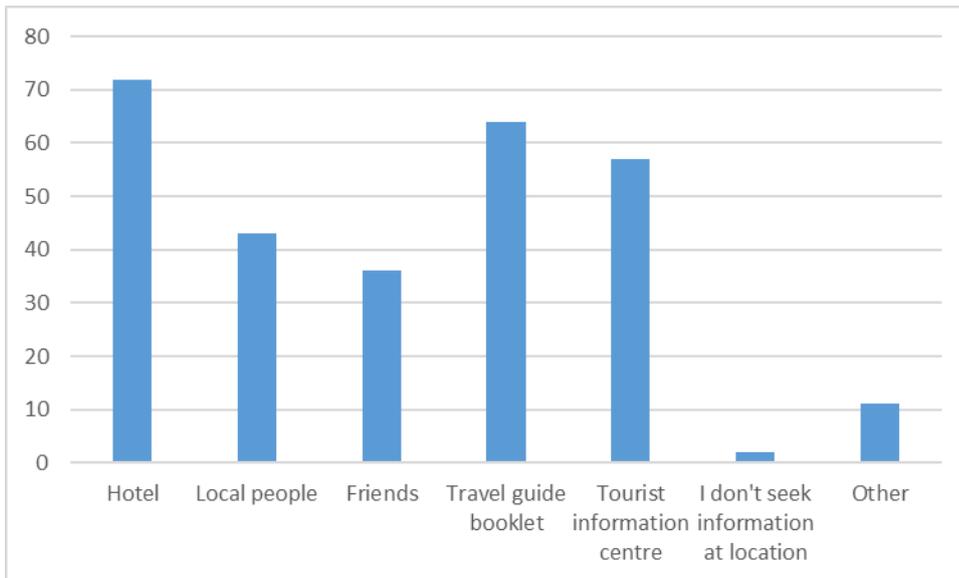


FIGURE 6. Information sources used during a trip (n=285)

Figure 6 shows which information sources travellers use when they are at their destination. The more official sources are popular in this question. Hotel staff, travel guides and tourist information centres are used the most. Each of them was chosen by well over 50% of the respondents. Additionally, recommendations from local people and friends are appreciated, both with around 40 responses. However, not everyone searches information at the destination. Two respondents chose the alternative 'I don't seek information at the location'. 11 respondents also chose the alternative 'other' and gave responses such as internet and other accommodation options apart from hotel.

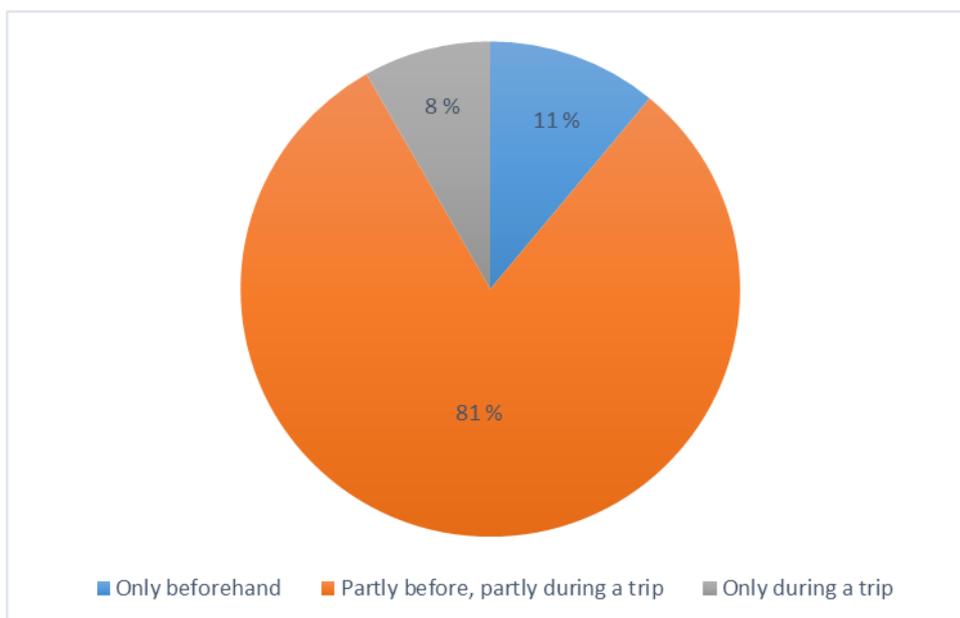


FIGURE 7. The point of time of planning a trip (n=109)

Question 5 offered two choices for the point of time of finding information about the travelling destination. Each respondent could choose one or both. Nearly each respondent, over 90%, plans the trip beforehand. Additionally, 60% of the respondents plan their travels only at the destination. Figure 7 is based on question 11 and describes further the point of time when the respondents find information about their travelling destination. As much as 80% of the respondents plan their trip only partly beforehand and find new interesting places to visit when they reach the destination. The rest of the respondents either plan the trip entirely beforehand or don't plan at all. They both have an about 10% share of the respondents.

3.4.2 Reliability and validity

Defining whether a research is valid and reliable shows if it is measuring the right issue and if the results are useful. The questions in this research are valid concerning the aims and topic of the research as they concentrate on the point of time and means of finding information about travelling destinations, and destinations and attractions the respondents visit. Further, the number of respondents (109) is fairly large and sufficient for a survey research of this scale. The range of nationalities among the respondents is also wide. However, the shares of different nationalities are not very equal; three nationalities cover most of the respondents. Additionally, the age distribution of the respondents is heavily emphasized on young adults. Nevertheless, the original aim was specified to reaching rather younger people than old.

The design of the research questions is somewhat valid. The multiple-choice questions with the possibility to choose only one alternative are exclusive and the alternatives do not overlap. Four out of eleven research questions regard means of searching information, which is the main topic of the questionnaire. Covering the main research problem from various perspectives increases reliability. However, not all questions are necessarily straightforward. In question four, the alternatives *big cities*, *small cities*, *close to home* and *far from home* can be understood in various ways depending on the respondents living environment and experiences in life.

The findings of the research show strongly that social media, mobile applications and other online sources have an increasingly important role in information search

regarding travelling. The sources used earlier in this thesis show similar development.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will present the suggestions for the case company Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen regarding their marketing communication strategy. There will also be discussion about the relevance of the thesis research and future possibilities in the area.

4.1 Marketing communication strategy for Hanna Partanen

To begin with, considering the 4Ps of marketing could be useful in determining the current situation of the case company. Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen has a long history and significant meaning to the local people. The company's classic products are the heart of the business, and the original recipes are still used. It would be good if the products were not altered but rather utilized in marketing. The aim could be to introduce the local traditional products to foreigners, not to adapt the products to their taste. The packaging of the products is also to the point and continues the traditional style of the company.

Next, the price level of Hanna Partanen products is well known among Kuopio citizens so any permanent changes in prices would be notable. Further, tourists don't often consider price as an essential factor when they make purchase decisions. Considering the place, the original old wooden house gives a perfect addition to the experience of foreign customers who want the experience of traditional Finnish bakery. Additionally, the central location of the bakery and the sales wagon in the centre of Kuopio makes them extremely easily available to anyone.

Instead of the product, the price or the place, the potential lies in **developing promotion**. As three of the four Ps of marketing are predetermined in the company, only promotion is yet to be adjusted. In addition to the Ps of marketing, the 4 Cs of marketing will be very essential in this process. Opposed to the Ps, the Cs are concentrated on the customer point of view of the buying process. However, they are closely connected to the 4 Ps: customer needs and wants are considered in the product design, cost to the customer comes mainly from the price of the product, convenience equals to a sales place which is easily available to the customer, and communication can be seen as continuation to promotion where the customer can have two-way communication with the company. Thus, **promotion and**

communication between the company and potential customers are the most relevant issues to consider and develop.

4.1.1 Marketing communication process

A good tool for the case company to use in developing efficient marketing communication is the seven-step marketing communication process described in chapter 2. There are two important audiences worth targeting: foreign **tourists** visiting Kuopio and **exchange students** studying in Kuopio. Students are generally young adults from 18 to 30 years old. Some good communication objectives would be persuading more foreign customers to visit the bakery and giving them an excellent and informative experience there. In the message content, the **traditional products** and **historical location** of the bakery could be emphasized. It would be good to make the messages clear and simple to attract the attention of the customers so that they will find more information themselves. As a message format, pictures and short video clips give a lot of information and are not very culturally sensitive. Further, the modern cameras, both cameras in mobile phones and actual cameras, produce high quality photos and are rather affordable to everyone. The research survey of this thesis shows that social media and other online channels are used increasingly when searching for information about travelling. Also, good **customer service** is an excellent format to reach the customers and create goodwill and spread by word of mouth.

Particularly when choosing the message channel, the company should consider the budget: whether to use channels that are free of charge or costly. As a message channel, **online channels** are the most affordable. They are usually initially free, and a only special extra features are charged. Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen has social media pages on Facebook and Instagram which both could be utilized more effectively in marketing communication. The company could publish pictures and videos more often. This way there would be a greater chance that the potential customers see the pictures and videos and find the company. Also, using hashtags and **tagging** in the published pictures would increase the visibility in social media.

As Facebook owns Instagram, the two applications are connected and the same pictures can be published in both simultaneously. This is a useful feature worth utilising. Further, people often find social media an easy and convenient channel to contact a company, ask questions and give feedback. Thus, it would be extremely

important to read the comments on Facebook and Instagram, and answer them as much as possible. Further, the research survey supports the hypothesis that such a traditional source of information as hotel is still used a lot during travels. Hence, Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen could also consider contacting the local hotels and other accommodation companies in Kuopio area to ask if they could cooperate in marketing communication. Finally, the importance of **customer service** is significant also in communication channels.

Customer service plays a role in choosing a message source as well in the form of word of mouth effect. When a potential customer hears the message from a former satisfied customer of the company, the reaction to the message will likely be positive. Further, as the bakery is a nationally well-known attraction, for example bloggers might write about their visit there. Their experience of the customer service will be a base for the blog text, which potential new customers will read. In addition to maintaining excellent customer service, the bakery's staff could be used as a source for example by presenting them in published pictures. This would make a more personal connection between the company and the customers.

To measure the results of marketing communication actions the company can evaluate whether the number of foreign customers has increased during a certain period of time. In social media, monitoring can be done based on likes on the posts and new followers on the company's social media pages. The next important action would be to use the results in future operations.

4.1.2 Other issues to consider

There are a few additional issues, which the company could consider to improve the customer experience. The price list at the bakery and at the sales wagon at the market place could be translated into English to make the experience more effortless for tourists. The social media platforms which the company actively uses could be mentioned on the website. Thus, the information and communication channels would be better and easier available.

In addition to social media platforms, the most popular travelling applications and websites are worth listing on. Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen can be found on Tripadvisor already. However, the information there could be more up to date and thorough. Additionally, the free Tripadvisor sticker could be added on the bakery's

website and door, as many tourists search for Tripsadvisor approved places to visit. Yelp is another website worth using and is free of charge. Lonely Planet requires a request for listing a company. It does not cost anything so it is worth trying even if there is no guarantee that Lonely Planet will visit the company and write about it.

| Marketing communication process | Recommended actions |
|---|---|
| Identify the target audience | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. foreign tourists 2. exchange students |
| Determine the communication objectives | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. more foreign visitors at the bakery 2. better customer experience |
| Budgeting | decide how much money can be spend on marketing communication, social media is a cheap communication channel |
| Design the message | traditional bakery, pictures, video clips |
| Select the communication channels | social media, customer service, hotels |
| Select the message source | satisfied customers (good customer service), bakery staff in published pictures |
| Measure the communications' results process | number of foreign customers, likes and followers on social media |

4.2 Relevance of the thesis and research

Regarding the research that was done earlier about the topic, it was of varying quality and quantity. Social media, mobile applications and their use in marketing are still currently researched very little. The information available is mainly based on single companies' and customers' personal experiences. On the other hand, the research about marketing communication is rather extensive. Thus, the suitable elements of the information available had to be selected.

The research survey done for this thesis is not very broad or comprehensive. The thesis was made to correspond the needs of one small company. However, the results and back ground information of the thesis can be utilized in other similar

companies. For example, the local residency information of Kuopio is useful for other Kuopio based companies. Also, functions of social media and other mobile applications are crucial to know for anyone this day.

The case company does not currently have any operations concerning acquiring foreign customers or serving them. However, as the background research of the thesis shows, there is a remarkable number of potential foreign customers in the Kuopio area both living permanently and visiting. To the author's personal experience, some foreign customers already find the bakery and visit the bakery shop. Nevertheless, with the help of the research of this thesis work, the quantity of foreign customers and the quality of customer service can be increased and improved.

The results of the research questionnaire support the findings of the online and literature research. However, after taking the recommendations to use, the company could make further research on whether the actions taken are effective. Further research about travellers' habits could improve the company's reputation further and increase the flow of foreign customers.

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Appendix 1

1. Age
 - 18-25
 - 26-35
 - 36-45
 - 46-60
 - over 60

2. Gender
 - male
 - female
 - other

3. Nationality _____

4. I usually like to travel to:
 - big cities
 - beach
 - small cities or country side
 - close to home with similar culture
 - far from home and my culture

5. I seek information:
 - before my travel
 - at the location

6. Before my trip I find information about the destination:
 - on social media
 - on touristic websites
 - at a travel agency
 - in magazines
 - I don't find information before my trip
 - from my friends
 - other _____

7. When I travel, I visit:

- the best known touristic attractions
- museums and historical places
- shopping centres
- restaurants, cafés and other places that serve food
- cultural events (music festivals and concerts, theatre, opera etc.)
- other _____

8. At the location, I seek guidance from:

- my hotel
- local people on the street
- my travelling friends
- my travel guide booklet
- the tourist information centre of the city
- I don't seek guidance at the location
- other _____

9. As a foreigner in a new country I like to try local food:

- Yes
- No

10. When I travel:

- I only eat local food
- I try local food a little and then stick to what I know
- I only eat the same kind of food as at home
- I only eat at international restaurant chains

11. I plan the whole programme of my holiday:

- before the trip begins
- I do some research beforehand but leave room for new findings at the destination
- I don't plan beforehand

Appendix 2

Hello all my traveller friends! I have created this questionnaire to support my thesis work researching marketing opportunities targeting tourists. The case company of this research is Kalakukkoleipomo Hanna Partanen bakery in Kuopio, Finland. This survey aims to find out about the travelling habits of people from around the world and of different ages. I would appreciate very much if you can take just a few minutes of your time and fill in the survey. Please, share this to your friends as well. Myös suomalaisten matkailijoiden vastaukset ovat erittäin tärkeitä.

Appendix 3

Kalakukko

Kalakukko comes originally from the Savo area. The original kalakukko is made with fish, either vendace or perch, and bacon. The fish and bacon are piled inside a thick layer of rye bread dough. The kukkos are first baked shortly in high heat to make the crust crispy. Then they spend nearly nine hours in low heat so that they become juicy and tasty inside. The kukkos are fed with butter during the baking to give them taste and keep them moist. Hanna Partanen makes kukkos also with salmon, beef and pork, rutabaga, and vegetable mix (rutabaga, zucchini, carrot and leek). To heat up the kukko, it should be kept in the oven in 150°C for 1 hour per 1 kg.



The name 'kukko' is believed to stem from words that mean 'hill'. This would be explained by the hill-like shape of the kalakukko.

Meat pie

The meat pie is made of doughnut dough and filled with seasoned ground meat, rice and boiled eggs. The pies are deep fried in vegetable oil. It is a great snack by itself but often people open the pie and fill it with sausages, ketchup, mustard and other fillings. Similar meat pies are made around Finland with small differences depending on the area.



Karelian pie

Karelian pies are traditional pasties from Karelia area in Eastern Finland and Finnish-Russian border area. They are made of a thin rye crust filled with rice porridge, and then baked in a hot oven. The pie is a savoury pasty. It is eaten like bread with egg butter, a mixture of boiled eggs and butter.



Jam doughnut

The jam doughnuts are available in apple and raspberry flavour. The dough is filled with jam and then deep fried in vegetable oil. Finally, they are coated with sugar to add some sweetness. Apple jam is the original and traditional filling, and raspberry joined the assortment in the 21st century. These are so called 'pig doughnuts' as their shape resembles a pig. This kind of doughnuts are baked all around Finland.

