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USING VALUE PROPOSITION TO DESIGN AND TEST A NEW SERVICE CONCEPT

– Case Reima

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The purpose of this thesis is to define and design a new service concept, and test if there is a need for anything like it. If there is a need for a concept of a service at this point or if it should be changed and further developed, if so into what direction. The commissioning company, Reima, wants to see if their current loyal customers would see this service as something they used and in what ways. Reima is digitalizing, as they see the markets moving more and more toward the digital world. The new service concept is part of these digitalizing efforts.

The theoretical frameworks used in this thesis were based on the concept of value proposition canvas by Alexander Osterwalder et al. (2015), which also explains the tools and process used in it. Meanwhile, it is looking at what is a value proposition and what creates value to customers.

Data gathered for the research is quantitative. The method used was an online questionnaire conducted to a group of people in the company's newsletter subscription. They are mainly included in the target group of the service concept.

The results give great insights about the customer habits and readiness to be part of a service, while validating and improving the defined value proposition of it.

KEYWORDS:

New service development, value proposition, value proposition canvas, value, Reima

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ARVOLUPAUKSEN KÄYTTÄMINEN UUDEN PALVELUKONSEPTIN SUUNNITTELUSSA JA TESTAUKSESSA

- Reima

Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on määritellä ja suunnitella uusi palvelukonsepti, ja testata mikäli sen kaltaiselle palvelulle on tarvetta. Selvitettävä on mikäli konseptoidun kaltaiselle palvelulle on tarvetta tai mihin suuntaan sitä pitäisi muuttaa ja kehittää. Toimeksiantajayritys Reima haluaa nähdä mikäli heidän tämän hetkisinä lojaleilla asiakkailta on tarvetta konseptoidun kaltaiselle palvelulle ja millä tavalla. Reima digitalisoituu samalla kun markkinat siirtyvät koko ajan enemmän digitaaliseen maailmaan. Uusi palvelukonsepti seuraa näitä digitalisoitumistavoitteita.

Teoreettinen viitekehys seuraa pääasiassa Alexander Osterwalderin arvolupauskanvasin konseptia, sen prosessia ja siihen kuuluvia eri työkaluja. Samalla selittää mikä on arvolupaus ja mikä luo arvoa asiakkaille.

Tutkimuksessa kerätty data on kvantitatiivista. Sen keräämiseen käytetty metodi oli onlinekysely, joka toteutettiin Reiman uutiskirjeen tilaajille. Vastajat kuuluvat konseptoidun palvelun kohderyhmään.

Tulokset antavat hyviä oivalluksia asiakkaiden tavoista ja valmiudesta olla osa palvelua, samalla kun määriteltyä arvolupausa saadaan kehitettyä ja vahvistettua. The results give great customer insights about the customer habits and readiness to be part of a service, while validating and improving the defined value proposition of it.

ASIASANAT:

Uuden palvelun kehitys, arvolupaus, arvolupauskanvas, arvo, Reima

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (OR) SYMBOLS

| | |
|------|---|
| CPV | Customer-perceived value |
| 4Us | Unworkable, Unavoidable, Urgent and Undeserved |
| BLAC | Blatant, Latent, Aspirational and Critical |
| 3Ds | Discontinuous innovations, Defensible technology and Disruptive business models |

1 INTRODUCTION

Digital disruption is on-going in the retail industry and it creates both great threat and opportunity. The adaptation to the situation gives a great amount of new possibilities. (Barbier, et al., 2016). New possibilities may happen in various business functions. A way to finding them is by creating new product or service concepts. New concepts should be tested with customers. This way companies get closer to developing value propositions that customers find compelling and will truly value. (Bielaszka-DuVernay, 2008)

The topic of the thesis is defining and testing a new a service concept using the Value Proposition Canvas as a structure. Target is to get a customer proven value proposition,. The case company is Reima Oy. Reima is a globally leading functional kids' wear brand. Digitalization is the core of the company's strategy. Big part of that is ecommerce, but also includes other business models that can be built to serve Reima's customers even better. The goal is to add services to facilitate the buying process and customers' every day lives further. (Reima, 2018.)

The interest toward the topic came through the current position of the author at Reima, while working closely with digitalization and digital products in the company. Being part of the digital customer experience team, it gave a ringside seat to the development of concepts to new digital products and services. Furthermore, a digital service concept was brought up in the conversations for next possible development projects. Where it seemed like a great opportunity to take a different perspective into the beginning of a development project, where the concept is defined and tested with customers. The perspective of value proposition is not revolutionizing the process, but suggests a structured way to look at it. This is a current topic for Reima, because of the growing amount of developing new digital products and services in the company.

This research discusses the topic by finding out answers to the following research questions:

1. How does the Value Proposition Canvas help in defining a new service concept?
2. Will the research show that customers see the defined value proposition similarly?

3. Is there a need for a solution, and should it be taken into further development?

This thesis gives practical understanding on how a new service concept can be defined and tested from the value proposition perspective. It also gives a suggestion based on the results whether or not Reima should progress with the development of the service concept.

The primary data used in the research comes from discussions with a manager at Reima and an online survey conducted to Reima customers. The discussions were prior to the online survey, and were mainly focused on defining the idea of the new service concept in a clearer way. More about the discussions in chapter 5. The online survey was conducted with some of Reima's customers who are subscribed to the company's Finnish newsletter. The goal of the survey was to find out if the defined value proposition would be anything like the customers' opinions. The survey was concentrating in finding out about the respondents' recreational activities and how they make the decisions on what to do, after which it leads to a description of a service concept and enquires opinions on its different possible functions and features. Chapter 5 will provide more coverage on the online survey methodology.

For secondary data, finding relevant information on value proposition in the context of this thesis was a challenge. Value Proposition Canvas is fairly new and unique way to look at the topic, therefore Osterwalder, et al. (2015) was a main reference in the thesis, together with Skok (2013) and Klement (2016).

First the research starts with defining what value is, what a value proposition is, and how to create one from different perspectives. Those definitions were followed by suggestions on how to create a compelling value proposition. The next part of the theoretical background concentrates on the Value Proposition Design and its relations to other business development processes, continued by explaining further the Value Proposition Canvas which is the base for the Value Proposition Design. Later specifically discussing Value Proposition Canvas' side of customer profile that includes customer jobs, pains and gains. It is also the part that is defined using primary data. Second part of the canvas is value map, which stays in lesser focus, since it is suggested to be done after the customer profile definition is ready. Secondly the thesis goes to the methodology of gathering primary data and analysis of it, which is followed by suggestions and conclusion of the thesis in the final chapter.

Results from the online survey showed similarities to the assumed customer pains and gains, but also well demonstrates the importance of each factor. There can be seen correlation between answers about the activities and planning of them. Results give great insights on what the families' habits around recreational additional are like. After the service concept was explained to the respondents, the approach was positive and indicated a great readiness to being part of the service's content creation. The quantitative research was successful and gives a base for further research and development.

2 REIMA OY

Reima Oy is a Finnish company established in 1944, that manufactures kids' premium apparel. The company's roots come from the post-war years when they started recycling army snowsuits to make work wear for women, and the products and target groups have changed after the beginning. Although production has been outsourced, the company stands proud behind its Finnish design. (Reima, 2018.)

Today, Reima provides good quality, year-around, tip-to-toe functional wardrobe for kids, ages 0-12. For babies, Reima has been familiar to Finnish families for decades, but in recent years they have invested heavily in global markets. The company's products are now sold in over 70 countries across three continents, of which Reima's own ecommerce covers 37 countries. Reima employs over 300 people globally, of which less than a half in Finland. (Reima, 2018.)

The company is expanding and growing, but yet wants to keep improving. Reima has digitization in the center of their strategy, which means developing their digital offering. Part of that strategy Reima launched ReimaGO kids' activity sensor and tracking, as their first digital product. Continuing with the strategy, the company acquired Finnish Baby Box, which offers solutions for baby preparation, with packages of collections of baby essentials. Those collections include Reima products. In Finland, all expecting families are offered as social support baby boxes that include clothing and supplies for newborns, especially intended for first-time-parents. These boxes that are offered as social support also include Reima products.

Reima is looking to help parents and families more with their day-to-day lives. This is what the digital development projects in the company are trying to accomplish. The author's position in the digital customer experience team at Reima lead to the subject and research. New concepts are constantly gone through, while trying to find the digital solutions that would bring the customers, parents and families, the most value.

3 CREATING VALUE FOR THE CUSTOMER

3.1 Customer's needs as a starting point

To begin with, Reima wanted to design a new service concept with and for the customers. As suggested by Alam (2002), customers can be involved in different parts of the new service development process, but it is seen to be most important to involve them in the stages of idea generation, service design, and service testing and piloting. Since, the idea generation stage has been done prior to the research, the next stage and the main focus on this research is in the service design. Main focus in the design phase is to discover what the customers would need and value. To understand what the customers' needs are, it is seen to be useful to look the matter through value proposition. As Wormald (2015) points the power of value proposition as an approach to modelling products or services, before going further in the development of them.

3.2 What is value?

Value is the customer's estimate of the extent to which a product or service can satisfy their needs (Fill, 2009). Gamble (2016) explains further, that value is the reason why a customer uses a product or service over another.

Whether it is products or services, customers are not looking to buy features, they are looking to buy benefits. That means finding something that helps them or gives the customers a solution to their problem. According to Fill (2009, p. 197), value is determined, with business-to-business customers and consumers, "by the net satisfaction derived from a transaction, not the costs incurred to obtain it". By answering the needs of the customers with the offered service or product, "satisfaction of needs is a way of delivering value".

Value in marketing is often referred to as customer-perceived value (CPV). CPV is how the consumer assesses the utility of the product, which is based on how they perceive what is being given away and what are they receiving. Utility of the product meaning the usefulness of it for the customer. This perception of the value that the consumer is getting from a service or product is subjective and individual. This is the reason why perceived value changes between the consumers and even occasions. Any circumstance could

affect the way a person will make a purchase decision at a certain time or place. (Ravald & Grönroos, 1996.)

What needs to be taken into consideration is using the term customer-perceived value while discussing about the consumer. It was argued by Lai (1995) to have a differing meaning, "customer value focuses on the buyers evaluation of product purchase at the time of buying, while consumer values stress people's valuation on the consumption or possession of products". Possession gives an easier way to for the customer to asses the usefulness of a product, since it is tangible for them.

In order to understand how decisions are made, it is valuable to understand the consumer decision process. There is a model seen in Figure 1, to explain and illustrate the different stages in the consumer decision process, each stage explaining the motivational factors behind the decision. The starting point always has a problem or a need that needs to be satisfied. To recognize that, an individual has to realize the difference between the current state of matters and the desired one. The second stage is information search, that comes after the problem has been already recognized. During this part, the consumer is trying to look for more information on the possible solution, where time spent can vary a lot between individuals. The search can be internal or external. Internal meaning the consumer's own experiences and external could be anything from relatives to the Internet. Third stage, evaluation of alternatives is basically going through all the information search's findings and analyzing them. The evaluating is considered to be highly important but the most time-consuming part of all. The fourth stage of the process is purchase decision, where the consumer finally decides after finding information and evaluating it, whether to make a purchase or not. The final stage, post-purchase evaluation is easily ignored by companies, since it happens after the purchase has been made. Although, this part directly has an effect to the future decision making process, and its information search part. The positive experiences also have a great effect on the peers and family of the consumer. (Dudovskiy, 2013.)



Figure 1. Consumer decision-making process (Dudovskiy, 2013)

3.3 What is customer value proposition?

Kinch (2017) explains that if a product, service, or experience is creating desired gains for the customer or relieving their pains, it has a value proposition.

Furthermore, Skok (2013) states that a value proposition can be defined as positioning statement that explains what benefit you provide for who and how do you do it uniquely well. Value proposition will provide the information about what kind of buyers are being targeted, what type of problems are sought to be solved, and what are the factors that make the company noticeably different? It was also stated, that value proposition describes the benefits customers can expect from your products and services (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, p. 6).

3.4 Creating a value proposition

When starting to create a value proposition, the most common mistake is to go precipitately into defining the solution, without actually thoroughly understanding the problem that is sought to get solved. It is notable to constantly keep in mind the customers, value proposition begins and ends with them, as Innes (2015) emphasizes.

There is a four-step model presented by Skok (2013), for building a compelling value proposition. The four steps consist of Define, Evaluate, Measure and Build. This model helps to look at the value proposition from different perspectives. Furthermore, the model assists in structuring the creation of a value proposition with defining if the customer problem worth solving, evaluating whether the idea to solve it is unique and compelling, measuring if the solution to the customer's problem has enough gains to compensate the pains of taking it into use, and finally going to building of a value proposition after the preparation steps.

3.4.1 Worth Solving?

Definition part helps with looking into the problem set to solve, whether it actually is one that is worth solving. "A problem well stated is a problem half solved". It is important to first describe the problem well before going full ahead with creating a solution to it.

Defining a value proposition has a central part called 4Us, coming from Unworkable, Unavoidable, Urgent and Undeserved. The 4Us consist of questions related to the words it describes, assisting in looking at the problem and the significance of it. Suggesting that if the majority of the following questions about the 4Us are answered positively, the chosen path would be a correct one. If not, re-evaluating and reviewing the project should be considered. (Skok, 2013.)

1. Is the problem Unworkable? Is the new venture a solution addressing an issue with consequences that are real and can be measured?
2. Is fixing the problem Unavoidable? Is there any implication of governmental or regulatory control getting involved?
3. Is the problem Urgent? Are the ones having this problem prioritizing it? It is tremendously easier to get the attention of the target audience, when solving a highly ranked issue.

4. Is the problem Underserved? Are there no notable solutions given to this topic?

According to Skok (2013), in the definition part of four-step model there should also be done the qualification of the problem, is it “Blac and White”? BLAC being an acronym for Blatant, Latent, Aspirational and Critical, and WHITE referring to the white space in the market.. White space in these types of cases means “a place where a company might have room to maneuver in a crowded playing field.” (Johnson, 2012). Figure 2 helps to understand this with the visualization of Blatant Critical Matrix.

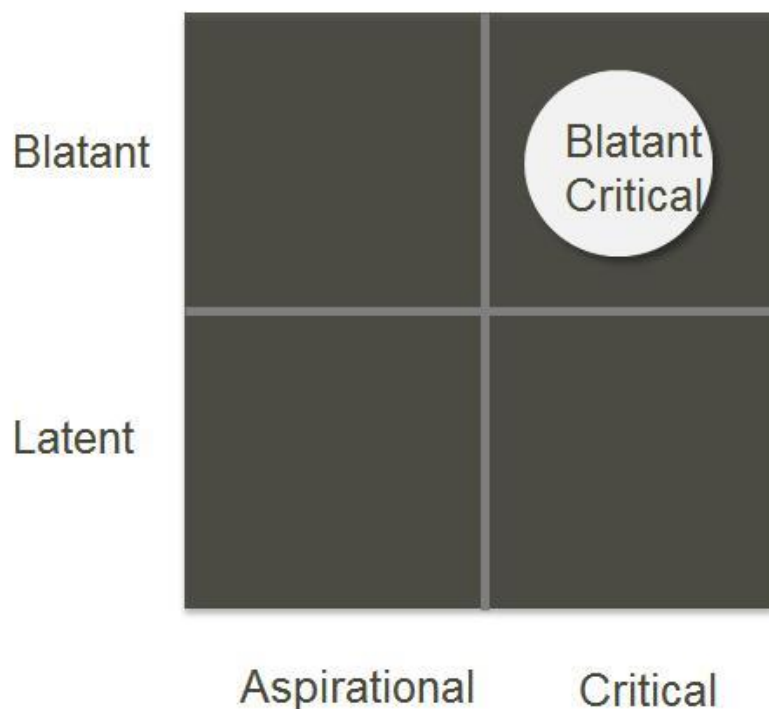


Figure 2. The Blatant Critical Matrix (Skok, 2013).

Latent and Blatant are demonstrating the visibility of the problem. Blatant problems are the ones that are clear to the customer. Latent problems are the ones that the customer is not familiar with or is new to. Latent problems are definitely worth solving, but require a lot more work put into the customer education than the Blatant ones. Therefore, it needs to be assessed if the company involved is indeed ready for the needed time and financial investment. On the other side of the matrix, Aspirational and Critical are demonstrating customer needs. Critically needed solutions mean the real, significant and current problems people or companies are trying to solve. This implies that the customer needs the solution now. Aspirational needs are not necessarily today's issues, you can

live with them, but are touching the need for success and status or luxury. Notable is that aspirational solutions are vital in the consumer market, as great earnings come from the recognition of unknown needs and ambitions of customers. (Transcend Strategy Group, 2017.)

According to Riani (2017), the best problems to solve are the ones that are unworkable, unavoidable, urgent, underserved, as well as, blatant and critical. The problems most preferably looked for are blatant and critical ones, since they are affecting financially, today, like the name of Figure 2 expressed it. What needs to be kept in mind is that the today's aspirational needs can become blatant and critical, even sooner than thought.

3.4.2 Unique and compelling?

When the determination of the problem is finished, it is followed by the second part of the four-step model which introduces the Evaluate phase. Evaluation helps define whether the great idea has something in it that can be called unique and compelling.

An approach presented by Skok (2013) to the evaluation part is the 3Ds, which stand for Discontinuous innovations, Defensible technology and Disruptive business models. What is the unique mixture of these three that makes a problem compelling enough to the ones behind the idea, but also to the unconvinced customers? Even if the idea to solve a problem is compelling for customer, it also needs to be alike for the developers and providers of the solution, e.g. the company behind the idea. There are more factors in making a solution convincing than typical speed, price, and other basic determinations of being better. When the idea for a solution to a customer problem is evaluated with the 3Ds, it can help find the true potential of it.

According to Skok (2013), as a result of looking at a problem in a different way, discontinuous innovations give transformational benefits over the current situation. These can also be stated as breakthrough, radical or disruptive. Birkinshaw, et al. (2006) suggest that, the implementation of new technologies, products, or business models are representing a dramatic departure from the current state of the art in the industry. Basically, discontinuous innovations are about coming up with totally new types of solutions.

Coming back to the statement of being compelling for both sides, Defensible technology is where a lot of technology companies start. Defensible technology is intellectual

property that can offer protection by blocking others to even start a competition and by getting an unfair competitive advantage. When the solution found is dealing with hard technical problems, new inventions or new processes, it could eventually create patents that protect the established intellectual property. (Skok, 2013.) Moreover, Chen (2017) says these defendables around the business are the so called moats around the castle.

Mardsen (2015) says, that by taking on the problem differently than the current providers in the market and giving a solution to the customers that disrupts the present situation, can be created a disruptive business model. Christensen, et al. (2015) suggest that disruptive models can be found in two ways. They are either innovating in an existing market, where the offering is good enough and targeted to low-end user, or creating a new market to turn people who do not consumer to consumers. The purpose of a disruptive business model is also to create value and cost rewards that will help the business to accelerate its growth. (Skok, 2013.)

3.4.3 Enough gains to compensate the pains?

The third part of the four-step model, measure, involves the use of gain-to-pain ratio. It measures if the customer is actually getting enough gains to compensate the pains and costs of adopting to the use of the new product or service. There is often emerging a problem of over delivering features, when the most important part of the equation is forgotten – the customer. Can it be that the amount of possible features in the offering is so broad that learning to use the product actually becomes too big of a pain itself, even though the price or other factors of it may not be creating pains? For this, Skok (2013) suggests to look for the so-called non-disruptive disruptions. It means finding a way to create great benefits with the product or service to the customer, with minimizing the alteration of the current processes or settings they are used for. Pains and gains are also focused in the later framework of value proposition canvas. Reima should keep in mind the part of not developing too many features, so that using the solution becomes too much of a pain itself.

3.4.4 Ready to build?

After the three first steps of the model for building a compelling value proposition, comes finally the last but not least part, build. The model has so far shown how to do the so-

called preparing part. This finishing part of building shows how to really build the value proposition utilizing the defining, evaluating and measuring steps. (Skok, 2013.)

When building the value proposition, the following should be filled in and have an answer to:

- Who are the target customers?
- What is current situation they are not satisfied with?
- What is the product or service?
- What problems does it solve and how?
- How does it differ from existing options?

The last factor Skok (2013) states is, that even after all these four steps, the most important single factor affecting the value proposition are the people behind it. The people are the central of it in the end. How are they unique? What do the people do exceptionally well? People are the key.

3.5 Design and test what the customer values

A different look into value proposition is the Value Proposition Canvas proposed by Alexander Osterwalder, et al. (2015). They argued the lack of a tool for the process of creating value propositions. The canvas assists new or existing companies to design, test and build value propositions to customers in a more structured and thoughtful way (Osterwalder, 2012). Value proposition canvas is a more in depth look to a part of bigger entity, the Business Model Canvas, also by Alex Osterwalder. Business model canvas concentrates in looking at the brainstorming and business model specification phases from different perspectives. With the end goal of creating compact summary of the most important parts of the business model. (Liikkanen, 2016). Where value proposition canvas was built for, were the the parts of Value Propositions and Customer Segments in the business model canvas, as seen in Figure 3.

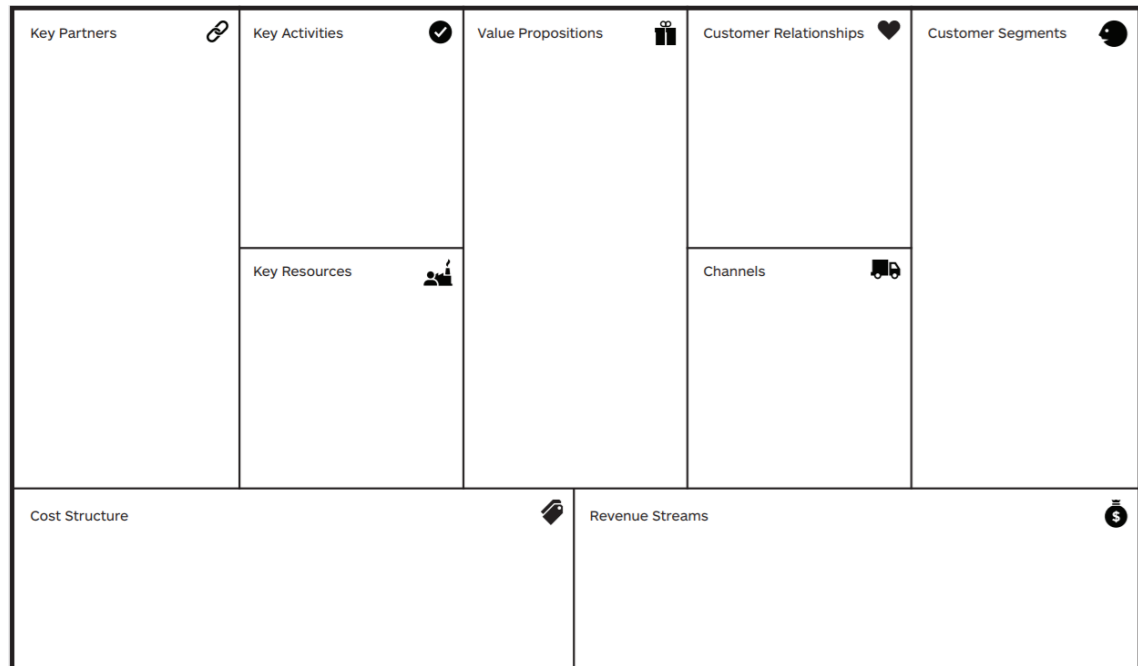


Figure 3. Business model canvas (Strategyzer, 2015).

The value proposition canvas is concentrating on creating value for the customer, unlike to business model canvas, which is concentrating on creating value for the business. Finding the fit between value propositions and customer segments is what the value proposition canvas is for. What needs to be kept in mind is that while creating a great value proposition canvas is extremely important, it does not replace the business model canvas, or vice versa. The best solution is to use both of them together, supporting each other, as a combination. (Osterwalder, 2012.)

3.6 Value proposition design with the help of Value Proposition Canvas

The process of the value proposition design is starting with the tools of value proposition canvas helping with the value proposition search phase, where the point is to design and test the product or service Reima wants to offer its customers. The search means finding the value propositions the customers are searching for and desire, and then making them in line with what customers want in the post search phase, which then means evolving the value propositions constantly in order to keep them pertinent to customers. (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, p. XIII.)

The core of the value proposition canvas can be separated into two, where the sides are the value map and the customer profile. First being about creating value and finding the right number of benefits, which are designed to attract the customers. Latter one is observing the customer characteristics that are expected, observed and proved to be in the market. (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, pp. 6-9.)

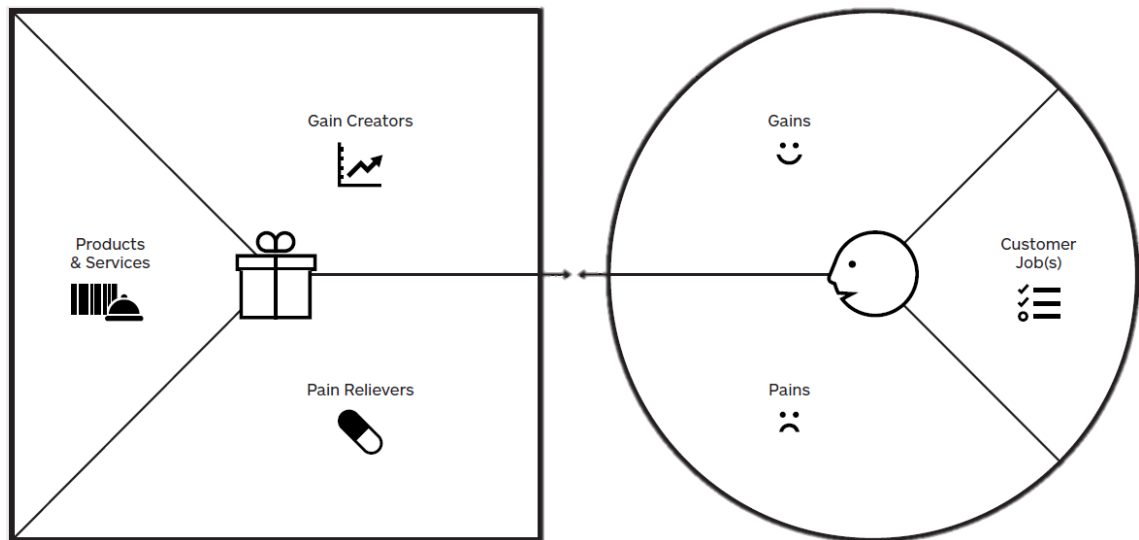


Figure 4. The Value Proposition Canvas (Strategyzer, 2015).

3.6.1 Customer profile

Customer profile consists of three parts that should define in detail what type of customer segment is being dealt with. It is the part where Reima will define who it will target, what are the targeted customers trying to do, and what creates pains and gains around the job to be done. The three parts are the result of breaking down the customer to jobs, pains, and gains.

Customer jobs

In their own words, what jobs are the customers trying to get done? Customer jobs can be anything they are trying to fix or finish, a problem that needs to be solved, or just want to make something easier. Jobs are not explaining what the product or service must do, they explain what the customer must do. Customers are always trying to make their lives better. (Klement, 2016). When defining the customer jobs, it should be reminded that it is crucial to try to take as much of the customers' perspective as possible. Yet those jobs

seen as important, may not actually be the important ones to the actual customer. (Osterwalder, et al., 2015.)

According to Osterwalder, et al. (2015), customer jobs can be separated into three main jobs of functional, social and emotional jobs, and to three supporting jobs of buyer, co-creator and transferor of value. However, Alan Klement (2016) argues that there are no different types of jobs, that each job should be treated as a unique.

Functional jobs occur when the customer is trying to get a particular task done or might have a certain problem that needs a solution. Social jobs are when the case is that the customer is seeking to look good or gain power or status. It is closely connected to doing things for the sake of others' perception. Personal and Emotional jobs are when customers try to find an emotional state of feeling great or confident. These jobs are affecting the customer on a personal level. (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, p. 12.)

When going from the main jobs to the supporting jobs, the type of jobs arise where consumption of value occurs. The supporting jobs can also be divided into three different roles, where the customers are either buying, co-creating, or transferring value. Buyer of value is simply making purchasing decisions or anything around purchasing. Co-creator of value includes anything to do with helping or taking part in the development or creation of products or services, which could be anything as simple as giving feedback. Finally, transferor of value jobs occur when the customer wants to change the product or service to an alternative, stop using it, or pass it on to someone else. (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, p. 12.)

The different perspective on the types of jobs, is that there are not different types. As Alan Klement (2016) specifically argues, "common mistake is to think that there are types of jobs. In particular, some may think there are emotional, function, and social jobs.", which is the contrary to the perception of Osterwalder, et al. (2015, pp. 12-13).

Klement (2016) states that customer jobs should be seen as unique. Many of the jobs share the core emotional desires, such as belonging, self-expression and control. Even though sharing a similar core desire, each job is a unique combination of them, thus being a unique job.

Customer jobs have frequently dependencies in the context of them. Osterwalder, et al. (2015, pp. 12-13) suggest that context can have a huge impact on how, why, and when the job is being done. It can change the whole reason behind the job being done. The

importance of a job is necessary to acknowledge. Jobs should be listed on the basis of the significance of them. This way it can be easily seen how bad of a need customers have for certain tasks. Some jobs customers just cannot get around and they have to do them or otherwise there will be serious consequences, e.g. missing a deadline at work or not paying the utility bill. On the other hand, some of the customers' jobs can be really insignificant, merely because customers value other jobs more e.g. picking which coffee to drink. Yet again, the insignificant jobs can mean a lot more to some than the others. There is a clear connection to the context and customer's profile.

Customer pains

Customer pains describe the problems that are sought to be solved. Identifying the points that cause customers pain enables targeting to be made to the right group of people who truly need the product or service. Karp (2015) emphasizes the importance of this phase to be recognized, since it is crucial to find these people who actually need and are fascinated. Preventing jobs to get done or anything that annoys the customer in the process of getting a job done can be called a customer pain. The pains include also the risks that getting the job done withholds, affecting how well the job is done or if getting done at all. Alexander Osterwalder, et al. (2015, p. 14) suggest dividing the customer pains into three different identifiable types of pains. The first type of undesired outcomes, problems, and characteristics include the functional, social, emotional, and ancillary pains. These might involve customers' personal opinions and preferences on the disliked characteristics. Second, obstacles, are the types of pains that stand in front of the customer, stopping them doing the job to begin with, or slowing the customer down. Lastly, the risks i.e. undesired potential outcomes. They include everything that could go wrong with the job, or have substantial negative outcomes.

Khare (2017) points out that customer pains are in the center whether the case be designing new, or improving existing products or services. Gathering feedback and listening to what the pain points are for the customers can give large numbers of valuable insights that can assist in creating new or improving old. It can reveal poor customer experience or user satisfaction, e.g. Merch Cash & Capital, a financial services company, used feedback through surveys and interviews to find gaps in their customer experience, where the revealed gaps evidently led the company to invest heavily in relieving a customer pain point.

Customer gains

Customer gains are the created improvements to already existing activities. (Gamble, 2016). They describe the results and benefits looked for. The customer gains have different type of impacts depending on the perspective and premise of the customer. Some of them are required, expected or desired, even some gains can surprise the customer. Functional utility, social gains, positive emotions, and cost savings are included in customer gains. The relevance of the gain is also an important factor. Is it just something nice to have, or more of an essential solution? (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, pp. 16-17.)

Required gains represent the types of gains that are needed in order to the solution to work. Required ones are the basic assumptions and expectations of the product or service. Expected gains are not necessities but basic things that are almost automatically thought to be included in the solution. The features that are not expected, but are wished to be part of the solution are the desired gains. The extra benefits will make the solution better and more desirable for the customer. Unexpected gains are the surprise factor. The type of features of the solution that the customer could not think of by themselves. These gains include solutions from revolutionizing technologies to just new approaches to the customer's problem. (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, pp. 16-17.)

3.6.2 Value map

The latter part of the Value Proposition Canvas is value map. Value map defines comprehensively a certain value proposition's features in an organized way. This side of the canvas explains what the case company is going to offer to relieve pains or create gains for the customer. It is divided to three sections, products and services, pain relievers, and gain creators. The products and services part is basically listing everything offered from the customer's perspective. Their purpose is to fulfill the basic functional, social, or emotional jobs. Pain relievers are the features of the solution that will solve parts causing pains to the customer job before, during, or after completing the job. (Osterwalder, et al., 2015, pp. 26-35.)

The Value Proposition Canvas' value map is given lesser focus, since the purpose is to create the concept first around customer pains and gains before rushing into the solution.

The value map should be looked at after customer profile is more defined, which means in this case, after testing a suggested value proposition with a quantitative research.

4 RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

This chapter will discuss how and why the research was done and what kind of phases were gone through, and continues to present the research results and analysis of them.

4.1 Base for the research

In order to get started with using value proposition in defining a new service concept, it was seen lucrative to first have a discussion with a manager within the company, who falls into the target audience of the concept as a parent. The idea of the service had been brought up before, but the purpose of these conversations was to get more content to the idea and enrich it. The discussions were purposely conducted following the methods and topics of Value Proposition Canvas (Strategyzer, 2015). The great amount of secondary data used especially about value proposition, to support each phase of the research, should be emphasized. The risk of using a manager from Reima was that the opinions might be biased. Although, it is notable to state that the topics arised in the discussions about customer jobs, pains and gains, were to be tested and proved with Reima target group customers. Thus, the results, biased or not, were to create a foundation for the research conducted on customers.

Reima in general wants to offer more for the entire families, which is why the customer jobs with some scale of problems were investigated, trying to find ones that involve families and actually need a solution. The problem that was chosen to be inspected more closely was related to the families' free time and activities done during it.

The customer job with that problem that had been appearing from feedback on other Reima digital products, and discussions with partner companies. The job was about parents trying to come up with activities to do together as a family during their free time. This problem and customer job was then looked at from the value proposition design perspective. The informal discussions were structured to go through Value Proposition Canvas in the framework's suggested way. Starting from the customer job, which was basically the question of what to do, or what should we do today? The question means there is always a lot of things happening around the family's week days, such as hobbies, but during weekends or other days when there is no school or daycare, the parents usually have to come up with an activity of some kind. The activities can mean going to

parks, playgrounds, activity parks, fields, sports related, cool places to visit, or just great spots to play at. Reima wanted to find a way to help parents and families with coming up with new places to visit and things to do during free time. While defining the job itself, it is also necessary to define who is doing the job. Different type of people could be doing the same job but how it is done can vary between their different roles. Parents were chosen to be the ones doing the job in building this value proposition.

Next part on the Value Proposition Canvas was, during the informal discussions, to define the pains and gains of the customer job. They were discussed as well prior to contacting customers. Both were tried to be kept focused on the actual customer job, and separate from the possible solution. Therefore, the talks created a lot of different types of pains and gains, some were simply not solvable, such as kids getting tired during the activity. The pains that appeared were related to the consequences of not doing anything, attempting to find new places, and information about the activity's surroundings. Gains concentrated on getting new ideas and recommendations for activities, getting more information on the services near the activity, and most importantly spending time as a family, whether it be a new or old place for activities, seeing the joy and hearing from the kids themselves that they had fun.

The topics raised from the conversations with the Reima manager gave a good direction on what the customers should be asked opinions on. Even though some pains and gains were defined quite specifically, it was important to keep questions presented to the customers on a more general level and as themes for the questions. This would help to find out whether or not these were just biased opinions, or would they be seen similarly appearing in the answers of the quantitative research.

4.2 Research design

Research designs are typically categorized to two types, quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative designs are mostly based on numerical data that gives an understanding of the findings quantitatively. It is a more generalized type for assessing phenomena. With qualitative, on the other hand, the purpose is to target more precisely and focus on smaller amounts of people in numbers. Qualitative type research design relies on quality of description. (Abbott & McKinney, 2013).

Quantitative data was seen to be the more beneficial for the purpose of getting a broader understanding on customers' views. To gather qualitative data, it would be valuable to have a more clear definition of the concept and the value proposition. Since there is no clear definition before the data collection, the primary data is quantitative.

As Anderson & Narus (1998) express, using methods such as survey questions or focus groups is a useful way to get a better understanding of what the customers value. Notable is that the results from these methods largely rely on customer's perceptions, and do not base on gathered data about their actions. Therefore, supporting the sought results, the method for data collection was chosen to be quantitative online survey questions.

4.3 Creating the survey

The survey was carried out with Webropol, an online survey tool. Webropol was being used commonly in Reima's other questionnaires. It was an easy-to-use tool, already familiar to the author, and in line with other company questionnaire, which is why this online survey tool was chosen.

The decision was made with Reima that the target country would be Finland. In case of further actions with the concept, it would be beneficial to concentrate to one market. Reima Finland's customers being the target, the questionnaire was decided to be made in Finnish, for it to be more easily approachable to this target audience.

The survey was created mainly by the author, but received some help from a manager at Reima. It was designed using the previously discussed topics and results. Context of the survey was divided into two sections; personal habits and opinions about family activities, and asking opinions on the idea's possible features. Before the second part of the questionnaire, a short description of the concept idea was explained in order to make the respondents understand the setting and theme of questions. There were altogether 13 questions in the survey and all of them were compulsory. The questionnaire included some additional questions that were left out from this research. Those questions that were left out included detailed demographic information and related to other development project.

The online survey was sent 29 November 2017 in the bottom of a Reima Finland email newsletter. The reach of Reima Finland's newsletter was some 60,000 people. Open rate of large companies in retail and ecommerce was median 16.8% in 2017 (Chaffey,

2018). Internal statistics show that Reima Finland's newsletter average open rate for November and December 2017, excluding discount newsletters, was 22.9%. The one containing the link to the online survey had an open rate of 21% (12,600).

Average click to open rate during that time period for non-discount newsletters was 7.6%. The click to open rate for this particular letter was 9,1%, and the amount of people that clicked to open the survey was 423 (3.4%). The percentage is nice regarding that about third of the people who clicked to open a link in that newsletter, did open the survey too. 57% of those who opened the survey link, finished it. Making the final number of respondents 242 (1.9%). Even though the percentage was small, the good number of responses made the research valid.

4.4 Limitations of online survey

There were some limiting factors with the conducted online survey. The message was sent during the period of time when there were a lot of communication toward the newsletter subscribers. Thus, it needs to be noted that the location in the newsletter and frequency of messages might have affected the amount of respondents. Limiting the number of responses was also the short time the survey was available, six days. According to Fryrear (2015), response rates can go below 2% if everything is not clear to the customer receiving the email, which might include the limitations explained in this case, such as survey was not mentioned in the email title and survey link located in the bottom of the message.

4.5 Results

The first questions of the survey started by asking if there is enough time for activities to do together with the family on a weekly basis. The purpose was to see if the respondents general situation with time and family activities, but also address one of the pains, time. Meanwhile doing so, it was slightly guiding them to the topic. The respondents were able to answer the question using a scale of 1-10, where 1 was "not enough" and 10 "enough". Figure 5 illustrates the scatter of the answers. 71% of the answers were more toward "enough", answered 6 or over. This shows that majority of the parents feel like they do

have enough time to do activities together with the family. Out of the 29% (70) that leaned more to “not enough”, approximately half answered 3 or lower. This shows that there are quite a few families that cannot find the time to do activities as a family.

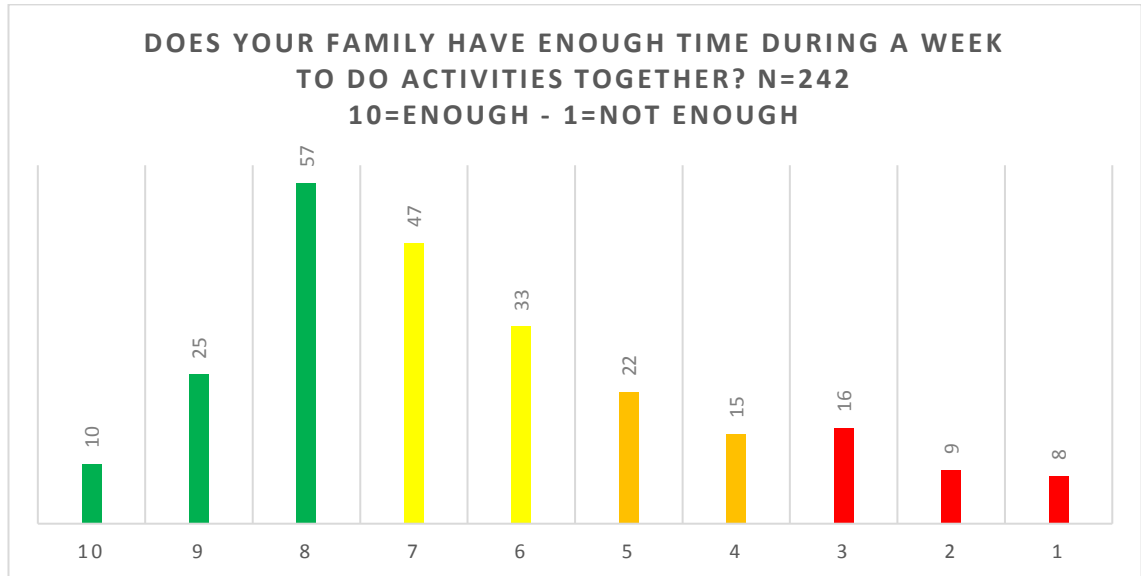


Figure 5. Does your family have enough time during a week to do activities together?

First question was followed by asking the type of activities families do together and the frequency of each one the proposed type of activities. Figure 6 shows the most common to do activities and which ones are rarely done together with the family. The environment that the respondents live in affects the answers, since the possibilities are somewhat different with families living in cities compared to ones in the countryside. 62% of the families were “playing in the yard” which was highest activity done on a weekly basis, but none of the answer options got to the same percentage from question 1, where 71% of parents were more on the side that they had enough time for family activities. Notable is the “rarely” share of each activity, it might mean there is need for help.

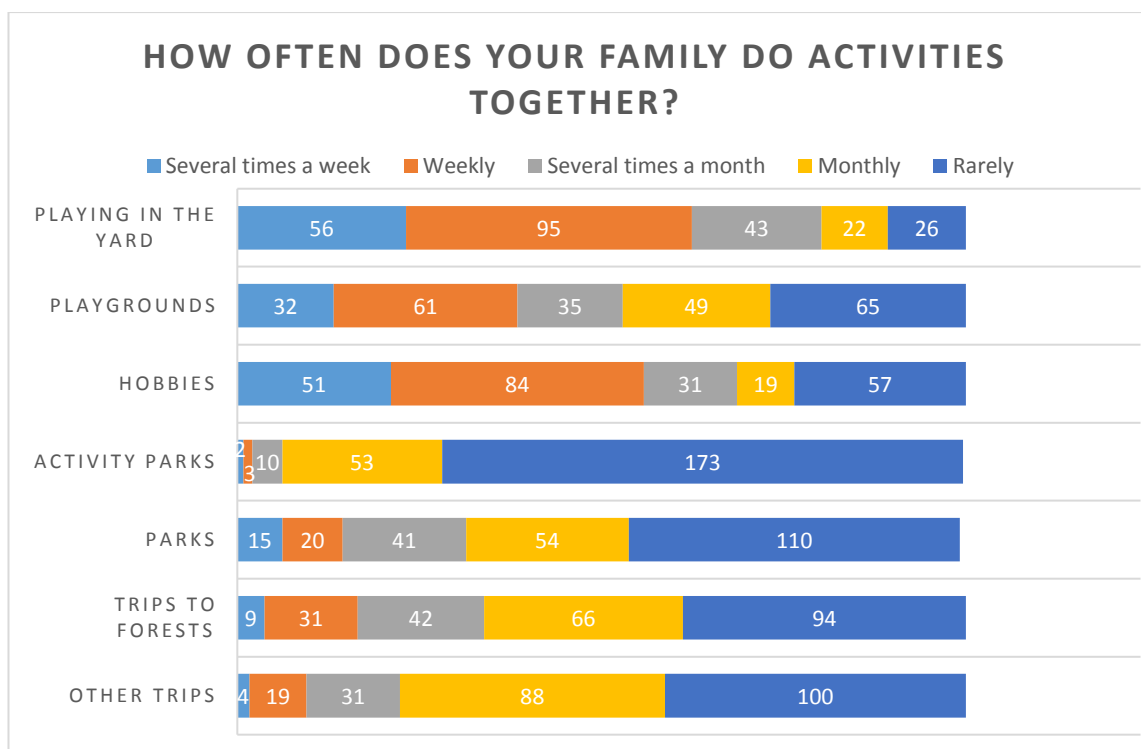


Figure 6. How often does your family do activities together?

After finding about the habits and time used together with the family, The survey went on to enquire about the planning of the family's activities. The questions were trying to find out how much before the planning of the activities is done, and the purpose of them was to find if the planning was forgotten or just left closer to actual execution of the plans. This could mean the parents need to urgently come up with a plan, and that is the moment there might be a need for help. Figure 7 shows that the answers indicate that planning goes 34% of times to the day before or the same day, which means parents have to quickly come up with what to do. Figure 8 supports the finding of parents usually having little time to come up with activities, by showing that 78% of the respondents forget to plan family activities at least time to time. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that almost a quarter of all respondents forget to plan anything "often". Those could be probable moments for parents to need assistance.

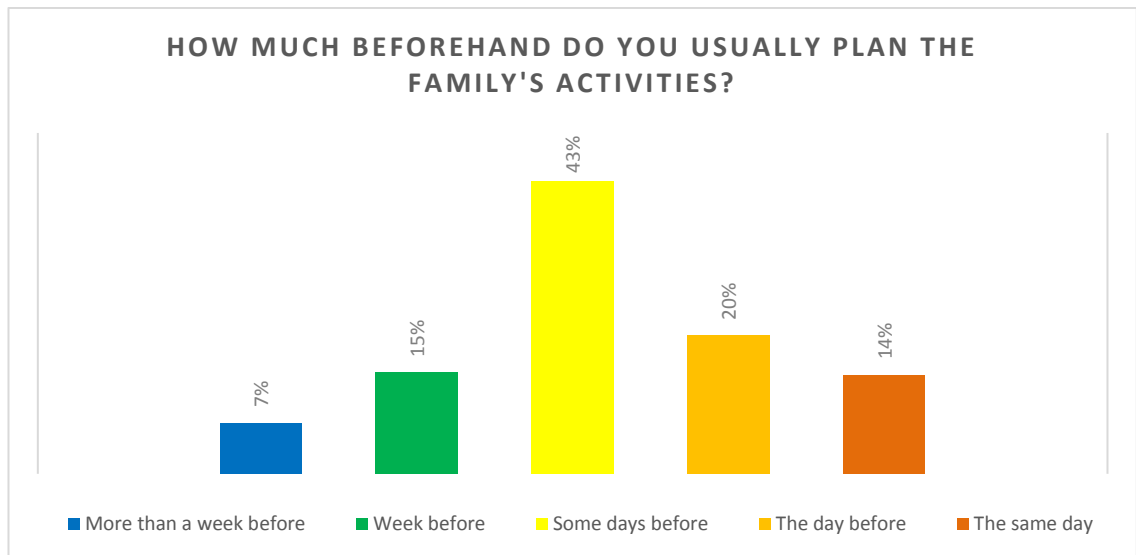


Figure 7. How much beforehand do you usually plan the family's activities?

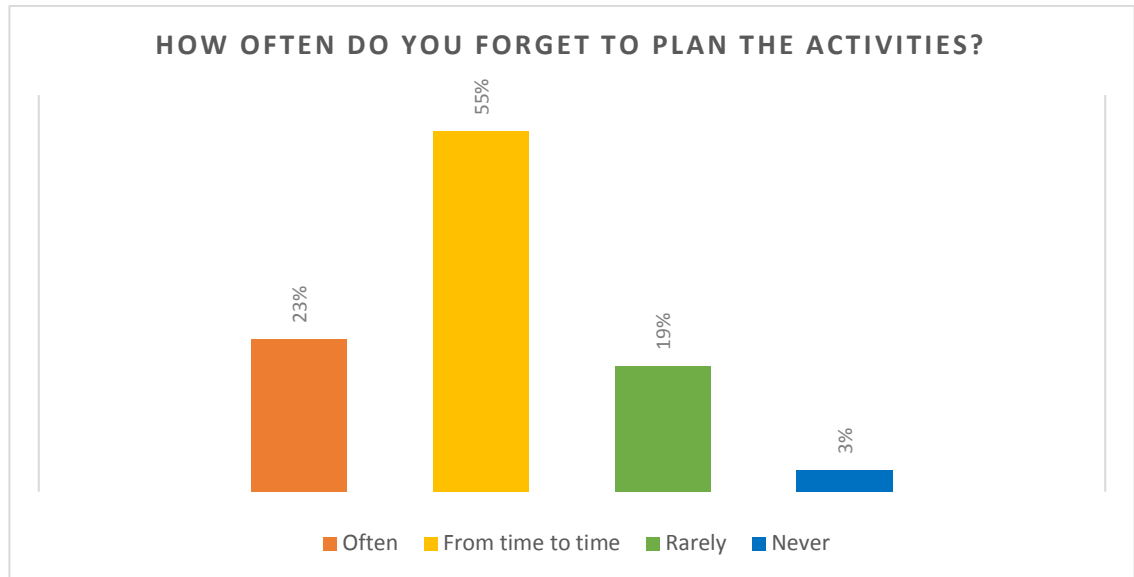


Figure 8. How often do you forget to plan the activities?

The next part of the questionnaire was about coming up with new ideas for what to do together with the family, are new ideas needed and where do they come from? The need for new ideas was concentrated on two answers “from time to time” (57%) and “rarely” (33%). That shows parents are looking for new ideas, but not too often (8%). Answers for where do new ideas come from in Figure 9, give great insight to the current sources of activities for parents. This is important to understand if anything was offered to this very purpose and audience. It was a multiple choice question, but yet shows well the splitting of the answers. Parents and kids do take the number one spot with 55% each, but parents also saw new ideas often coming from friends (41%), social media (39%), and Internet (36%).

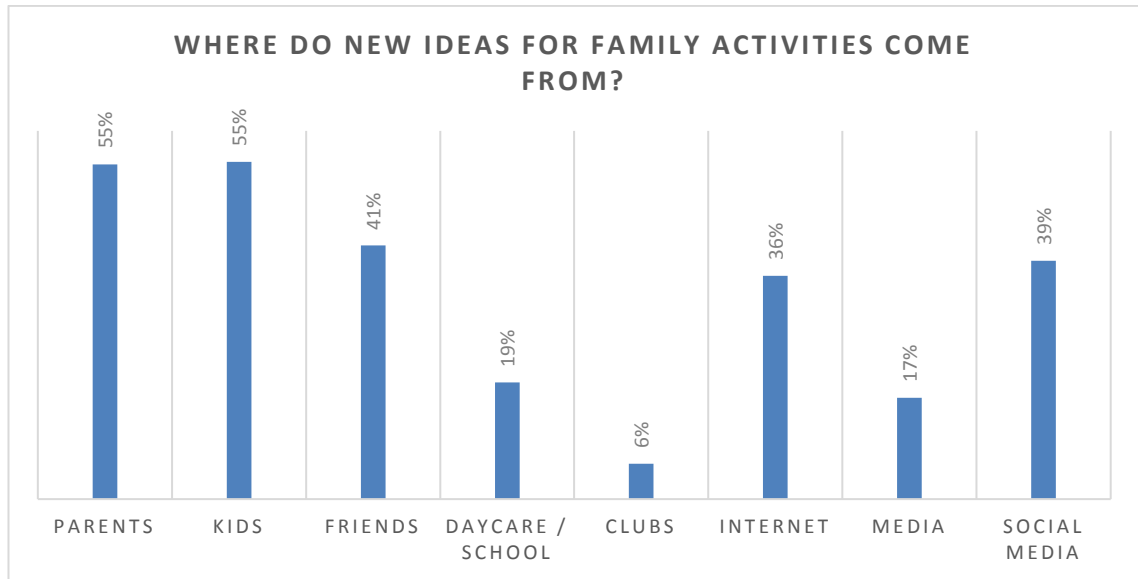


Figure 9. Where do new ideas for family activities come from?

The parents were asked then about the factors that affect the decision making of what to do. There were eight options, and the respondents were asked to arrange them in the order of importance of those given factors. Results are calculated by a score of importance, the lower the score, the higher the importance. Earlier experiences (3,2) was on average most important factor before distance or easy access (3,6), and price (4,0). Equipment (5,7) was on average the least important, after close by services (5,5). Although, when analyzing the scores, it is noticeable that none of the factors' importance score goes to either extreme. The highest valued factor "earlier experiences" (3,2) is still 2,2 points away from the highest possible score, and the lowest, "equipment" (5,7) 2,3 points away from the lowest possible score. Furthermore, it brings to the spread of all scores, where all the options' scores are between 3,2 and 5,7 points, meaning all the factors are within 2,5 points. Therefore, the results can offer an indication to the order of importance, but should not be interpreted so that some of the options are not important. This small difference can come from extremely mixed opinions, or these are all important which has made it hard to put them in any specific order.

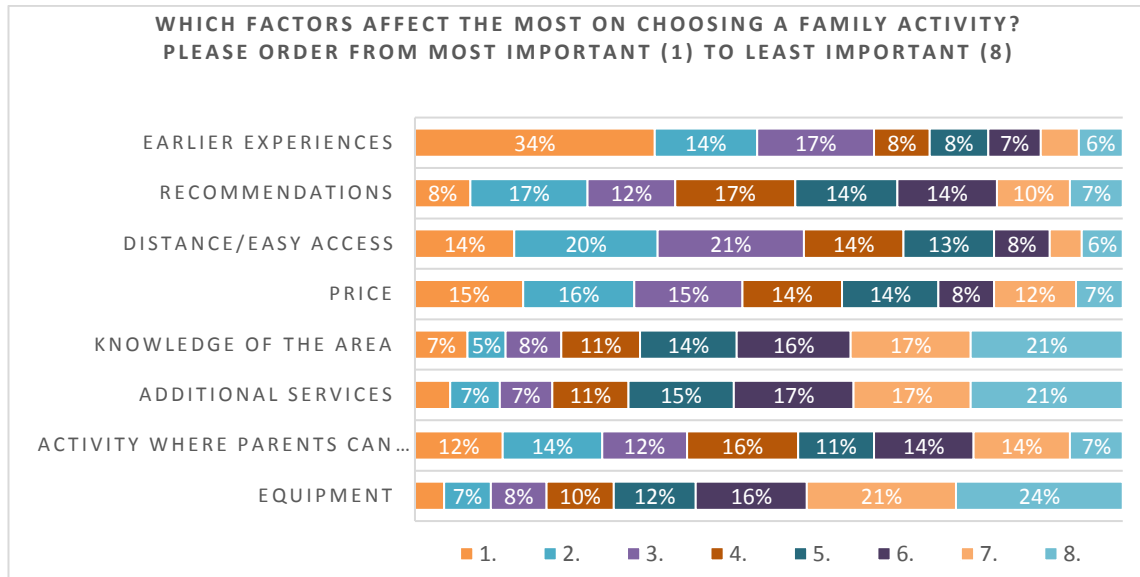


Figure 10. Which factors affect the most on choosing a family activity?

After giving a short introduction to the service concept, more questions were asked regarding a possibly offered service. To get relevant content about family activities, it would need parents' input. Therefore, the second part of the survey begins with enquiring the readiness to share content and the audiences they would feel comfortable sharing it. Purpose is to see how much and to what extent could Reima use the user oriented content.

Question 10 is about what type of content would the respondent be willing to share in a service like this. Three different options got about 60% or more, saying they would be willing to share. These options were "comments about experiences" (70%), "likes" (60%), and "tips on what to do in a place of activity" (59%). An important result for the content creation was that 41% were willing to add new places of activity. It is crucial to this type of service that users are keen on adding activities themselves, and assumedly shows interest toward using a service like this. To be noted that 10% were not interested to share at all.

Following the what could be shared, was to whom would the parents be willing to share the forementioned content. This question's intent is to find out what kind audiences would the parents be willing to share content, so what type of restrictions would the service need regarding visibility of content. Majority were ready to share their experiences to friends (69%) and family (56%), which was not surprising. A positive insight to notice from the results was that, 52% were ready to share information and experiences about

the activities publicly. The publicly shareable content is key to get a concept of a service like this to work.

This topic was then continued by turning the tables a little bit by asking next from which sources would they like to see shared content. The options were same as in the previous question.

Results from the two previous questions presented in Figure 11, were quite similar with each other, with exception of “public” and “service providers”. Public content was more preferred to be seen than shared, with a difference of 19%, as well as for service providers respondents had 13% more interest in seeing content than sharing to them.

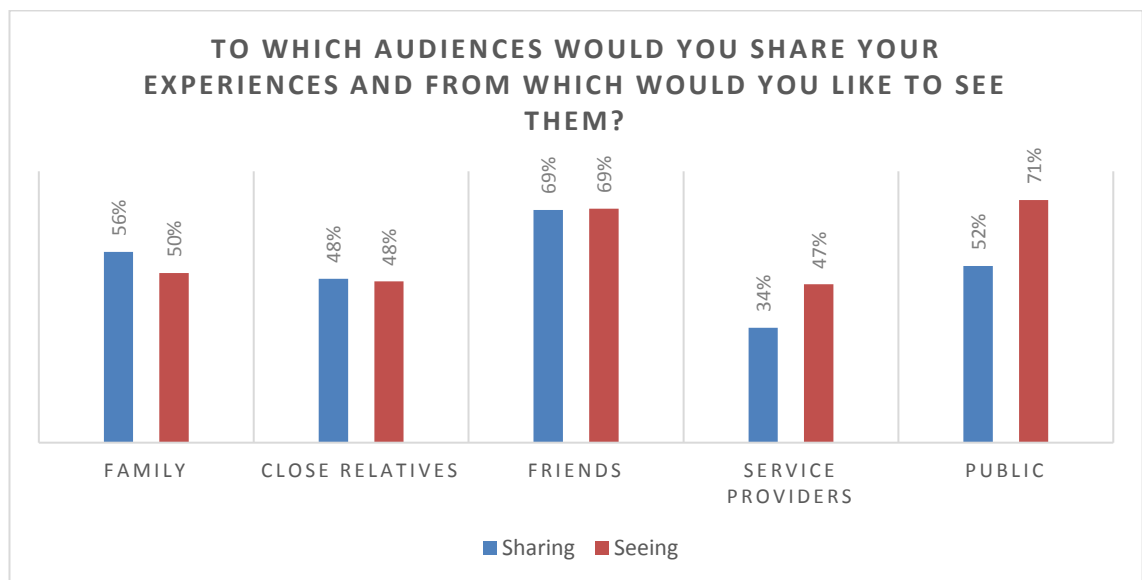


Figure 11. To which audiences would you share your experiences and from which would you like to see them?

Finally parents were asked would they prefer using the described type of service in a mobile application or web browser. The question was to get an understanding of the need and willingness for mobile application use.

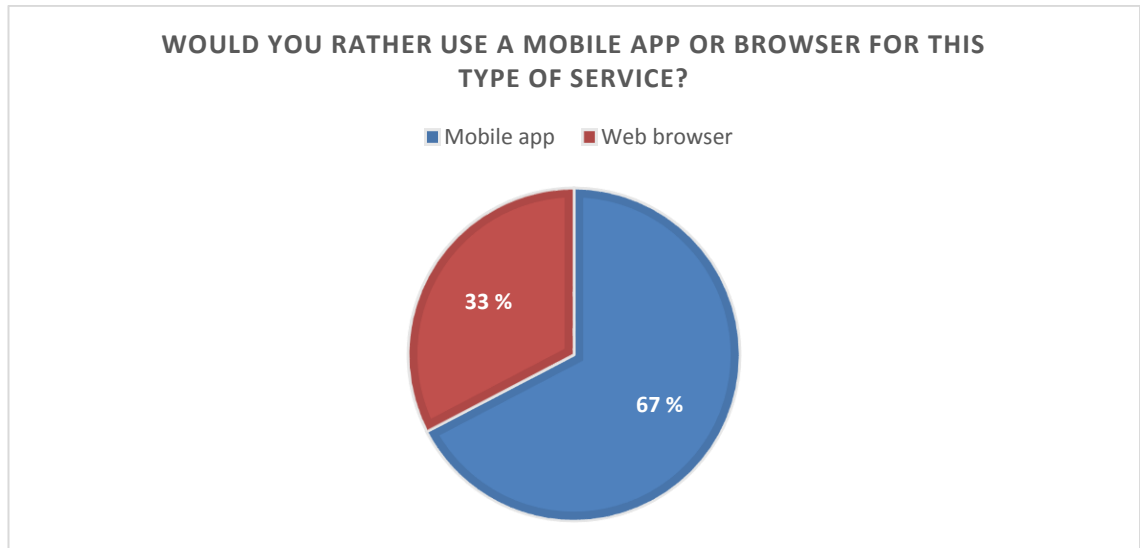


Figure 12. Would you rather use a mobile app or browser for this type of service?

5 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

To conclude the research from the author's perspective, the use of value proposition was useful for the developing company. There are multiple styles and methods to use it, but in a general level, it does not only help with defining and designing the concept for the customer, but also helps the people developing it to get a concrete understanding why and for what it is being developed, and then sell the idea internally and externally later on to the development project. To be noted that, the author had not previously been part of concept development process.

As stated before, the base of the online survey conducted to the Reima newsletter subscribers, might have been biased as it was created with a Reima manager. Therefore, the survey was designed so that the questions related to getting a better understanding of parents' habits and ways to come up with activities to do together with the family came first, before going into explaining the concept in more detail. Also, the results from parents who are somewhat loyal to Reima might have a positive approach to the topic, but the topic is not about anything existing and the questions were in a general level. Thus, the results could be argued to have been slightly affected by brand loyalty. The second part was separated to get unbiased comments from the respondents. It was important to make some assumptions regarding the concept, so that it was possible for the parents to react to it in a needed way. It was emphasized to keep the questions and answers as unsuggestive as possible. When looking at the results of the survey, it is clear that the answers came from personal opinions and the respondents were able to communicate their opinion without leading them to an answer. Therefore, the author sees great value in the answers.

The customer pains were true about parents forgetting to plan activities for the family, and that it usually goes really close to the actual day the activity is supposed to be happening. This means that parents to come up with things to do in a tight schedule, where there could be a need for help. 62% of the he answers were 7 or below in the scale asking if they thought they had enough time for family activities. These families could have the situation that they cannot come up with family activities, so they might go for more individual activities. While having the abovementioned findings in mind, they should be cross-checked with the results from what activities the families are doing. Showing a great amount of playing in the yard (62%) and hobbies (56%) weekly. Those

options are of course the easy options, since yards are often close to homes, and hobbies are planned and regularly recurring. The lack of time could be assumed to affect the fact that families are mostly doing the easy activities. If there would be a service to help them come up with activities to do or new places to go to, perhaps it would assist in increasing even in the scale of several times a month the part of, e.g. playgrounds, parks and trips to nature. Pointing out these because those activities can be far away and would need planning, or parents might not know they exist or where the spots are located.

More than a third of the respondents said they got new ideas for activities from social media and Internet. This indicates that parents already search for activities from similar places as the service concept would be in. The results from question 8 showed that experiences are highly important to the parents. After explaining about the service concept, question 10 was enquiring the type of content parents would be willing to share, and it also pointed out experiences as the most popular option (70%). These results show that experiences matter the most to parents, and they are willing to share them too. Probable reason is that they can see themselves in the same situation and understand how important it would be to find experiences from other families about places of activity. It is continued by the parents expressing their high willingness to share content publicly among other audiences, which gives a great starting point for possible service, bearing in mind the readiness to participate by adding places of activity (41%).

When taking all the findings from the research into consideration, there is great potential in the field the concept is trying to touch. Interest toward a service like this can be seen from the answers. This thesis limits to testing assumptions made about a value proposition, and presenting the results. As the results are positive, and there is possible space for a service, the author suggests taking the concept and service development further. As quantitative methods were used first, for the next phase Reima should utilize the benefits of qualitative approach, since the concept has been more defined now. Purpose for the qualitative would be to get more deeper insights, and confirmation to the assumptions made from the answers of this research. Yet keeping the value proposition canvas in the center of the development project and updating it constantly, so that each party involved can understand for whom, what and why is the service being developed for. Even if the qualitative research is done, Reima should continue testing with customers each new and developed part of the concept during the whole development process, they are the ones who are going to use the service and are in the center of the

job to be done. This was emphasized in order to ensure the most valuable part of a new service development process will not be forgotten, the customer.

Value proposition canvas in general should be taken into use to more of Reima's digital or physical products or services, existing or in development. It gives a purpose to each part of a product or service, and can help find the unnecessary or extra features that might not be just creating gains or relieving pains, but quite the contrary instead.

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Survey in Finnish

1. Onko mielestäsi perheellänne riittävästi aikaa yhteiselle tekemiselle viikon aikana?

Riittävästi 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Ei riittävästi

Yritä vastata vuodenajasta riippumatta

2. Kuinka usein perheenne tekee aktiviteetteja yhdessä?

Useita kertoja viikossa Useita kertoja kuussa Useita kertoja Viikottain Useita kertoja Kuukausittain Harvemmin

Pihaleikit

Leikkipuistot

Ulkoilu

Harrastukset

Aktiviteettipuistot

Puistot

Metsäretket

Muut retket

Mitä tänään tehtäisiin?

3. Kuinka ajoissa yleensä suunnittelette perheen yhteisiä aktiviteetteja?

a) Yli viikko ennen

- b) Viikko ennen
- c) Joitain päiviä ennen
- d) Edellisenä päivänä
- e) Samana päivänä

4. Miten usein tekemisen suunnittelu unohtuu?

- a) Usein
- b) Silloin tällöin
- c) Harvoin
- d) Ei koskaan

5. Kaivataanko teillä ideoita mitä tehdä perheen kanssa?

- a) Usein
- b) Silloin tällöin
- c) Harvoin
- d) Ei koskaan

6. Minkä näet suurimpana haasteena yhteisen tekemisen suunnittelussa?

- a) Oma viitseliäisyys
- b) Tiedonpuute
- c) Ajanpuute
- d) Kodin sijainti

7. Mistä yleensä uudet ideat yhteiselle tekemiselle tulevat?

- a) Vanhemmat
- b) Lapset
- c) Ystävät

- d) Päiväkoti / koulu
- e) Kerhot
- f) Internet
- g) Media
- h) Sosiaalinen media

8. Mitkä asiat vaikuttavat eniten yhteisen aktiviteetin valintaan?

Laita seuraavat vaihtoehdot tärkeysjärjestykseen tärkeimmästä (1) vähiten tärkeimpään (8):

- a) Aiemmat kokemukset
- b) Suositukset
- c) Etäisyys/kulkuyhteydet
- d) Hinta
- e) Lähialueen tuntemus
- f) Lisäpalvelut (esim. kahvila tai ravintola)
- g) Aktiviteetti johon myös vanhemmat voivat osallistua
- h) Varusteet

9. Keskusteletko näistä kokemuksista muiden vanhempien kanssa?

- a) Usein
- b) Silloin tällöin
- c) Harvoin
- d) Ei koskaan

Perheen arki saattaa olla välillä kiireistä ja välillä perheen yhteinen aika voi jäädä pienemmälle huomiolle. Mietimme, että voisiko Reima olla tässä jotenkin avuksi esim. tarjota vinkkejä, inspiraatiota perheen yhteisille aktiviteeteille.

Ja haluammekin kysellä yleistä kiinnostusta liittyen perheille suunnattuun karttapohjaiseen palveluun, jossa käyttäjät voisivat etsiä, merkata ja suositella hyviä paikkoja ja aktiviteettimahdollisuuksia. Palvelu voisi tarjota enemmän tietoa lähialueen mahdollisuuksista ja tarjota vastauksen "Mitä tänään tehtäisiin?" -kysymykseen. :)

Kyse ei olisi vain julkisista tai kaupallisista paikoista, vaan myös käyttäjien itse löytämistä ja suosittelemista paikoista tai vaikka ns. "salaisista" paikoista.

10. Mitä tietoa olisit valmis jakamaan tällaisessa palvelussa?

- a) Arvosteluja
- b) Tykkäyksiä
- c) Kommentteja kokemuksista
- d) Vinkkejä paikasta ja mitä siellä voi tehdä
- e) Kuvia paikasta/aktiviteeteistä
- f) Merkkaamaan uusia aktiviteettipaikkoja palveluun
- g) Puutteiden ilmoitus, huollon tarve, parannusehdotukset
- h) En ole kiinnostunut jakamaan

11. Kenelle näkisit, että olisit valmis jakamaan näitä lisäämiäsi tietoja ja kokemuksia?

- a) Perhe
- b) Lähisukulaiset
- c) Ystävät
- d) Palveluntarjoajat

e) Julkinen

12. Kenen jakamia tietoja ja kokemuksia olisit halukas näkemään?

a) Perhe

b) Lähisukulaiset

c) Ystävät

d) Palveluntarjoajat

e) Julkinen

13. Näkisitkö, että palvelua käyttäisit mieluiten...?

a) Mobiilisovelluksessa

b) Nettiselaimessa