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RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTIVENESS  
OF ADVERTISING CHANNELS AT  
VIITAMAA CARAVAN OY

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## ABSTRACT

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The topic of this study is the effectiveness of advertising channels. The topic was chosen by the request of Viitamaa Caravan Oy. The company wants this study to give more information about the effectiveness of different advertising channels in their own advertising. Viitamaa Caravan Oy also wanted some insight into the fact how much money in the budget should be reserved for each channel. The research problem can be defined as: Which of the advertising channels already used in Viitamaa Caravan Oy are the most effective ones?

The theoretical framework of this study consists of two parts. The first section s basics studies of marketing. Then advertising as a concept and the different fields of effective advertising are studied. This part also introduces the different advertising channels. The empirical study was executed by using a quantitative questionnaire. The research data was collected from the answers to a questionnaire that was handed out in the store of Viitamaa Caravan Oy. The questionnaire was voluntary to answer. The analyzing of the data was executed by first dividing the data into three; basic information, recognisability and advertising &service. The information was then analyzed numerically with STSS statistics-program. The received statistics were compared to the budget used in advertising.

The results of the study showed that from the already used advertising channels the most effective ones were newspaper and internet advertising, word-of-mouth, fair and outdoor advertising. The effectiveness of radio and television advertising was low compared to the costs. Budget funds should be increased at least for internet and outdoor advertising. If the amount of budget will be kept the same, radio and television advertising should be decreased. Also, the amounts used to newspaper and fair advertising should be considered again. The study also indicated that the advertisements should be developed, transformed to more functional ones and they should be otherwise planned better. The objectives and budgets should be planned beforehand annually and the budget should be based on the effectiveness of the advertising channels.

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Keywords	marketing, effectiveness, advertising, advertising channels, caravan industry
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Liiketalous ja matkailu

## TIIVISTELMÄ

Tekijä	Anna-Sofia Huuromonen
Opinnäytetyön nimi	Tutkimus mainontakanavien tehokkuudesta yrityksessä Viitamaa Caravan Oy
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Tämän tutkimuksen aiheena on mainoskanavien tehokkuus, Viitamaa Caravan Oy:n pyynnöstä. Yritys toivoo saavansa tutkimuksen avulla lisätietoa eri mainoskanavien tehokkuudesta omassa mainonnassaan ja näkemystä kuhunkin mainoskanavaan varattavasta budjetista. Tutkimusongelma on kiteytetty kysymykseen: Mitkä jo käytetyistä mainontakanavista ovat tehokkaimpia Viitamaa Caravan Oy:n markkinoinnissa?

Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys koostuu kahdesta osa-alueesta. Ensimmäinen osa-alue käsittelee markkinoinnin käsitettä kokonaisuutena. Toinen osa-alue käsittelee mainontaa käsitteenä ja tehokkaan mainonnan osa-alueita. Tässä osassa esitellään myös mainonnan eri kanavat. Empiirinen tutkimus toteutettiin määrällisenä kyselylomaketutkimuksena. Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin Viitamaa Caravan Oy:n liikkeessä esillä olleen kyselylomakkeen avulla. Kyselyyn vastaaminen oli vapaaehtoista. Aineistojen analyysi toteutettiin ensin jakamalla aineistot kolmeen eri ryhmään; *perustiedot, huomiota herättävyys sekä mainonta ja palvelu*. Nämä tiedot analysoitiin STSS tilasto-ohjelman avulla numeerisesti. Saatuja tilastoja verrattiin mainontaan käytettävään budjettiin.

Tutkimustulokset osoittivat että jo käytetyistä mainontakanavista tehokkaimpia ovat lehti- ja internet-mainonta, ihmisten välinen puhe sekä messu- ja ulko-mainonta. Radio- ja televisiomainonnan tehokkuus oli hyvin pientä verrattuna kustannuksiin. Budjettiin tulisi lisätä varoja ainakin Internet- ja ulko-mainontaan. Jos budjetti halutaan pitää samana, tulisi radio- ja televisio mainontaa vähentää, myös lehti- ja messumainontaan käytettäviä varoja tulisi harkita tarkemmin. Tutkimus osoitti myös, että mainontaa tulisi kehittää, muokata toimivammaksi ja suunnitella paremmin. Kohteet ja budjetti tulisi suunnitella ennakkoon ja budjetin tulisi perustua mainonta kanavien tehokkuuteen.

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Avainsanat	markkinointi, tehokkuus, mainonta, mainontakanavat, Caravan -ala,
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background to the study, what aims there are for the study and the research problems. To enhance the legibility of the study, also the structure of the thesis is clarified in this chapter. This chapter also introduces the company that ordered this study.

### 1.1. Background of the study

The theoretical reasons for doing this study are that the company Viitamaa Caravan Oy, wants to know how effectively different channels of advertising help them to achieve their goals in company productivity. The study is based on Kotler& Armstrong's theories of advertising, the effectiveness of advertising channels are based on the theories of Pirjo Vuokko and Gerard.J.Tellis.

The empirical reasons for doing this study are that there are only studies about the advertising channels that are effective in car sales but there are no studies that research which advertisement channels work for/affect the caravanners. Caravanners can be considered as a different kind of a buyer group because they are so much smaller and a more specific group compared to all car buyers. The specifics of caravanner customers are explained in chapter 2.3.

Advertising is a considerable cost for Viitamaa Caravan Oy but they do not know the effectiveness of their advertising .The advertising budget is yearly changing at Viitamaa Caravan Oy, but the company would now like to pin-point a certain sum of money to advertising each year. This study gives the company the knowledge that is needed for allocating specific sum for advertising which is divided between the advertisement channels as needed based on effect.

This study is vital because it is highly important for Viitamaa Caravan Oy to know which advertising channels are effective compared to the money spent on them. The company does not want to use a lot of money to some advertisement channels that are not effective and does not create more customer inflow.

The topic was also chosen for this study because the thesis writer works for the company in question. Because of the work relationship with Viitamaa Caravan Oy it gives the writer personal interest for the thesis. Previously the company has been trying a little of every kind of marketing and now it wants to emphasize only some areas, but at the moment there is no clear view which marketing forms to use. Also after the study the company will know better about their situation with customers.

The topic is writer quite unique because there are not many previous studies or theses about the industry of selling caravan cars and trailers, they are normally just included in the studies about car selling business, but this field of business is different from normal car business, so I feel that the topic should be also studied separately.

## **1.2. Aims of this study and the research problem**

The aim of this study is to find out the most effective advertising channels for Viitamaa Caravan Oy from the advertising channels already used in the company. The company does not want to increase the number of advertising channels but instead they want to enhance the use of current channels and put emphasis on the ones most effective. Another aim of the study is also to find out which forms of advertising are the most effective in getting customers to visit or contact the company.

The advertising channels already used in Viitamaa Caravan Oy are radio advertisements, newspaper advertisements, television-advertisements, personal advertisements, internet advertisements and fair advertisements.

Still, another aim of this study is to give Viitamaa Caravan Oy as much knowledge and benefit as possible to Viitamaa Caravan Oy so that the company can develop the effectiveness of their advertising and concentration and invest in the advertising channels that are the most suitable and the most effective for them.

The research problem can be identified as one basic question: "Which forms of currently used advertising channels (the internet, newspapers, radio, .etc...) are the



most efficient for Viitamaa Caravan Oy?” In order to solve this question research questions have been identified. The questions are “How did the customers find out/hear about the company Viitamaa Caravan Oy?” and “What form of marketing (that is correctly used) gets the most customers to visit or contact the company?”

The company wants to maximize the effectiveness of the advertising channels used and reveal the hidden problems in them. They also want to remove the channels which are not working effectively and are still costing money.

In this study the central focus is on advertising channels that the customers of Viitamaa Caravan Oy are following. It is studied how well the chosen advertising channels work and how effectively they attract new customers. The study will identify the best advertising channels the company should use. Carefully chosen questions have been gathered for the study in order to guarantee as much relevant information as possible.

### **1.3. Introduction of the case company used in this study –Viitamaa Caravan Oy**

The company that has been the initiator for this study is called Viitamaa Caravan Oy. It is based in Ylivieska and it was established in 1982. Viitamaa Caravan Oy is a medium size family-owned business. The company was established by Mr. Alpo Viitamaa, who has been the general manager of the company until the year 2008. At the moment the general manager of Viitamaa Caravan Oy is Mr. Hannu Viitamaa.

Viitamaa Caravan Oy’s main business is selling motor caravan cars and caravan trailers. The company sells both new and used items. Viitamaa Caravan Oy also provides additional services connected with this business field. The company offers repair work to caravan cars and trailers. Viitamaa Caravan Oy also has a large selection of spare parts, equipment and camping products.

The company has been in business for a considerable amount of time, and it is well known in the caravan field and it is highly appreciated. The company is also

financially very stable. In the year 2009 the turnover of the company was 3 895 000 million Euros and in the year 2010 the turnover was 4 114 000 Euros. There has been a slight increase in the company's turnover in recent years.

At the moment the company employs five fulltime employees and two part-time employees. There are three persons in the sales and purchasing department, one in the office and one in the repair department. There are also two employees who work part-time. The part-time employees work in the sales department or in the maintenance of the products when needed.

The busiest season for the company is in the summer time from April to September. In the summer time more working hours are needed and the employees have to be committed to the company. The buying experience of the customers is the most important element for Viitamaa Caravan Oy. In summer customers are enthusiastic and a lot of sales are made. In the summer over 300 caravan cars and trailers can be sold. The winter time business in this field can come almost to a halt, only a few caravan trailers might be sold in one month.

#### **1.4. Structure of the study**

After a close inspection of all study topics that could be studied about the company Viitamaa Caravan Oy, the effectiveness of advertising channels was chosen. This topic is the most important one for the company at the moment. The company felt that this is one area that had been left without attention in the company.

The first part of the study is called introduction. It deals with the overall introduction as well as the background of the study. The reasons and motivation for choosing this topic for the study are covered as well as how the topic is defined. Also the goals for the study and the research problem are defined in the first part of the thesis. In addition to these topics company Viitamaa Caravan Oy, which is the subscriber of the study, is introduced and the basic functions of the company's business are presented.

The second chapter of the study gives more information about the specific field of Viitamaa Caravan Oy. It includes an introduction of the field in general, a descrip-

tion of the customers and information on the competition in the field and also the current state of advertising at Viitamaa Caravan Oy.

Next the study introduces the theoretical background to the research. First it specifies what marketing is in general, then advertising in general is introduced. After this follows theory on effective advertising, what kind of marketing channels there are (Only the channels used at Viitamaa Caravan Oy are introduced) and how the channels affect the company's development.

This is followed by the methodology of the research. This part includes theory of the research methods used in this research. Also, the target group, research angle, analyzing methods, preliminary schedule and data collection is explained.

The fifth chapter includes the results of the study. It introduces what was found out by the questionnaire and how the results were analyzed.

The sixth chapter contains conclusion and suggestions. This chapter indicates what kind of answers are revealed from the questionnaire and what this means and what should or could be done to the marketing plan now.

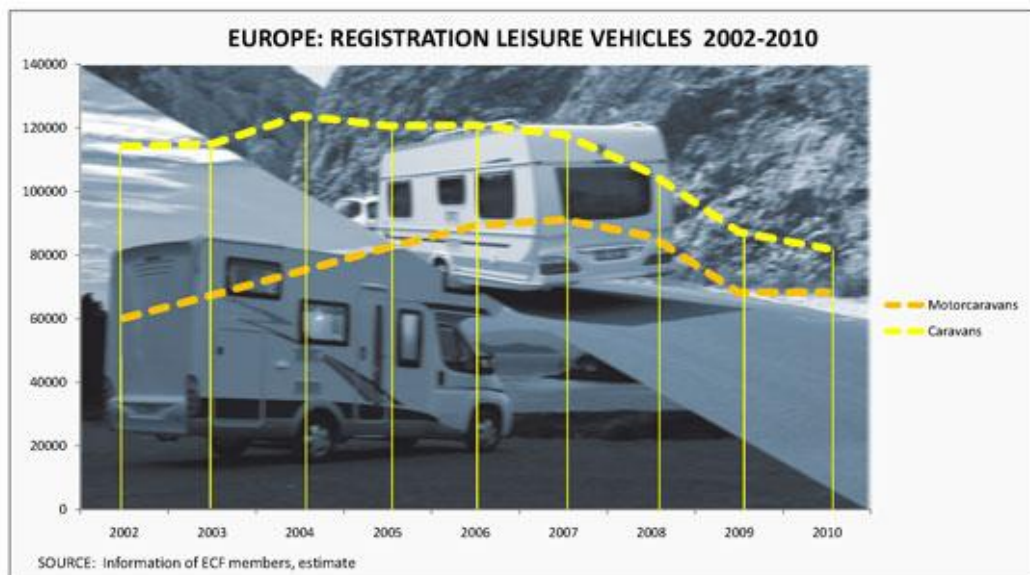
## 2. CARAVAN INDUSTRY

This chapter gives more insight to the company Viitamaa Caravan Oy. Basic features of the industry in Finland and Europe are explained. This chapter also gives information about the domestic competition in this industry. Next in this chapter the customer base is described and the behaviors of the customers of the company Viitamaa Caravan Oy are analyzed. At the end of this chapter the target group of Viitamaa Caravan Oy is described in more detail and current advertising methods of Viitamaa Caravan Oy are named.

### 2.1. Basic information about the industry

The caravan industry has been growing stably for years now. But, of course, because of the recent depression the numbers of caravans registered in Europe were turning down. Now the depression seems to be stabilizing, and the numbers of vehicles registered are staying on the same level. The following chart shows the registration of vehicles during 2002 to 2010.

**Picture 1** :Registration amounts of leisure vehicles in Europe 2002-2010.



“In Europe in the year 2010 the number of registered new caravan cars or trailers was 130 111. In Finland the number was 2335 pieces. The amounts of caravan cars and trailers in use in Europe is 5 398 040 pieces in total. “(EFC 2011)

In Finland there are about 110 000 registered caravan cars and trailers. Compared to the population this is the highest number in Europe. (MAT 2011) This shows how big business caravan industry is in Finland and in Europe, although it is very often considered to be small business (especially in Finland), as the numbers of products bought are so small.

There are no active caravan car or trailer manufacturers In Finland at the moment. All new caravan cars and trailers are imported. The biggest manufacturers are in Germany (etc.Hobby and Dethleffs) and in Sweden (KABE Ab).

The average caravan car or caravan trailer in Finland costs about 50 000 to 60 000 Euros. and it is registered for two to four persons (MAT 2011.).While the costs of caravan cars and trailers are quite high the number of sold caravan cars and trailer is not big, but it still gives a good income to the business.

According to MAT (Matkailuajoneuvotujat RY) in Finland in the year 2010 the sales were again up by 3,8% compared to the year 2009. In the thesis's case company the depression has not been showing on the sales, but the sales have actually been going up the whole time.

The next chapters give more insight into the field. Chapter 2.2 explains about competition in the field of motorhomes and trailers in Finland.

## **2.2. Competition**

Viitamaa Caravan Oy is doing business in a field where almost all products are imported to Finland. As mentioned earlier, at the moment there are no operating Finnish caravan car or caravan trailer manufacturers. As a result all the companies in the field are in the same position. The companies, however, have a possibility to make contracts of dealership with some manufacturers who might give extra benefit to the company. For example, German caravan car and trailer manufacturer Dethleffs has only fifteen companies selling their new products in Finland, and most of the companies are situated in southern Finland.

In the year 2010 only 2580 new caravan trailers and motorhomes were sold (MAT 2011). The units of new normal cars sold in 2010 were 111 898 (TRAFI 2012). The total of new motor vehicles (cars, motorcycles, vans, trucks etc.) sold in 2010 was 196 692 pieces (TRAFI 2012). If we compare the caravan sales to these fields it can be stated that the caravan business has quite a small market share.

As mentioned the business field is quite small and it might be called a niche business while many products are designed especially for the caravanners. Even though the business field is quite small there is a lot of competition in Finland. As a result good and effective marketing is essential for the companies.

The next chapter 2.3 gives information about the basics of the customer base. The chapter explains the things that are important for the main customers and some information about their member groups.

### **2.3. Customerbase**

Caravan industry is based on holiday and free time enjoyment which, of course, influences the customer base. Travelling with caravan cars and trailers and camping with them are very popular in Finland. There are many camping sites in Finland and also many unions that the caravan car and trailers owners belong to.

The most popular union is SF-Caravan Ry. It has over 62 000 members in Finland (SF-Caravan Ry 2012). The caravanners are a close community and they spend a lot of time together. Many caravanners spend their free time in the same camping site for many years with the same caravan neighbors and friends. Also, they often repeat the same patterns in their buying habits as well. A caravanner is often described as easygoing and as someone who wants to enjoy life. In the caravan culture joint get-togethers are very popular.

The following chapters identify and analyze the customers in the field of motor homes and caravan trailers. The chapters also explain how caravan customers act

in purchasing situations, their age groups as well as the customers that Viitamaa Caravan Oy concentrates on and tries to attract.

### **2.3.1. Customer analysis**

According to traditional customer classification theory of Bergström and Leppänen (2009) customers can be classified to four different groups. The first group includes potential customers which are in the target group the company is pursuing, but who have not yet bought the products or the services of the company. The second group includes the customers who are buying the company's products or services randomly without a certain buying plan. The third group includes naturally the regular customers, who buy from the company regularly and repeatedly. The fourth (many times forgotten) group is the customer who do not buy company's products or service any more for some reason. (Bergström, S. & Leppänen, A. 2009, 467-469)

In the field of caravan cars and trailers many customers are regular customers (belonging to the group 3) what has to be kept in mind in marketing and service. Many times the new caravan car or caravan trailer is only the newer model of the old model the customers had. Many of the customers are also very loyal to the seller, at least with this company, as it has been in business for so long and has tried to create customer relationships that are as long as possible. Usually the customers are elderly people, what effects to their buying abilities. The price might not be the key issue in the buying process but the quality and familiarity of the service in some cases might.

There are noticeably less young buyers, but the ones there are usually concentrate more on the price and on the "basic" need they have for the caravan car or trailer. Younger people might not have the money and time to invest that much into their free time and entertainment, while there are much bigger investments in their lives, as a result younger people might not be that big part of the customer base. This age group belongs to the random customers (group 2). They buy where the price and selection is right. Those middle-aged and pensioners normally have more money and free time and they want to spend it on enjoying their holidays.

The potential customers (group 1) are naturally young people who have not bought their first vehicle yet and, of course, all caravanners in Finland. It can be considered that this group should be handled like the third and the second group but to these customers marketing is the essential thing. If these customers do not hear about the company, they cannot know about their selection, service or prices.

The customers who used to buy (group 4) but are not the company's customers anymore are pretty difficult group. The reason for people belonging to this group is often because of the actions of the company. Customers feel that they have been treated wrongly or forgotten. To these customers the company should try after-sales marketing and, of course, try to treat each customer as well as possible and understand as well as admit their mistakes.

#### **2.4. Target group of Viitamaa Caravan Oy**

It is important for a company to find out the people who are buying from them and also what people are possible customers so that they can market correctly to the right people. Identifying the target group can be done by finding out information about the following things.

“Basic group, backgrounds, psychological profile, environmental factors, the habits of using the product, the knowledge of the product, the attitude towards the product, the surveys done about the target group, who is not in the target group, what media is most effective to this target group. (Raninen & Rautio 2003, 69)”

The target group of Viitamaa Caravan Oy is the people who are interested in this field, people who spend their time with caravan trailers and motor homes. They form a group that is widely known as Caravanners. In Finland there are a lot of Caravanners. Viitamaa Caravan wants to attract the attention of new possible customers and also be noticeable to the old customers. Customers tend to change their vehicles every few years and as the assortment of Viitamaa Caravan Oy is changing all the time, it is vital that also old customers remember the existence of Viitamaa Caravan Oy.



The majority of the customers are pensioners but there are a growing number of young people also interested in this field so the marketing should be done in a way that would satisfy both customer groups.

Chapter 2.5 explains the current advertising actions that the company Viitamaa Caravan is using to attract the attention of their target customers.

### **2.5. Current advertising of the Viitamaa Caravan Oy**

The objectives used by Viitamaa Caravan Oy are mostly informative and reminder advertisements. Of course the advertisements are changed a little concerning the situation but normally the changes are not very clearly thought out.

The budget for advertising keeps changing at Viitamaa Caravan Oy. There is no defined advertising budget. If there is some specific campaign or event, more money might be used in advertising. Annually the budget is usually under 40 000 Euros.

The advertising strategy of Viitamaa Caravan Oy is not really carefully planned. At the moment many channels of advertising are used, but it is not clear what of the channels are the most useful ones and what is possibly left out. Also, the form and usage of the advertisements have always been quite the same. Viitamaa Caravan Oy is using integrated marketing communication in their advertising. Integrated Marketing Communication means that in Viitamaa Caravan Oy all communication with customers, suppliers and all contacts is planned to be as similar as possible.

The company's newspaper, radio, internet advertisements follow the same form. The company is always polite, traditional and using the same phrases. Also, the e-mails and other contact forms are kept as similar as possible. The company tries to make all the contacts work well together as a unified force.

Most customers are regular customers and they are used to things being the way they are. Customers expect the same people, ways and service as they have always gotten. Viitamaa Caravan is using very "politely correct" advertisements

and they have not been changing their ways of advertising that much during the years, only added some. The phrase “politely correct” in this context means that the company tries to avoid any inconvenience, insults or anything else that could influence the customer in a negative way. The old customers expect certain things and might be lost if there are too many chances. In this part it has to be noted that many of the customers are pensioners so they might not want anything to change. However, Viitamaa Caravan has noticed that this way has been very successful to them, but they now want to emphasize ways that really work in their marketing, instead of using a little of everything.

The goals of Viitamaa Caravan Oy in advertising is increasing the sales, increasing the awareness of their company and getting more customers to come again.

There have not been made any studies or any other scientific evaluation about the advertising of Viitamaa Caravan Oy. The company has just based their advertising on their gut feelings.

Next is the theoretical part of the study. The theoretical part introduces the theories that the study is based on. This chapter also gives the reader the basic knowledge needed for understanding the study’s results.

### **3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

This chapter explains the theoretical information that this research is based on and what theoretical basics are needed when analyzing the effectiveness of advertising channels. This chapter starts from the basics of marketing, and then the attention is focused on the subcategory of marketing promotions, from the categories of different marketing promotions the concentration is focused on advertising.

The theory about advertising is the core of this study and the theoretical study will explain the importance of advertising, the problems with advertising, difficulties in evaluating the effects of advertisements, how the effects of an advertisement are formed, and the phases of how an effective advertisement is formed.

#### **3.1. Basics of marketing**

Marketing can be defined in many different ways. Some people think of marketing as only selling and advertising but there is a lot more to marketing than that. Marketing is changing all the time and its different parts are getting more and more attention. Companies are making efforts and investing money into research that will help them to do marketing in a way that it produces the most benefit. Marketing truly is an essential part of companies' business and it gives the companies more possibilities to stay in business.

Kotler & Armstrong define marketing as “managing profitable customer relationships. The twofold goal of marketing is to attract new customers by promising superior value and to keep and grow current customers by delivering satisfaction.” (Kotler & Armstrong 2012, 28) The definition of Kotler implies that the customer is the most important thing in marketing. To achieve good customer relationships and have efficient ways of getting new customers is the thing that marketers should keep in mind.

A common way of doing marketing is based on marketing mix theory. The marketing mix includes all essential parts that should be considered in marketing.

“The basic thought behind marketing mix is that marketing should persuade consumer to buy the product by different kinds of actions.” (Gummesson, 2004).

In marketing mix theory the four P’s are the most important features. The four P’s of marketing mix theory are Product, Price, Place and Promotion.

**The Product** in marketing mix means the actual product and what is included in it (the basic product, and decisional models, features available) and also the services that the company offers, what kinds of and warranties etc.

The levels of product and services are: core customer value, actual product and augmented product.

**The Price** can be defined as the actual amount that the customer has to spend in order to get the product or service.

**The Place** means the locations where the products are available for customers. “Company activities that make the product available to target consumers” (Kotler & Armstrong 2012, 76). The dealers, their different locations and repair shops etc.

**The Promotion** means the way company tries to sell the product or service, what kinds of ways they use that they get the customers to notice.

The promotion can be divided into five sub categories. They are advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing.

The following subchapter of this thesis concentrates on marketing promotion’s sub categories because the study’s aim is to study advertisements effectiveness, and advertising is one of the marketing promotions subcategories.

### **3.1.1. Marketing promotions**

There are many tools that companies can use in their marketing promotion. As stated earlier there are sub categories in marketing communication that companies

can use to develop their communication. These categories are advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing.

In this chapter all of the categories will be shortly explained and after that, the focus will be moved on advertising, which is the main theory in this research. These explanations are according to Philip Kotler (Principles of marketing, 2012)

**Sales promotion** “Short-term incentives encourage the purchase or sale of a product or service.” (Kotler& Armstrong 2012, 432)

**Personal selling** “Personal selling is personal presentation by the firm’s sales force for the purpose of making sales and building customer relationships.” (Kotler& Armstrong 2012, 432)

**Public relations** “Building good relationships with the company’s various publics by obtaining favorable publicity, building up a good corporate image, and handling or heading off unfavorable rumors, stories and events.” (Kotler& Armstrong 2012, 432)

**Direct marketing** “Direct communications with carefully targeted individual consumers to both obtain an immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationships.” (Kotler& Armstrong 2012, 433)

**Advertising** “Any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by identified sponsor” (Kotler& Armstrong 2012, 432)

As explained earlier this study’s main interest is in advertising, and the aim was to study advertisements effectiveness, so the advertising part of marketing promotions will next be gone through more clearly.

### 3.2. Advertising

Today we are in contact with advertising many times in a day, some might say even too much. This might raise a question why is advertising important? Is advertising only a way how companies try to get customers to buy something? Actually advertising is very important for several reasons. The reasons for advertis-

ing might be different for companies and organizations but basically advertising tries to inform, persuade and sometimes even to remind people.

“Advertising is paid, to a big target group simultaneously directed non-personal communication, which is forwarded by different kinds of channels by the effort of company or organization paying it.”  
(Vuokko 2003, 193)

Gerard.J.Tellis mentions in his book *Effective Marketing* (2004) four valid reasons why advertising is important.

“First, advertising is a major means of competition among firms. Second, advertising is primary means by which firms inform consumers about new or improved products. Third, advertising provides major support for the media in many countries. Fourth, advertising is a huge industry (it employs a lot of people and a lot of money is used to advertising).”

The book also mentions a fifth reason but this reason is not valid in Finland. The fifth reason is, the public subsidizes advertising expenditures. These four valid reasons clarify why it is important for consumers and countries to understand and respect advertising. Advertising gives a lot to the society and helps the customers to make intelligent decisions. (Tellis, 2004, 3-5)

According to Vuokko (2003), Advertising normally aims to at long lasting effects. A company wants, for example, to make some new product known in the markets, change or build up the image of the company, create a buying need or influence on people’s attitudes. Of course, also short-term goals to advertising do exist, for example inform of offers. (Vuokko 2003, 192-193)

Next chapter concentrates on the fact why advertising is important for companies. After this the problems of advertising are introduced. These chapters give good reasons why advertising is so popular between companies and why there are so many different kinds of advertisements.

### 3.2.1. Problems with advertising

Creating a good advertisement can be very difficult. This chapter will explain the reasons why the advertisements do not sometimes work even though they are creative and done by professionals.

According to Tellis (2004) there are four main reasons for this: Inattention to advertising, resistance to persuasion, misunderstanding of advertisement's message and limitation of effective techniques.

#### **Inattention to advertising**

Customers can be divided into four states of attention to the advertisements. If the customer is in a state of *Search*, the customer is actively trying to gather information about product they plan to buy. In this state the advertisements of different competitors are most effective, while the customer wants to compare the products.

If the customer is in a state of *active processing* he will think about the message he is receiving, he is not actively searching information but might consider some-day buying the product. In this state the problem is how and where to place the advertisements so that the potential customers will notice them and start to read and process their message.

Customer can also be in a state of *passive processing*. In this state the customer receives the message but does not process the message, for example, a customer notices the advertisement of a soap brand, but is not interested and does not spend any time thinking about it and goes on to the next advertisement. These advertisements customers probably will not even remember.

A customer can also be in a state of *avoidance*. Such a customer avoids advertisements, he or she does not want to hear, read or see any advertisements. These are the hardest customers to reach while they have no interest in advertisements. (Tellis, 2004, 29-31)

#### **Resistance to persuasion**

There are also four states that the customers can be divided into, from resistance to persuasion. First one is *selective persuasion*. These customers ignore most advertisements and only concentrate on a few of them. The second state is *selective perception*. These customers only take in the information that is compatible with their previous knowledge. They do not want to change their perception too easily. These customers are hard to convince if, for example, the company's image needs to be cleared. The third state is *selective interpretation*. These customers interpret the advertisements according to their own wants and beliefs. They only interpret the advertisements in a way that is suitable for them. For example, the interpretations between smokers and nonsmokers, of smoking advertisement about smoking causing cancer. The fourth state is *selective retention*. These customers only tend to remember the messages of the advertisements which were compatible with their prior beliefs; they easily forget the message of advertisements that are different than their own previous thoughts. (Tellis, 2004, 32-34)

### **Misunderstanding of the advertisements message**

The message of the advertisement can be left unclear to the customer. The reasons can be due to lack of attention and persuasion or the communication in the advertisement can be so confusing that the customer does not get the idea of the advertisement. The customer can end up making wrong conclusions from the advertisement and totally misunderstand the message.

### **Imitation of effective techniques**

Most advertisements tend to be ineffective but some advertisements really can be huge successes. Normally the reason why some advertisement is so more much effective than others is some kind of a new technique.

“To rise above the level of rival advertising, firms sometimes adopt new methods, media, tools, strategies, appeals and executions. On occasion, some of these turn out to be very successful”

When these breakthroughs do happen, of course, the competitors try to imitate the original and also use the same kind of methods. But if it is then used too much,



the uniqueness fades and the advertisement effectiveness is at the same rate as it was previously. (Tellis, 2004, 36-37)

After the problems in advertising have been identified it is good to know when the used advertising is effective. This, however, can be difficult. The next chapter informs why evaluating the effectiveness of advertising is so hard.

### **3.2.2. Difficulties in evaluating the effectiveness of advertising**

Evaluating the effectiveness of advertising is very difficult. That is because the effects are highly complex. Advertising's effectiveness depends mainly on human response to communication. Also, advertisements should get attention, be easy to process, easy to recall and create responses to the appeal. The main problems in evaluating the effectiveness of an advertisement are according to Tellis (2004):

“Consumers may buy a product for a variety of reasons. Advertising for a brand may occur in different media. Advertising may have not only instantaneous effects but also carryover effects. The effectiveness of the ad may also vary over the life of a campaign. Successive ads have overlapping effects and overlapping decays. Advertising response varies by segments and individuals within a market.”

The next chapter examines what is the effect of an advertisement produced. It clarifies the needed aspects so that the effect would be as strong as possible. Also, the steps are introduced how of an effective advertisement works.

### **3.2.3. The effect of advertising is produced from**

The aspects an effective advertising is made out of, and how effectiveness can be measured are explained when a chart on measures of advertising is introduced. The concentration will then move to the phases which an advertisement should go through to be truly effective.

The chart on page 27 by Gerard.J.Tellis (2004) identifies a firm's advertising input, consumer's mental processes and market outcomes that combined together in a right way form the effectiveness of an advertisement.

This study concentrates more closely to one of the firm's advertising input; media variable. A firm's advertising input also includes variables: intensity and ad contents but the focus is on media variable because of the lack of the company's want to increase intensity or change the advertisements content much. The media variable can be measured by TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, telephone, the internet, billboards, mail and yellow pages.



“Media are the communication channels through which an ad reaches an audience. Five common measures for the distribution of advertising through the media are reach, rating, frequency, gross rating points, and share of voice.” (Tellis, 2004, 45)

Viitamaa Caravan Oy knows the mental processes of their customers quite well because they have been in the field for so long and have learned their customer's thoughts, recognition, recall, warmth, liking, attitudes, persuasion and purchase intentions which are the typical measures of customers' mental process.

The customers of who tend to be regular and very loyal. They are normally older people and pensioners; they appreciate the quality and familiarity of the service more than price. This aspect was explained in details in chapters 2.3. and 2.4.

The company is also aware of the things that affect to the market outcomes; Brand choice, purchase intensity and accounting. Customers are loyal to certain brands and Viitamaa Caravan Oy sells the most popular brands. Customers tend to change their vehicles every few years Viitamaa Caravan tries to keep the yearly selection quite the same as it was before. Viitamaa Caravan tries to keep track of their financial status; they do not want to take additional risks so that the company would stay profitable. More about the part of market outcomes is explained in chapters 1.3. , 2.1. and 2.2.

**picture 2** :Model and measures of advertising effectiveness by Gerard.J.Tellis

<b>State in communication</b>	<b>Type of variables</b>	<b>Typical Measures</b>
Firm's advertising input 	intensity	Ad expenditures, share of outlays, exposures, rating, reach, average, frequency, gross ratings points, share of voice
	media	TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, telephone, Internet, billboards, mail, yellow pages
	Ad content: Creative	Argument and other verbal cues; pictures, sound and other emotional cues; endorsement and other inferential cues
Consumer's mental processes 	cognitive	Thoughts, recognition, recall
	affective	warmth, liking, attitude
	Conative	persuasion, purchase intention
Market outcomes	Brand choice	Trial, repurchase, switch
	Purchase intensity	incidence, frequency, quantity
	Accounting	Absolute or share sales, revenues ,profits

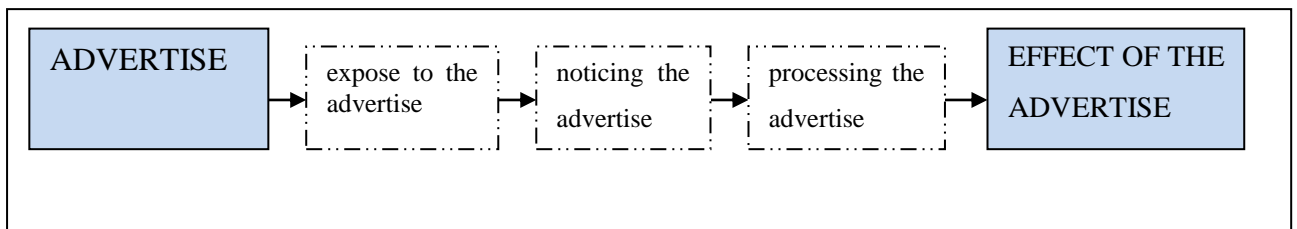
After the different parts of an effective advertisement are identified it is vital to know what things influence to the formation of customer's purchasing decision. What can the advertiser do to catch the customer's attention, and to enhance the

effectiveness of an advertisement? The next chapter introduces the phases how an effective advertising is formed from expose to processing.

### 3.2.4. The phases of how an effective advertisement is formed

First part in effective advertising is defining a certain target group. In this target group a certain effect is wanted from the advertisement. The following chart by Pirjo Vuokko indicates the phases of the advertise impact process. (Vuokko 2003,204-208)

**picture 3** : The phases of how the effects of an advertisement is formed



Advertisers want the chosen target group exposed to the advertisement as much as possible. The chosen media of the advertisement should be the one that catches the most people on the target group. Which newspapers or radio channels? Or do the members of the target group only use internet pages?

After the expose possibility is as high as possible, the noticing of the advertisement should be considered. How can the company get people to notice the advertisement from the media? The advertisement should stimulate the target group. There is short-term stimulation which can be forgotten in an instance, unfortunately. Long-term stimulation effects longer on the target group. Longer stimulation is, of course, better. If there are some points or things in an advertisement which create more interest in the target group the stimulation is probably longer. For example, a catching phrase or some known celebrity etc. can be used to create stimulation.

After noticing the advertisement, comes the processing phase. How the target group processes the advertisement is the most important part in creating effective marketing that is successful. If the target group processes the advertisement dif-

ferently than the marketer intended it, it is not a good result. As a result the customers might not want to buy the products or services. There is no demand or need created and even some boycotting towards the company can be developed. "The respondents' own frame of reference, knowledge, images and experiences do effect to the process phase." (Vuokko, 2003, 207). This is why it should be very carefully thought out what the advertisement includes.

### **3.2.5. Developing effective advertising**

Effective advertising is persuasive, has an argument, creates emotions and might even have some endorsements. A company should always try to aim for that. The following chapter will explain how a company should proceed in developing an advertisement that suits their needs.

In effective advertising there are some points that have to be followed. First an objective should be chosen. This objective can be an informative advertisement, persuasive advertise or reminder advertisement. This, of course, depends on what the company wants to advertise.

Then the budget of the advertisement should be clarified. It is clear how much money can be spend and is wanted to be spend in to this advertisement. After this part a strategy has to be developed. What is the aim and goals of this advertisement? There are two parts in the strategy that should be considered as well, what is the message the company wants to be noticed for and in what media would be the most successful and useful one?

After these the company should proceed with the advertisement. Then an advertising evaluation should be done. Including communication effects and sales and profit effects. Of course, the evaluation of the advertisement is time consuming and hard to do after every advertisement campaign. This is why the evaluations are done quite rarely in small companies.

This thesis is focused on the effectiveness of advertising channels; this is why advertising channels are specified next.

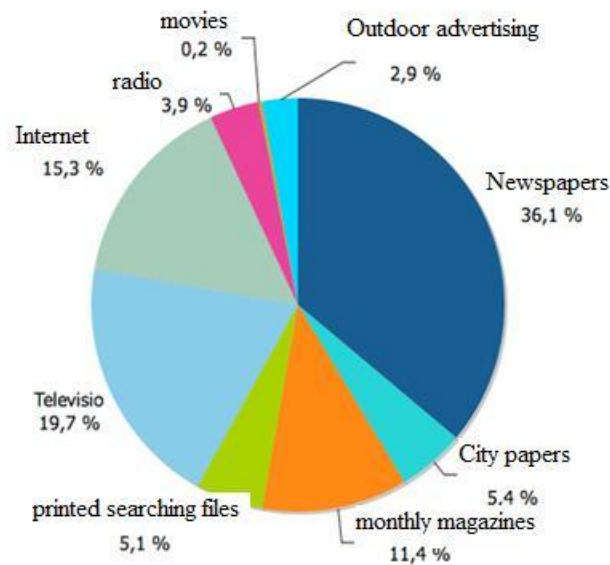
### 3.3. Advertisement channels

There are many channels through which a company can do advertising. All channels are different and they might work well by themselves or they might be good combination together with other channels. In this subchapter only the channels which are used by Viitamaa Caravan Oy will be explained.

“The consumer spends about 86 % on his or hers media day with different electric medias. The times spend with Television and radio is the biggest and the third is the internet. Electronic Medias though have only a third of media inputs”. (Rekola 2010)

The following chart shows the shares that the different media marketing have in Finnish marketing. (Mainonnan Neuvottelukunta & TNS Gallup Oy 2010)

**Picture 4** :Chart of amounts that media channels have in Finland.



#### 3.3.1. Television advertisement

Finnish people are watching more and more television today. Television advertising gives advertisers a good way to reach people, but the advertisement should be thought out carefully before showing, so that an advertisement is not offensive or that the benefits reached are reasonable. Television advertising has 19, 7% share of media marketing. (Mainonnan Neuvottelukunta & TNS Gallup Oy 2010)

“The benefits of TV in advertising: An advertiser can get good national coverage quickly, even 2 million viewers per show. The average Contact price is cheap (not always, it changes).The report ability and suggestively is very good (sound, picture and motion).And advertiser can choose locally where he advertises. (Isoviita & Lahtinen 2001, 184)”

“Television reaches daily 90% of Finnish people; Finnish people spend approximately three hours watching television every day. Television advertiser can choose either buying a show or target group divided by their bought or the combination of these. The shows, the number of presentation and presentation days are settled before hand”. (Rekola 2010)

### **3.3.2. Newspaper advertisement**

According to Sanomalehtienliitto newspaper advertising is the most traditional way of doing marketing in Finland. At the moment newspaper advertising is still the most commonly used one. In the year 2010 newspaper advertising did have a share of 36, 1% out of the media marketing. In Finland there are almost 200 newspaper magazines that are published at the moment. (Mainonnan Neuvottelukunta & TNS Gallup Oy 2010) Although newspaper advertising is still popular in Finland, its share is slowly going down, when internet marketing is taking its place.

“The strengths of newspapers are that they are considered to be trustworthy and they are centered on news. Also, newspapers are often local and an advertiser can advertise by regionally. Normally newspapers are also printed quite quickly so the information on advertisement doesn't get old so easily.( Raninen & Rautio 2003, 117 )”

### **3.3.3. Internet advertisement**

Internet advertising is becoming very popular. Almost all companies in Finland today have some kind of a website and many of them are also buying advertising space on the internet. The internet gives even a small company the ability to compete with the big companies. According to Sanomalehtienliitto the internet has 15, 3 % share in media marketing in Finland. (Mainonnan Neuvottelukunta & TNS Gallup Oy 2010)

Internet marketing is growing rapidly. It has grown about 20-30% in the recent years. The benefits of internet marketing are low production costs, focus ability and the possibility to do specific profit measuring. (IAB FINLAND 2010)

#### **3.3.4. Outdoor advertisement**

Some outdoor marketing is still used even though it is not that big part of media marketing any longer. The outside marketing has about 2,9% part of media marketing. (Mainonnan Neuvottelukunta & TNS Gallup Oy 2010)

“Outdoor marketing is an effective mass media; it reaches out to a large numbers of people at one time. It is also quite a cheap marketing method compared to the other marketing channels. With outside marketing the target market can be reached positional, locally and throughout the country. Outdoor marketing is special in a way that the advertisements are visible at all times during the marketing period. There is no time in it is switched off. Outdoor marketing reaches people in their everyday lives. (Vyyryläinen 2010)”

#### **3.3.5. Radio advertisement**

Radio is an effective, versatile and an interesting marketing channel. Radio marketing has about 3, 9% share of overall media marketing (Mainonnan Neuvottelukunta & TNS Gallup Oy 2010) Even though the share is not that big it is an easy way of getting your company noticed, for example, when advertising some sale or event.

“Because there are a lot of radio channels it is easier to reach your target group according to music taste, location, age and values. The using of just right combination of many radio channels it is reasonable in pursuing even over 80% of national coverage on the target group.

A radio campaign is also very easy to start, it can be in use in a couple of days and low costs make it possible to have many different versions of the advertisement. (RadioMedia, MTL 2010)”

#### **3.3.6. Fairs and customer events**

Fairs and different kind of events can be really effective and profitable to a company. A lot of fairs are organized in Finland annually. The biggest ones are travel fairs, habitare fairs, housing fairs. Fairs and events gather many people into one



location and they are an easy way of finding people who are interested in the subject. In fairs it is easy to present new ideas and development of the products or services. Fairs and events are a good way to contact with your customers and possible customers. In addition to the customers who are already interested also many people just wonder into different fairs so new customers can be found when they hear about the company in question.

“The benefits of fares and events as a marketing channel are that they have the ability to extended brand meetings and experiences. Fares and events can have target goals for example visitors amount, visitor satisfaction and the visitor structure. (Leikola 2010)”

### **3.3.7. Word of mouth advertising**

Word of mouth advertising is many times a forgotten form of advertising, but this channel can be very useful for a company. Word of mouth –advertising includes all the times when customers talk about the company. A person tells someone else where he bought some product, complains about service in some store, gossips about someone’s job , tells his friend where can he find some product, tells about extra offers etc.

Word of mouth advertising can be very effective and extremely good for the company, if the word of mouth advertising is positive. Word of mouth advertising can also be negative. When it is negative it might hurt the company seriously. One negative comment can have a much higher effect than five positive ones. This is why companies should try to always keep customers happy and treat every customer as an individual. Word of mouth advertising normally happens in situations that the company cannot influence; this is why companies should try to always remember that even though they might not know about the negative advertising it might exist. Companies should try to avoid creating more of negative advertising and try to fix the wrong images that the customers have gotten. (Kotler& Armstrong 2012, 419-422)

When the theoretical study has been completed the next chapter examines the methodology that is used in the study carried out in this thesis .In the next chapter basic theory about methods, sampling, reliability and validity are explained and

also the reasons and ways how was the previously mentioned parts were carried out in this research.

## **4. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

This chapter explains the methodology of the research used in this thesis. After this chapter the results of the research are introduced and analyzed.

### **4.1. Research methods**

The aim of the study in this thesis is to find out which media channel is the most effective to Viitamaa Caravan Oy. The main study method is a questionnaire that was given out to the customers in the store of Viitamaa Caravan Oy. The effectiveness of the media channels will be studied by comparing the result of the questionnaire to the amounts of money used to advertise in different media. As a result, it can be clarified that which advertising media is noticed the best while concerning the costs that it creates. The statistic information and theories introduced in chapters 2 and 3 will be used as a base for analyzing of the results.

### **4.2. Data collection methods**

There are a lot of ways how to get data for a research, and from the different research methods a researcher can choose the one that fits to her/his research the best. These methods help the researcher to collect and analyze the data in a way that is suitable for the research in question and so that it helps him/her to answer the research question. The two most used research methods are qualitative and quantitative.

“Quantitative research is based on amount. It answers to questions how often, how much, how important something is etc. The results are indicated by percents, pieces, Euros etc. Quantitative research can for example, be done as interviews, panels, tests.” (Kivikangas 1991, 213)

“Qualitative research tells why a customer is acting in certain way, so it answers to questions why and how. In qualitative research the population sampling is significantly smaller. Qualitative research can be for example done by group discussion, deep interviews, brainstorming”.

In the research study that is done as a part of this thesis a quantitative research method is used to collect the data. The research method for the sample unit is probability. The research is done by using a questionnaire, so the primary data is

received from that. The questionnaire will be placed into the store of Viitamaa Caravan Oy. The questions and the form of the questionnaire can be found on pages 62 and 63 of this thesis.

### **4.3. Sampling the population**

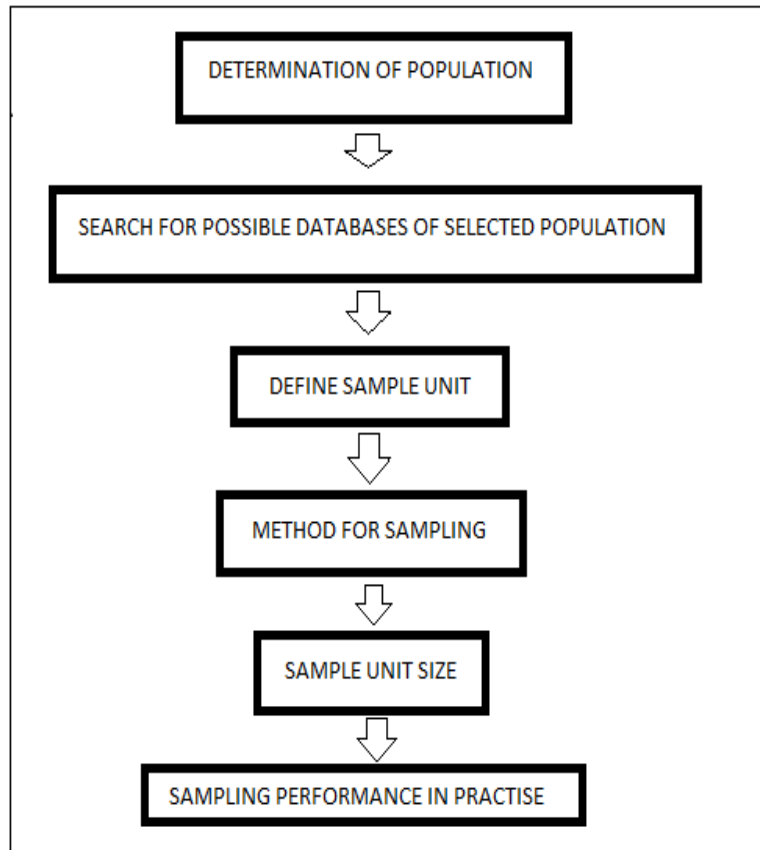
“The research is always based on some particular basic group, population. At the start of the research the population should be identified as accurately as possible. These accuracy demands are, however, limited by time and money. So, instead of sampling the whole basic group the population is many times determined in to a smaller sample unit.  
“(Lotti 1995, 17-20)

It is not possible to acquire questionnaire responses from every customer of Viitamaa Caravan Oy, due to limited resources. The company has been operating for 30 years so the customer list would be too long and the company has not been keeping track of all customers. That is why it is important to determine the sampling unit that is made of some customers but includes customers from all customer groups.

Approximately 60 caravan trailers and motorhomes are sold during the summer months. The emphasis in this study will be on the customers who bought a vehicle (the questionnaire was mentioned to them), but the possibility to answer was given to all customers. If it is assumed that the total population is around 100 customers who could answer the questionnaire (vehicle buyers 60 people & some of spare part customers 40 people) then the percentage of sampling was 26 percentages after the survey.

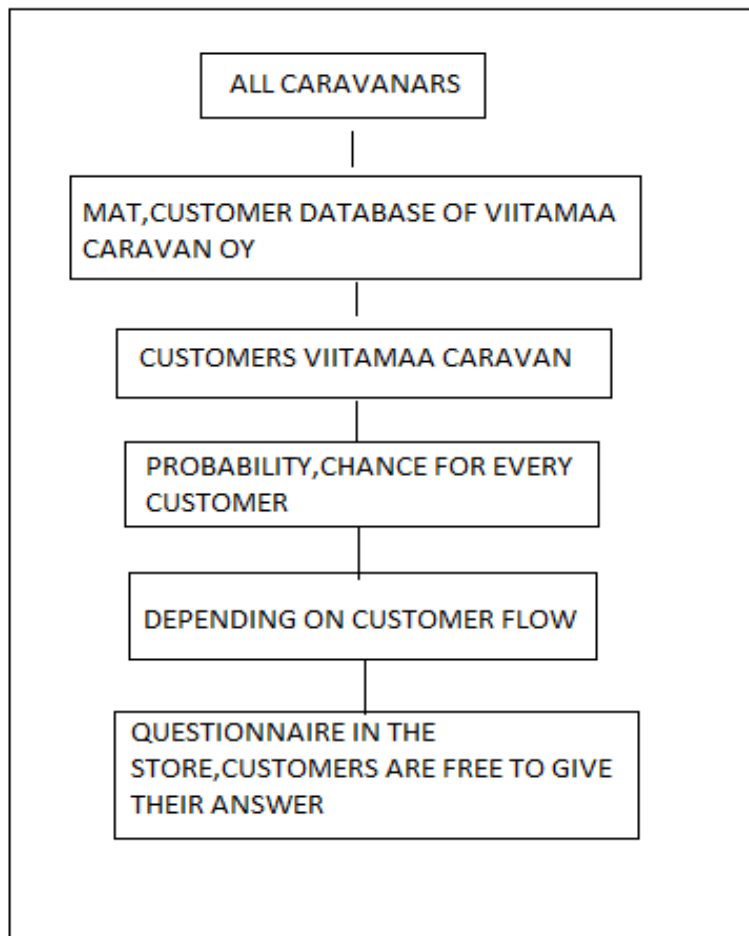
The following chart is based on the chart of Leila Lotti in the book *Markkinointitutkimuksen käsikirja* (1995) it indicates the different steps of sampling.

**Picture 5:** The different steps of sampling by Leila Lotti



These steps are clear and help the researcher to identify the sample unit. There are many versions of this chart; some might be more specific or even simpler. This chart was used as a base for identifying the sample unit in this case study. The following chart includes the steps followed in this research and how the sampling process was done and what were the reasons for them.

**Picture 6:** The steps of sampling used in this research, based on the chart of Leila Lotti



Viitamaa Caravan Oy has been operating for nearly 30 years so there are a lot of customers that could take part of the research. That idea though is not possible to carry out because of limited resources. Because the caravan trailers and motor homes are a hobby for most people they do not wish to feel harassed by the company, they want to feel free and be in charge of their own time, so it is better not to send questionnaires or “force” them to fill the questionnaire in the store.

Customers normally change their vehicle every few years so there are many customers who just come to see the current models but if the chance to answer to the questionnaire is given only to the customers who buy now the research might not be believable. As a result, as the customers of Viitamaa Caravan Oy tend to come

back to make new purchases the opportunity to answer is given to all of the customers visiting Viitamaa Caravan Oy in a certain time period that is selected. However, to enhance the respondent rate of vehicle buyers the questionnaire is mentioned to all of the customers who buy a vehicle, so that at least some of the customers who are considered most valid would answer.

#### **4.4. Execution and the schedule of the questionnaire**

The method that is used is probability. Every customer that happens to enter the store has a possibility to answer to the questionnaire. Additionally, the customers who buy a caravan trailer or a motor home are reminded of the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be offered to the customers in the months of June and July. These months are the busiest so the range of answers might vary more than on other months.

Because of the high season in the business field studied, during summer months it is not possible to start handling the results or data immediately. The processing will start in December 2011.

#### **4.5. Analysing the data**

The number of handed in questionnaires is 26 pieces out of the assumed total population of 100. Viitamaa Caravan Oy concludes about 60 motorhomes or caravan trailer sales in the months of June and July and there are, of course, also customers that visit the store to buy some spare parts or just to see the selection. Considering that the questionnaires were available in the store only for two months and because the customers were not pushed to respond to the questionnaire, the respondents rate is good.

Also, it has to be remembered that the field in which Viitamaa Caravan Oy operates is a small niche, so the customer flow is smaller than in some other corporations.

The data received from the questionnaire needs to be analyzed so that it is possible to make some conclusions and that right kind of solutions can be given to the

company that ordered this research. The received data will be divided into basic groups (basic information, recognisability and advertisements & service) and then analyzed with the help of SPSS program and Microsoft Office Excel. The different kinds of charts will help indicate the results both in percentages and in numbers. Questions three to four are planned to answer the research question “How did the customers find out/hear about Viitamaa Caravan?” Questions five to eight are planned to answer the research question “What form of marketing (that is used) gets the most customers to visit or contact the company?” Questions one, two and nine are added to help the analyzing process.

The received results will be analyzed with Kotler & Armstrong’s theory of comparing the budget of each advertising channel to the effect that each advertisement channel had. The theoretical background will help in the analyzing process.

#### **4.6. Reliability and validity of the research**

It is very important for the research to be valid and reliable. But a research can easily be unreliable or non valid. If the researcher does not take this into consideration when planning the research methods, the results of the research can come out totally wrong, wrong things might be studied.

“The two most important concepts in the accuracy of the research result are reliability and validity. Reliability means the stability of the results, it can be tested several times with the same results and validity means the accuracy of the data. The better the reliability is the less can chance affect on results. With validity it is indicated is the research measuring what it is supposed to measure or is it measuring something else.” (Raninen & Rautio 2003, 28)

When it comes to the validity of this study, this research study can be considered quite valid. The results did give an answer to the research questions and the aim was reached. Also, the results gotten, corresponded quite well with the researchers own previous assumptions (that the internet, newspapers and word of mouth are effective, and radio might be quite an ineffective advertising tool in this field. The researcher also thought there might be a need to develop the advertisements to a more noticeable direction).



As to the reliability of this study it can be concluded that in this thesis the respondents group was quite small, but the results were quite unanimous (the three most effective channels were consistently the best ones in the different comparisons) so they can be considered reliable. Also, the respondents were anonymous and based on free will to answer, so the answers are not influenced by any form of want to please the researcher. Therefore, this research can be considered reliable.

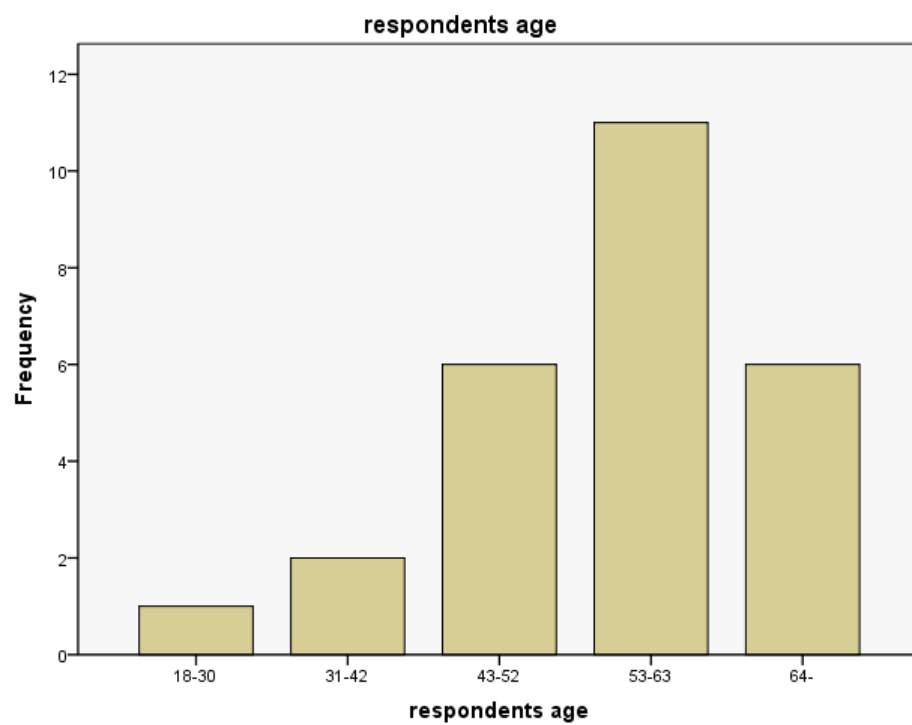
## 5. RESULTS

### 5.1. Basic information

The First question studies the respondent's ages and do the respondents own a caravan trailer or a motor home. This gives some insight on how the respondents are divided, as shown in figures below.

**First question:** The age of respondents.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-30	1	3,8	3,8	3,8
	31-42	2	7,7	7,7	11,5
	43-52	6	23,1	23,1	34,6
	53-63	11	42,3	42,3	76,9
	64-	6	23,1	23,1	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	100,0	



Out of the 26 respondents the biggest age group was the persons aged 53-63, with 11 respondents. It is 42, 3 % of the total respondents. The respondents aged 43-52 and 64- have the same frequency. Both age groups get 23, 1% out of the total. Respondents in the age group 31-42 have only three respondents with 7, 7%. There was only one respondent in the age group 18-30 with 3.8%.

The results show that the customers are mostly over 40 years old. Also, the number of customers goes up when the age goes up. The age group 53-63 is often at the point in their lives that their mortgages have been paid, children have moved out and they are earning more money than before, which gives this age group the opportunity to spend more money on free time.

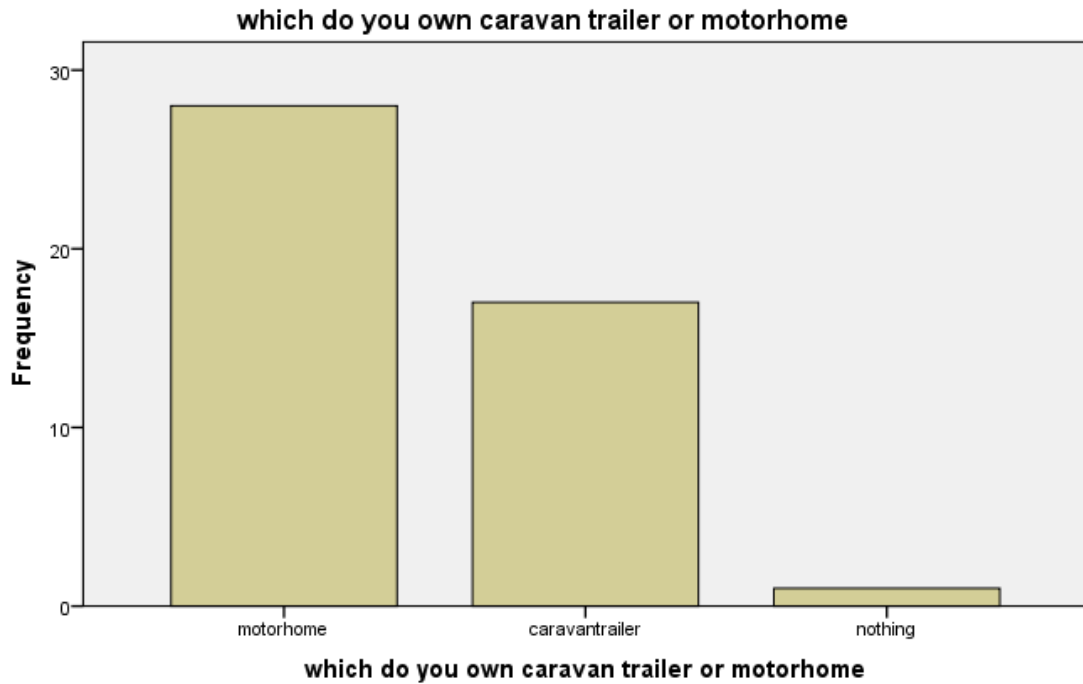
**The second question inquired:**” Do you own a motor home or a caravan trailer?”

**which do you own caravan trailer or motor home**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid motorhome	18	69,2	69,2	69,2
caravantrailer	7	26,9	26,9	96,2
nothing	1	3,8	3,8	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Out of 26 respondents 18 (69, 2%) people owns a motor home. This has been also noted in the company. The motor home industry is growing and people are starting to buy more motor homes instead of caravan trailers.

7 people, with the percentage of 26, 9%, own a caravan trailer and only one of the respondents (3, 8 %) did not own either of these vehicles. This indicates that even if the motorhomes have achieved the biggest percentage in this research, there are still many caravan trailer owners. Also, the results show that there are not very many customers visiting the store of Viitamaa Caravan Oy who do not own a caravan vehicle.



**respondents age \* which do you own caravan trailer or motorhomes Cross tabulation**

Count

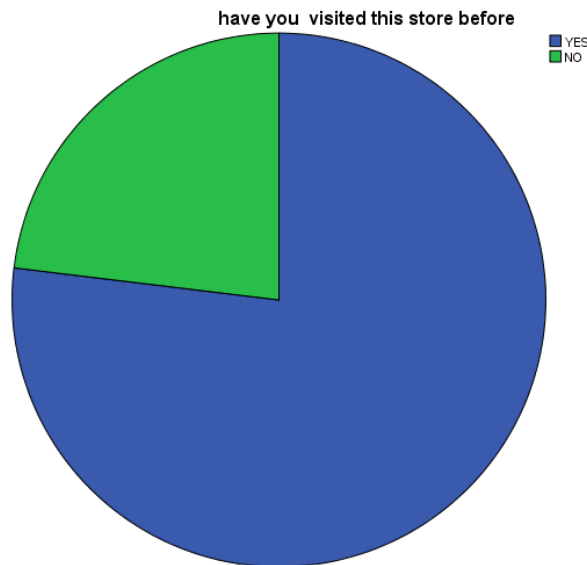
		which do you own caravan trailer or motorhomes			Total
		motorhome	caravantrailer	nothing	
respondents age	18-30	1	0	0	1
	31-42	1	1	0	2
	43-52	1	4	1	6
	53-63	9	2	0	11
	64-	6	0	0	6
Total		18	7	1	26

After the second question the age groups are cross matched to the vehicle which they own. The people owning caravan trailers are divided into over 30 to 63. Motorhomes however are divided into all categories but still the most of motorhomes are owned by age group 53-63. Only one respondent from the age group 43-52 did not own any vehicle.

## 5.2. The recognisability of the company

The second section of the questionnaire studies how well people know the company and how they have come into contact with the company.

**Question number three asked:** “Have you visited the store of Viitamaa Caravan Oy before?”

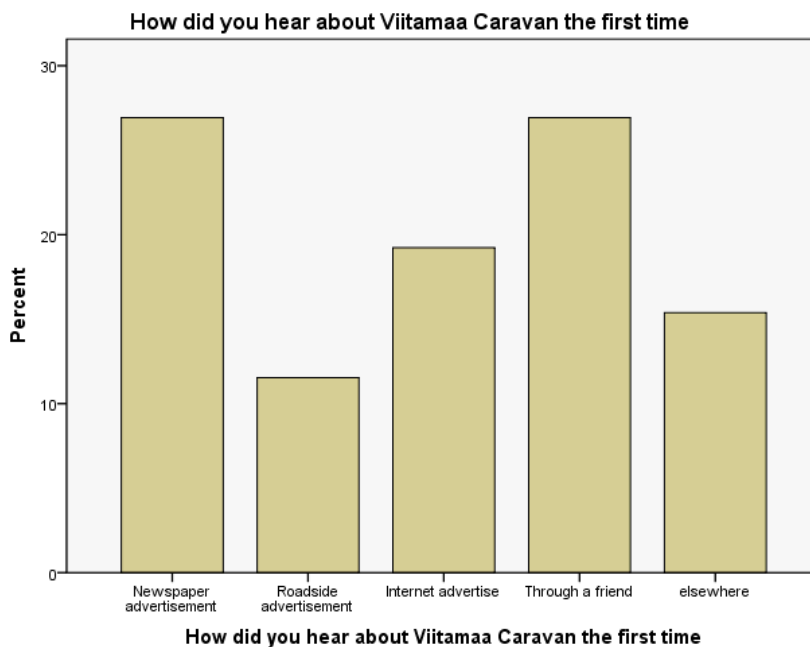


have you visited this store before

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid YES	20	76,9	76,9	76,9
NO	6	23,1	23,1	100,0
Total	26	100,0	100,0	

Out of the 26 respondents 20 people have visited the store before and only 6 people have not. The results show that 76, 9% of respondents have been to this store before, which indicates that most of the customers of Viitamaa Caravan Oy are regular customers. This is a known fact in the company and it has been also mentioned previously in this thesis.

**Question number four studied:** “How did you hear about the company Viitamaa Caravan Oy for the first time?”.



Most of the respondents had heard about Viitamaa Caravan Oy from a newspaper (26,9%) or from a friend (26,9%). The third biggest was the internet with 19,2%.

None of the respondents had heard about Viitamaa Caravan Oy for the first time on the radio, fairs or television advertisements. This is quite surprising because Viitamaa Caravan Oy does quite a lot of radio advertising.

**How did you hear about Viitamaa Caravan the first time**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Newspaper advertisement	7	26,9	26,9	26,9
	Roadside advertisement	3	11,5	11,5	38,5
	Internet advertise	5	19,2	19,2	57,7
	Through a friend	7	26,9	26,9	84,6
	elsewhere	4	15,4	15,4	100,0
	radio,fares,tv	0	0	0	0
	Total	26	100,0	100,0	

These results indicate that in advertising the most effective channel to reach the potential customers is news paper advertising or word of mouth. This is followed by the internet.

**Question five studied:** “Where did you search for information concerning the

**respondents age \* where did you search information concerning the company/trailer/motor homes**

**Cross tabulation**

Count		where did you search information concerning the company/trailer/motorhomes			Total
		internet pages	newspapers	directly from the store	
respondents age	18-30	1	0	0	1
	31-42	2	0	0	2
	43-52	3	1	2	6
	53-63	7	2	1	10
	64-	2	1	3	6
Total		15	4	6	25

company/trailers/motorhomes?”

This question was cross analyzed with the age groups, so that the differences between ages could be seen. 15 (57,7%) respondents did use the internet, six (23,1%) searched for information from the store and only four (15,4%) from the newspapers. One (3, 8%) respondent did not response to this question. All age groups used the internet but only age groups 43-52 and above did use newspapers or the store. In the original questionnaire there were also the options of: “from friends” or” somewhere else”, but none of the respondents selected these options.

**Question six studies:** If you have found information on the Internet which website did you visit?

Which webpage did you visit

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	www.viitamaacaravan.fi	5	19,2	26,3	26,3
	www.netticaravan.fi	8	30,8	42,1	68,4
	www.nettikaravaani.com	5	19,2	26,3	94,7
	some where else	1	3,8	5,3	100,0
	Total	19	73,1	100,0	
Missing	System	7	26,9		
Total		26	100,0		

In this question only the persons who answered to question five with internet pages were asked to answer. However, four people did not understand and also answered to this question. This is not a problem as the point was to see which of the choices mentioned in the questionnaire the customers tend to visit the most, and additional answers would only back up the result.

Out of the four possible choices the most common was www.netticaravan.fi with 30,8%. Both www.viitamaacaravan.fi and www.nettikaravaani.com got 19,2 % of the responses. Only one (3, 8%) respondent had visited some other page.

These results indicate that the www.netticaravan.fi is the most effective internet page. www.nettikaravaani.com and the own pages of Viitamaa caravan Oy have the same impact in percents.

### 5.3. The advertisements and service

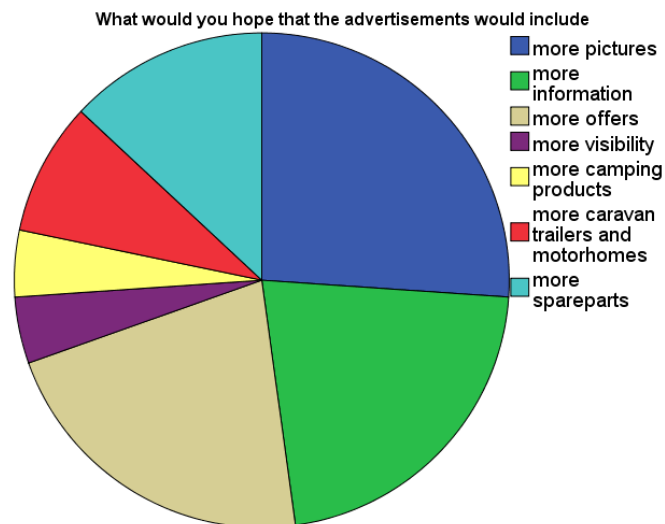
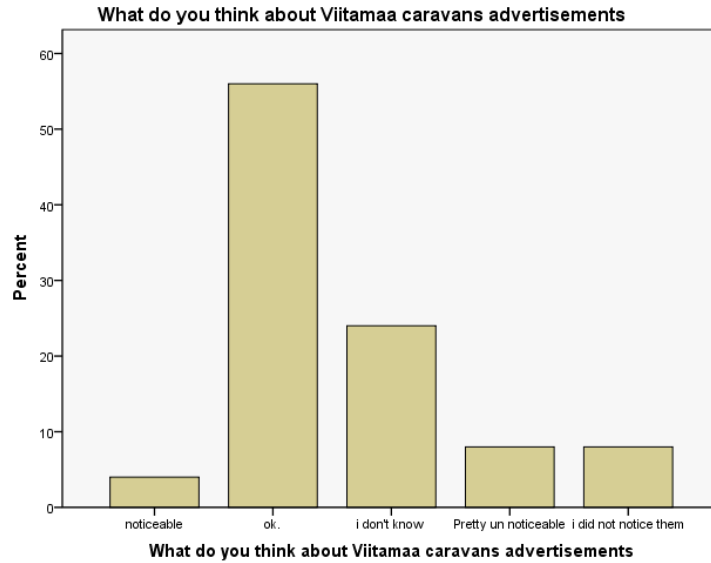
**Question seven inquires:** "What do you think about Viitamaa Caravan Oy's advertisements?" **And question eight studies:** "What would you hope that the advertisements would include?" Questions seven and eight were analyzed by cross tabulation.



**What do you think about Viitamaa caravans advertisements \* What would you hope that the advertisements would include Cross tabulation**

Count		What would you hope that the advertisements would include							Total
		more pictures	more information	more offers	more visibility	more camping products	more caravan trailers and motor homes	more spare-parts	
What do you think about Viitamaa caravans advertisements	very noticeable	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	ok.	3	4	3	0	1	0	2	13
	i don't know	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	4
	Pretty unnoticeable	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
	i didn't notice them	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Total		5	5	5	1	1	2	3	22

There were 22 respondents to these questions. Four of the respondents did not answer to this question. Most of the respondents (13 persons 59, 1%) considered Viitamaa Caravan Oy's Advertisements to be "Ok". These people would want more information into the advertisements and also more offers and pictures. Some respondents wanted also more camping products or spare parts. Only one respondent (4, 5%) answered that the advertisements were very noticeable. Four respondents (18, 2%) did answer "I don't know" to question seven. These people wanted more pictures, information and vehicles into the advertisements. Two persons (9, 1%) answered that the advertisements are unnoticeable and two of the respondents (9, 1%) had not noticed them at all. The groups "unnoticeable" and "I didn't notice them" wanted more offers on to the advertisements; they also mentioned more visibility and vehicles.



These results show that most of the people think that the advertisements are good enough but there are some aspects what they would hope more for. Also there were some answers that indicated the ineffectiveness of the advertisements as four people thought they were either unnoticeable or they had not notice them at all and only one respondent said that the advertisement were very noticeable.

This fact should be considered by the company. They should put more effort into the advertisements and try to make them more noticeable. The respondents mostly wanted more pictures, offers and more information, so this could be used as a key form of the advertisements.

**Question nine asked:** “What is for your opinion the most important thing when you are buying a motor home or caravan trailer?2. This question was analyzed with cross tabulation of age groups.

Out of 26 respondents eleven persons (42, 3%) answered “service”. Seven people (26, 9%) answered “selection”, five people answered (19, 2%) “Price”, two people (7, 7%) answered “easy to see the selection” Only one person (3, 8%) answered “other”.

In the biggest age group, 53-63, the most common answers were service and selection, only one price and easy to see the selection answer.

The person in age group 18-30 answered “price”. The persons in group 31-42 answered “service” and “price”. The age group 43-52 divided the answers between “price”, ”service”, ”selection” and “easy to see the selection”.

Group 64- appreciated “the service” the most (4 out of 6 answers). Only one person answered “selection” and one person answered “other”

**What is for your opinion the most important thing when you are buying caravan vehicle \* respondents age Cross tabulation**

Count	respondents age					Total
	18-30	31-42	43-52	53-63	64-	
What is for your opinion the most important thing when you are buying caravan vehicle						
service	0	1	1	5	4	11
Price	1	1	2	1	0	5
selection	0	0	2	4	1	7
easy to see the selection	0	0	1	1	0	2
other	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	1	2	6	11	6	26

This result indicates that for the older people, service and selection are the most important areas and for the young also the price has huge impact on the purchasing decision. This result is similar than it was also in the customer analyzes.

Clearly, Viitamaa Caravan Oy is on the right track on what they emphasize in the company.

#### **5.4. Comparing the results of the study to the amounts of money used in advertising**

In this chapter the results of the study will be compared to the advertising budget of Viitamaa Caravan so that it can be seen which channels are most the cost-effective. In addition, the budget and the effectiveness of advertising channels are compared in percentages.

##### **5.4.1. Basic comparison between advertising budget and the study results**

The annual amounts used on advertising are given in figure below. The approximate total amount is 32 500 € each year. This sum may vary if there are some extra events or extra campaigns. 55, 3% of the yearly advertising budget is spent on newspaper advertising. 15, 4% is used on to internet marketing and the marketing of fares. 7, 7% is used on radio advertising. 3, 1% is used on both outdoor advertising and television advertising

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING	18 000 €
INTERNET ADVERTISING	5 000 €
OUTSIDE ADVERTISING	1 000 €
WORD OF MOUTH ADVERTISING	0 €
RADIO ADVERTISING	2 500 €
TELEVISION ADVERTISING	1 000 €
FARE ADVERTISING	5 000 €
	32 500 €

According to the research the most effective advertising channels were newspaper advertising, word of mouth and internet advertising. When comparing these results to the amounts of money used on to each media, it can be noticed that the money put into advertising really does pay off. The biggest amount of money was put on newspaper advertising and in the research; newspapers also got the first place in searching for information and getting to know the company.

At this point it has to be noted that also word of mouth got good results, in getting to know the company and in the searching information questions. This should be taken into consideration; as word of mouth is free for the company (just considering the amounts of money) but is as effective as newspapers when trying to wake interest in potential customers. This can be the thing that gives the company a competitive edge compared to competitors if they put a lot of effort into making their customers happy.

Both internet advertising and fare advertising consumed 15,4 % of the yearly advertising budget. Internet advertising was in the three most effective ways of advertising in the research, but fare marketing did not get any attention of the respondents. Internet marketing has got a very good outcome from a small amount

of money. It would be useful to put more money to internet advertising and less money to fare advertising,

The money spend on internet advertising is significantly lower than money put into newspaper advertising, and the results of the research did implicate that the difference in effectiveness between the two ways in advertising is not that big. This raises a question. “Is still too much of the budget used to newspaper advertising instead of internet advertising?” It is possible that the amount of money put into newspaper advertising could be decreased and the amount put into internet advertising should be increased.

11% of the people noticed Viitamaa Caravan Oy for the first time from an outdoor advertisement. This is actually a very good result because only 3, 1% of the yearly budget is used on outdoor advertising. Possibly more outdoor advertising should be used if the outcome is as good and the costs still so low.

Radio advertising was not effective as indicated by the research. The amount of money put in it annually was 7, 7% of the budget, so this seems like quite a useless way of advertising. The reason for this can be that the radio advertising is concentrated on a small radio channel which might not catch most customers’ attention. It would be efficient if the amount of radio advertising was decreased a little.

Television advertisements did not have any effect in this research but that can be explained that this is a very rarely used advertising channel of Viitamaa Caravan Oy.

#### **5.4.2. Comparison of each advertising channels budget and the effect benefit in percentages**

The next chart will explain in percents how much benefit the money put into a certain advertising channel produces. This is done by comparing the percent number of effectiveness and money spent.

Channel	€	effect	benefit percents
Newspapers	55,30 %	26,90 %	0,49 %
word of mouth	0 %	26,90 %	26,90 %
internet	15,40 %	19,20 %	1,24 %
radio	7,70 %	0 %	-
fares	15,40 %	0 %	-
outside	3,10 %	11,50 %	3,70 %
Television	3,10 %	0 %	-

Chart though can be corrupting. This is why also the previous analyzes were done. If a company would only believe this chart, it might end up in quite big problems. Because of the small number of answers and the cheapness of some channels, the percentages of the benefits are very big although they might not be as valuable to the company. Only one answer can give huge percentages to some small and cheap advertising channel.

Chart shows that the most effective way would be word of mouth (26,9%) that was also one of the three most effective in the study without the money comparison. Money wise this is a free channel which gives it some benefit comparing to the others. But still as earlier explained the word of mouth marketing is very important and Viitamaa Caravan Oy should try to keep the customers happy so that the word of mouth marketing would still remain a positive advertising channel.

The second best way is outdoor marketing with 3, 7%. This is a very effective advertising way and because it is cheap, Viitamaa Caravan Oy should emphasize a little more this advertising channel. But with this form of advertising it has to be kept in mind that it is significantly cheaper than other advertising channels but as explained earlier, its effectiveness might be high because of the answer numbers.

From the other channels the most effective one is the internet, followed by newspapers. Also, because the internet was the main way how the customers searched for information it should be considered as a very effective advertising channel. Viitamaa Caravan Oy should put more time and effort into internet advertising; define more about the places where they advertise on the internet and what kind of

advertising it should be. On this customers were asked to give some opinions on the questionnaire. If needed, allocating more budgeted money might be reasonable.

Newspaper advertising was forth in this comparison. This implies that all though it is effective, too much money might be used on it. Newspaper advertising should be thought out, and it should be developed in a way that its effects would be as high as its budgeting percentage is. Why would over half of the budgeting be in newspaper advertising if it is not clearly the winner on the effectiveness?

Radio, fare and television advertising all gave minus figures on the effectiveness compared to budgeting. This is actually quite worrying. Television advertising would be wise to leave out at all because it would require a lot more budgeting to become efficient. Fare and radio marketing are still needed, Fares are mandatory because of the manufacturers demand, but the company should think carefully what fares they attend and how much money is put in to these. Radio advertising seems to be quite ineffective so if the company still wants to do radio advertising, even though its benefits have been low based on the study. Radio advertisements should be totally modified, and the radio channels and the amounts of advertises should be taken into consideration.



## **6. CONCLUSION**

This chapter will give more information about the research. It will clarify how the aims were met and the research questions answered. The chapter also explains what suggestions could be made and how the company should proceed with this information. This chapter also includes evaluation of the research and possible suggestions on further researches.

### **6.1. Summary of the research**

The aim of this research was to study which channel of advertising is the most effective for the case company, to get feedback on the advertisements used and ideas for how could they be developed. The research questions studied how the customers found out/heard about the case company and which form of marketing that was been used gets the most customers to visit or contact the company.

The feedback on the advertisement was analyzed in chapter 5, as were also the development ideas. The most effective channels were identified and explained in chapter 5.4. The next chapter identifies some suggestions that could be useful for the company in integrating their advertising.

### **6.2. Suggestions for advertising**

The suggestions for advertising were discussed and analyzed in chapter five. They could be summarized as following: It would be more effective to plan the whole year's advertising in advance. The objectives of advertising should be clear at least to the company. Are the advertisements all informative, persuasive or reminders? How are the media channels divided? The budget should be made based on the effectiveness of the channels and, of course, based on to what kind of objectives will be followed. The strategy can now be identified better because now the most effective channels are known. Now there is also more information on what the advertisements should be like. Advertising should be more developed so that the advertisements were more noticeable and included more pictures, information and offers. They should stick to people's minds, but still be as politely correct and traditional as possible.

### **6.3. Evaluation of the research**

The theory chosen for the research gives good insight into the research. The theory did help the analyzing process and also gave good basic knowledge about the subject. The research method used in this thesis, quantitative research, was chosen because the aim was to study effectiveness, which was easier to study with percentages than with qualitative answers. The data collection method was a questionnaire form. The questionnaire form was a good method, but perhaps there could have been some extra allurements towards the questionnaire, for example, some competition, so that the number of responses could have been increased.

The research questions were met, and the research gave a lot of inside information on them. The customers found out/heard about the company mostly through the internet and from the other customers. The most effective advertising channels were word of mouth, internet and newspapers. Surprisingly the study also discovered that the radio advertisements were not effective, even though Viitamaa Caravan Oy thought that their radio advertisements are highly effective.

The research gave plenty of information on the customers' behavior and opinions; also basic information about the target groups was discovered. The questions for the questionnaire were carefully chosen and the questions gave the information needed for the research aim to be reached. The results were analyzed from percentages in comparing different points of views. The research process is defined and explained quite accurately, so it should be possible to repeat the study if needed.

### **6.4. Suggestions for further research**

This research has awakened many ideas and questions concerning Viitamaa Caravan Oy and its marketing. There are a lot of things that could be done to enhance the company's business. On the basis of this research the following additional research areas that would help the company could be recommended: customer satisfaction survey, creation of a marketing package, development of a web shop, im-

proving stock maintenance also better advertisements could be created and more training about marketing should be given to the entrepreneur.

Also, the company is following their own experience too much, instead they should try to develop their advertising and other areas of their business to a more contemporary approach. Some kind of an training plan to the employees and the entrepreneur should be created and executed.

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## 8. APPENDICES

VIITAMAA CARAVAN OY  
-MARKETING INTERVIEW -  
Anna-Sofia Huuonen

### 1. Respondent's age

- 18-30
- 31-42
- 43-52
- 53-63
- 64-

### 2. Do you own a motorhome or caravan trailer?

- motor home
- caravan trailer

### 3. Have you visited Viitamaa Caravan Oy's shop before?

- Yes
- No

### 4. How did you first hear about Viitamaa Caravan Oy?

- Radio advertisements
- Magazine advertisement
- Roadside advertisement (in Kempele)
- TV- Advertisement
- Fair
- Internet advertisement
- by a friend
- somewhere else \_\_\_\_\_?

### 5. What is, in your opinion, the most important thing in buying a caravan vehicle?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service            | <input type="checkbox"/> flexible hours            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Price              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____?              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Previous knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> Easy to see the selection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selection          |  |

**6. From where do you look for information concerning trailers/motor homes/  
Viitamaa caravan Oy?**

- Internet pages
- News papers
- Directly from the store
- From friends
- Somewhere else \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer to the question 6A, only if you answered: "internet pages" to question 6.

**6A. which internet page did you visit/search information from?**

- www.viitamaacaravan.fi
- www.netticaravan.fi
- www.nettikaravaani.fi
- Other \_\_\_\_\_?

**7. What do you think about Viitamaa Caravan Oy's advertisements?**

- very noticeable
- good
- I don't know
- pretty unnoticeable
- I didn't notice them

**8. What more would you hope the advertisement to include?**

- more pictures
- more information
- more offers
- more visibility
- more camping products
- more motor homes & trailers
- more spare parts