

# **Advancing Productization of Sauna Culture in Tavastia Region:**

A case study on wellness tourism in Finland



Bachelor's thesis

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<b>Title</b>	Saunakulttuurin tuotteistamisen edistäminen Kanta-Hämeessä: tapaustutkimus hyvinvointimatkailusta Suomessa	
<b>Supervisor(s)</b>	Iris Humala, Merja Helin	

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#### TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tutkia suomalaisen saunan tuotteistamista ja sen edistämistä Kanta-Hämeessä. Matkailutuotteena saunominen kuuluu hyvinvointimatkailun piiriin, joten opinnäytetyö suoritettiin hyvinvointimatkailun tapaustutkimuksena. Opinnäytetyön tilasi Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulun tutkimusyksikkö HAMK Smart, joka on mukana useassa matkailualan kehittämishankkeessa Kanta-Hämeen alueella. Tämä työ kuuluu Let's Go Tavastia -tutkimushankkeeseen.

Tutkimusmenetelmiä oli kaksi ja ne olivat kvalitatiivisia eli laadullisia. Ensimmäinen oli internetkysely millä kartoitettiin muun muassa saunatilojen sijainteja, määriä, julkisia saunavuoroja, saunatuotteiden sisältöä ja markkinointiyhteistyöhalukkuutta sekä saatiin luotua yhteystietoluettelo, jota tilaaja pystyy hyödyntämään alueen matkailun kehittämisessä mm. luomalla saunakartan Visit Häme -sivustolle. Kyselylinkki lähetettiin sähköpostitse 220 saunatoimijalle. HAMK Smart mainosti linkkiä uutiskirjeessään sekä kaksi maakuntalehteä teki saunakartoituksesta uutisjutun, joka oli sekä painetussa lehdessä että verkkojulkaisussa. Vastauksia saatiin 100 ja saunatoimijoita löytyi 76.

Toisena tutkimusmenetelmänä oli benchmarking eli vertailuanalyysi. Vertailukohtana toimi Pirkanmaan maakunta, missä sijaitsee koko maailman saunapääkaupungiksi julistettu Tampere, jolla onkin kaikista maakunnista eniten julkisia saunoja. Ensin kummankin maakunnan saunojen tuotteistamista tutkittiin internetsivujen perusteella ja sitten verrattiin toisiinsa. Tällä tavalla selvisi, että miten tuotteistamista voidaan kehittää Kanta-Hämeessä.

**Avainsanat** Suomalainen sauna, hyvinvointimatkailu, tuotteistaminen

**Sivut** 78 sivua, joista liitteitä 22 sivua

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to study the productization of the Finnish sauna and its advancing in the Tavastia Region. As a tourism product sauna bathing belongs to the category of wellness tourism, so this thesis is a case study on wellness tourism. The commissioner is a research department of the Häme University of Applied Sciences called HAMK Smart. The HAMK Smart works in many tourism development initiatives in the area and this thesis is part of a project named Let's Go Tavastia.

This thesis had two qualitative research methods. The first one was an online survey that mapped out the locations and number of the saunas, locations, public sauna shifts, contents of the sauna products and interest on co-operation. The survey enabled to compile a list of contacts that the commissioner can utilize in the development of tourism in the area, for example by placing a sauna map on the website of Visit Häme. The survey link was sent to 220 sauna actors through e-mail. HAMK Smart advertised the link in a newsletter. Two regionals made a news article about the sauna mapping, both published it in a printed newspaper and electronic publishing as well. The number of respondents was 100 and the number of sauna actors found was 76.

The second research method was benchmarking that is also known as peer analysis. The point of comparison was the Tampere Region, where Tampere city is located and is declared as the sauna capital of the whole world. Of all the regions, there are the most public saunas. First, the productization of saunas in both regions was studied through websites. Then regions and the level of sauna productization were compared to each other. This enabled the author to find out how the productization of the sauna culture can be advanced in the Tavastia Region.

**Keywords** Finnish sauna, wellness tourism, productization

**Pages** 78 pages including appendices 22 pages

# CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1	Background.....	1
1.2	Research objective and research question .....	3
1.3	Research methodology .....	3
2	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	4
2.1	Tourism.....	5
2.1.1	Defining tourism & tourism types .....	5
2.1.2	Defining wellness & wellness tourism.....	5
2.2	Productization .....	7
2.3	Service design and story design .....	9
2.4	Summary of the theory .....	11
3	TOURISM IN FINLAND.....	12
3.1	Tourism as business in Finland.....	12
3.2	Wellness tourism in Finland .....	13
3.3	Finnish saunas .....	14
3.3.1	History of a Finnish sauna .....	15
3.3.2	Sauna & benefits to health and well-being.....	17
3.3.3	Sauna types.....	17
3.3.4	Sauna culture and tradition.....	19
3.4	Marketing & the Finnish saunas.....	21
3.4.1	Sauna regions .....	21
3.4.2	Sauna associations and collaboration partners .....	22
3.4.3	Finnish sauna campaigns, events and accomplishments.....	23
4	PRACTICAL RESEARCH ON SAUNA PRODUCTS .....	27
4.1	Data collection: Web-based mass survey .....	28
4.1.1	Data analysis.....	29
4.2	Data collection: benchmarking .....	38
4.2.1	Data analysis: productization of saunas in Finland .....	38
4.2.2	Data analysis: productization of saunas in the Tampere Region .....	41
4.2.3	Data analysis: productization of saunas in the Tavastia Region .....	47
4.3	Summary of the practical research .....	50
5	RECOMMENDATIONS ON SAUNA PRODUCTIZATION IN TAVASTIA REGION .....	50
5.1	Online visibility of Tavastia Region saunas .....	51
5.2	Campaigns .....	51
5.3	Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience – quality certificate & handbook.....	52
5.4	Sauna workshop .....	52
5.5	Sauna as business.....	53
5.6	Recommendations for further research .....	54
5.7	Reliability and validity of the study .....	55

6 CONCLUSIONS .....	55
REFERENCES.....	57

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Tavastia Region sauna survey Q&A in English
- Appendix 2 Tavastia Region sauna survey questions in Finnish
- Appendix 2 Sauna instructions
- Appendix 3 Sauna survey article in the newspaper

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The meaning of this research is to study the potential of the Finnish sauna culture and to find out new opportunities for productization to make the most of it in Tavastia Region. The main point is to find out what kind of sauna products exist in the first place and what Tavastia Region is lacking. This will lead to new innovations that organizations can utilize and therefore advance tourism at the area. Sauna belongs in the category of wellness tourism.

Since the city of Tampere is the sauna capital of the world, it is a good role model when it comes to productization of the Finnish sauna and sauna culture. For this reason, Tampere region is used as a point of comparison in this research. The product and service offering of both regions are studied and then compared to each other. (Sauna Capital Tampere Finland, n.d.b)

The author of this thesis is an International Business student from Häme University of Applied Sciences. HAMK is located in the Southern Finland. It provides education for approximately 7500 students in seven campuses at the area of Tavastia Region and Tampere Region. (HAMK, n.d.d)

Finland is a bilingual country and the word Tavastia comes from the Swedish word 'Tavastland'. The equivalent in Finnish is 'Häme'. So, Tavastia Region is not only known as Tavastia but also as Häme.

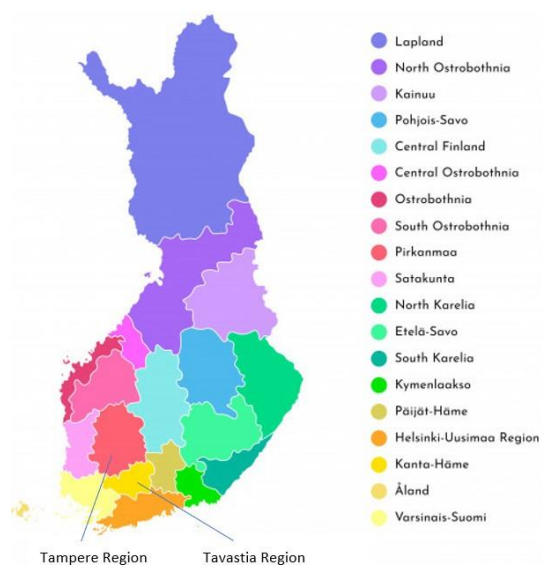


Figure 1. Map of Finland's regions indicating the locations of Tavastia Region and Tampere Region (Freepik, n.d.).

HAMK has four research centers and the commissioners of this thesis are from the HAMK Smart unit. Let's go Tavastia, was a project where the commissioners, project manager Outi Mertamo and development manager Kirsi Sippola, worked. The project was about enhancing tourism operations and focusing to develop it from certain aspects such as nature tourism, culture tourism and wellness tourism. (HAMK, n.d.a & HAMK, n.d.b)

The Let's Go Tavastia project started 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2017 and ended 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2019. As an extension of it a tourism project called Western Lakeland started 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2019 and it will be going on until 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2020. It is about advancing the operations of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), focusing on responsible tourism and coordinating international marketing, strengthening the brand of Tavastia (Häme) and developing the website of Tavastia Region that goes by name Visit Häme. (HAMK, n.d.c & n.d.a)

This thesis is a case study on wellness tourism in Finland. Finnish saunas and sauna culture are a part of it. As the main subject, this report focuses on saunas, and explores them from the perspectives of wellness tourism and productization.

The HAMK Smart ordered another thesis on the sauna topic, but from another perspective. A fellow student also from the field of business administration mapped out public saunas and sauna shifts at the area that are freely accessible by anyone. The research included the marketing aspect, the point was to receive marketing consent from sauna providers and to find out the interest on marketing co-operation. This information is important for the HAMK Smart concerning the development of territorial tourism. This information is usable in multiple ways. For example, it will be utilized in development of the regional website called Visit Häme ([visithame.fi](http://visithame.fi)) where a sauna map will be placed. The point of the sauna map is that the information is compiled in one place, making it easier to find and increasing visibility of the services.

Since the students shared a topic, it was rational to collaborate on the creation of a sauna survey, being also reasonable that the respondents received only one survey instead of two. For the authors, the results were mutually beneficial.

For a foreigner who has no knowledge of the Finnish sauna culture and traditions the first sauna experience can easily turn out to be a confusing situation. Therefore, commissioners of this thesis have additionally requested the author to compile sauna instructions from the perspective of wellness tourism. The idea is that the instructions provides guidance for those who are not that familiar with Finnish sauna bathing. The meaning of the instructions is to help sauna bather to achieve best possible sauna experience. The instructions are on two languages, English and Finnish.

The informative part is mostly for the tourists since most of the Finns are already experienced sauna bathers. Therefore, the instructions were given a visual look, to look good in any sauna space.

The main purpose of this thesis is to find solutions for the productization of saunas, since it has not been yet sufficiently conducted in the Tavastia Region. This way the sauna spaces can be put into operation with new perspectives.

## 1.2 Research objective and research question

The research question in this thesis is: How to advance productization of sauna culture in Tavastia Region.

The objective is to find new ideas and innovations on sauna productization in Tavastia Region. In other words, the goal is to figure out how the Finnish sauna is productized in Tampere Region and how it can be utilized in Tavastia Region. The objective is to learn about the usefulness of productization and methods to apply it to the already existing products as well. The purpose is also to press the fact that Finnish sauna is unique, organizations can easily turn it as a great selling point with correct productization and marketing. All this results in the advancement of tourism and wellness tourism in the area.

## 1.3 Research methodology

This thesis is a case study where the subject is studied in-depth with a descriptive and explanatory approach. For this reason, the thesis is principally qualitative research even the mass survey produced quantitative data as well. Quantitative methods are analytical, studying the subject from a numerical perspective that counts on systematic analyses and measurement. Whereas qualitative methods study the subject from a deeper point of view, considering human behavior and perspective. (Humala, 2019).

The theory includes research on tourism, wellness tourism, productization, and service design method known as story design. The data is gathered from several different sources and materials such as books, articles, blog posts, websites, scientific journals and digital learning materials. The content of the theoretical framework is reflected in the research part including the analysis, recommendations and conclusions.

The actual analysis was conducted with the help of two research methods: a web-based mass survey and benchmarking. A web-based mass survey is a good and easy tool in data gathering since it can be sent



to a large number of respondents to receive plenty of information at once. The type of data depends on what kind of questions are asked. In this case, data was both - qualitative and quantitative. As mentioned before this is qualitative research, but the quantitative data helped to comprehend the bigger picture and gave more credibility to the study. The qualitative data enabled to explore the subject profoundly. (Humala, 2019)

The second method is benchmarking. It was conducted first by observing websites. Since Tampere Region is used as a point of comparison, the research included territorial websites of the Tampere Region and the Tavastia Region. Research subjects were also websites that provided information on the sauna topic from the perspective of both regions. The observation revealed the state of productization concerning sauna in both areas. Benchmarking assisted to analyze the differences and gave ideas about the possibilities on the productization of sauna culture in the Tavastia region in the future. Benchmarking – is referred also as a peer analysis – meaning that something is compared to another, analyzed and obtained ideas are adopted in own operations (Eriksson & Koistinen, 2014. P. 46; Humala, 2019, Tuulaniemi, 2011)

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework in this thesis consists of concepts of tourism and productization. The framework is divided into two sections. The first one is about tourism: defining tourism & tourism types and then moving on to defining wellness & wellness tourism. The second part is about productization: explaining what productization and service design mean, including the concept of story design.

These concepts together form the base for the theoretical framework. Studying the basics of these theories points out the direction for the research and shows how to proceed to the research part on the productization of the Finnish sauna. Together, these theories illustrate the possibilities in tourism from the perspective of productization.

Exploring these specific subject areas assists to answer in the research question: how to advance productization of sauna culture in the Tavastia Region. The theoretical frame in its entirety creates the foundation for the whole process, enabling a fluent movement to the actual research part. The knowledge gained from the theoretical framework was compared with the actual research part on sauna products and helped to find an answer to the research problem and to form it on the recommendations and conclusion parts.

## 2.1 Tourism

### 2.1.1 Defining tourism & tourism types

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (2019), the travel and tourism sector is one of the largest industries in the world. In 2018 it produced 8.8 trillion dollars. Every tenth job was at travel and tourism, and the whole number was globally 319 million.

This large industry is divided into three main forms of tourism: domestic, outbound and inbound. Domestic tourism means that a person travels in own home country, for example, a Finnish person travels inside the borders of Finland. In outbound tourism, a tourist travels to other countries from own home country, for example, a Finn traveling to France. Inbound tourism is just the opposite, a Frenchwoman traveling to Finland, and Finland is not the homeland. (VisitBritain, n.d.)

According to Suontausta & Tyni (2005, p. 141) a typical tourism product is a bundle of different service module components: transportation, accommodation, food and beverage and program services in other words known as activities.

So, in the tourism industry products are usually service products that are designed based on what customers want and need. Therefore, customer-oriented thinking is the key point to develop tourism-related products. Inventing successful products and services requires studying and understanding customers' behavior and needs and finding out their reasons for traveling. (Suontausta & Tyni, 2005, pp. 130-133)

Tourism services are separated in own types based on the features and the interests of people. Services are easily “found” when the name of the tourism type reveals directly what kind of tourism service to expect. Tourism types are for instance: nature tourism, health tourism, culture tourism, culinary tourism, business tourism, wellness tourism and so on. (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2008, p. 26)

### 2.1.2 Defining wellness & wellness tourism

In this busy world, people appreciate and are willing to invest more on experiences. People want to feel the timelessness and to be able momentarily to leave behind the pressure of work combined with the daily routines at home. The word ‘wellness’ is a combination of words ‘well-being’ and ‘fitness’. (Suontausta & Tyni 2005, 42–46)

The definition of wellness is an overall well-being of a person. It consists of several dimensions that altogether determine the quality of life: emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical,

social and spiritual. In other words, the concept of wellness is seeking optimal health and vitality by finding harmony between all these dimensions. (Cederström & Spicer, 2015)

Interconnectivity of the dimensions points out how extensive concept wellness is. This is because people are like a pile of motley colored sweaters: having different likes, phases of life, cultures and living environments. Suontausta & Tyni (2005, p. 26) state that wellness is affected by culture, time and place. Due to this, the concept of wellness keeps on shaping up and diversifying while the world and the course of life changes. Wellness had an impact in the tourism industry concluding to a subcategory, wellness tourism.

Wellness tourism concentrates on the experiences and maintaining physical, psychological and spiritual wellbeing. It does not aim to heal already existing health issues - as medical tourism does - but the purpose is to maintain health and improve wellbeing by increasing enjoyment. (Visit Finland, n.d.d, p. 4 & Turun Sanomat, 2015)

The difference between wellness tourism and medical tourism is also the reason for traveling. The service products of medical tourism concern healing illnesses and symptoms. The service products in wellness tourism pursue to relieving stress, enhancing physical condition, preventing illness, focusing on better nutrition and a healthier lifestyle. (Suontausta & Tyni, 2005, p. 73)

Suontausta & Tyni (2005, pp. 106-107) states that people are different and have also several different motives for consuming wellness services: relaxation, a chance to behave freely without limitations of everyday life, escaping mundane life, self-examination, increasing social contacts and becoming closer with the family members. This makes wellness an extremely wide and potential concept from the perspective of service providers. Because people are different, everyone is looking for wellness and indulgence in their own way. (Suontausta & Tyni, 2005, pp. 106-107 & 146-147)

Therefore, wellness tourism products can be basically anything that is not unhealthy and promotes either mental or physical well-being – or both. Personalities and interests define the nature of the activities people are searching for. Categories of wellness are exercise and sports, beauty treatments, relaxation, healthy food, meditation, social relations, mental activities, and environmental sensitivity. So, services can be for example about different kinds of retreats, walks in nature, gym exercises, camping, spa treatments, culinary art, recreational activities provided by a workplace, cultural events, sauna bathing and so on. (Suontausta & Tyni, 2005, pp. 69 & 106-107; Turun Sanomat, 2015)

## 2.2 Productization

Productization includes not only visioning new tangible products but turning services into products as well. A finished product can be a mixture of tangible items and services. The key thing in productization is to make a product as simple as possible to understand. In other words, a product designed in a way that there is no doubt about the content. This makes it easier to buy, and easier to produce. (Tuotantotalouden verstaas n.d.; Parantainen, 2010, p. 31 & Suomi.fi, 2019)

Investopedia (2019) describes productizing in the following way: “*Productize* refers to the process of developing or altering a process, idea, skill, or service to make it marketable for sale to the public. Productization involves taking a skill or service that has been used internally and developing into a standard, fully-tested, packaged, and marketed product.”

Tuominen, Järvi, Lehtonen, Valtanen & Martinsuo (2015, pp. 5-6) point out that involvement is the base for successful service productization. It forms a shared understanding between producers and customers about the best possible value that a product can create. This mutual involvement motivates both parties into creative thinking and helps to adapt and revise working methods. The commitment to service is created when the customers are challenged to contemplate what they want from the product and how it could be achieved. This assists the service provider to consider what the company can offer to the customers. This kind of interactive learning leads to a functional, efficient, and continuous service product with the best possible value for both parties.

The following image (figure 2) describes the co-operation between the customer and the service provider in the service productization process.

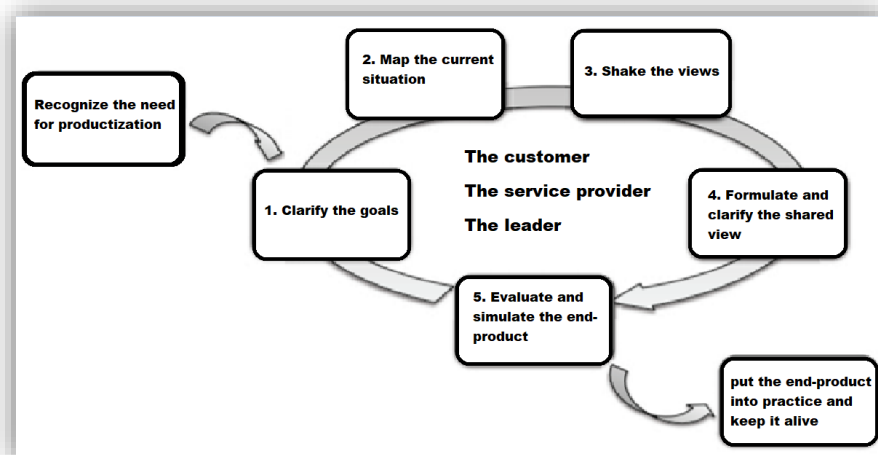


Figure 2. The phases of involving productization (Tuominen et al. 2015, p. 12).

Tuominen et al. (2015, p. 5) additionally explain that productization of services consists of internal and external productization. The customer is involved in the external part by confirming to the service provider that all components in the service package meet the expectations. Based on this service product is described in marketing and sales materials and so on. Internal productization is about processes that not necessarily show to the customers. It is about the internal processes of the service provider, where the appearance of the product to the customers is thought through. In other words, the service provider thinks it from the perspective of the customer. The internal processes are also about dividing and defining the responsibilities and tasks amongst the employees. So, service products are mixtures of customer-oriented standardization and tailoring.

Productizing comes with different techniques. This one is thought for products that already exist and there is a need for remodeling through productization. Tuotantotalous (n.d.) identifies it as a process of eight phases. The first one is about defining the customer segment, figuring out what kind of problem the service product will solve for the customer, identifying the competitors and what are the true benefits of the product. In the second phase, the definition of the service will be rephrased, first by dividing it into pieces for a thorough analysis and then divesting the unnecessary parts. At this point, the service will be split into two parts: the core services and the additional services. Phase three is about elaborating on the product. Certain qualities will be defined, such as usable resources, demands concerning the outcome of the product, responsibilities of the personnel, phases of the service and so on.

Preparing the work instructions precisely and considering the previous development is the fourth phase. And standardizing is the next one. The use of well-prepared document templates in repetitive functions simplifies the whole process. This kind of documents can be for example training materials, templates for reports, contracts, and quotations. This includes also optimizing the collection of feedback, invoicing and the use of working tools (Tuotantotalous, n.d.)

Phase six is about forming the service packages from the perspective of the customer so that services would be as appealing as possible. In the seventh one, products will be priced distinctively and hopefully with solid prices. The last phase is where the service will be concretized. Concretization raises the substance and the credibility of the service products. It is achieved with the help of references, guarantees and most importantly by involving the customer to be part of the on-going development process. Visualizing the product with images and graphs in the marketing materials such as brochures, price lists, and other printed materials will help to understand the content. In addition to those, animations are good tools to be used on social media and websites. All this increases the attractiveness. In other words, the products are made

easier not only to purchase but also to market. (Tuotantotalous, n.d.; Koskelainen, 2008 & Tuulanniemi, 2011 p. 50)

Accelerating procedures such as marketing, sales, internal information flow, and collaboration are the goals what service provider pursues with the productization; effectiveness is the key to a successful productization process. It is also crucial that the role of service produced is understood. The quality of well-productized service products is always the same and it must be reproducible and furtherly developed as well. The product is properly described, and it is effortless to sell. (Tuominen et al., 2015, p. 9)

Villanen (2016, p. 226) emphasizes that productization comes with risks and challenges. There is a risk of over productization. It appears as a lack of motivation amongst workers or as a too formal service product. This is the cause and effect of processes taken too far. Another risk is that the service provider loses the ability to view products from a customer-oriented perspective. It is also possible to give too much credit for the service description and not realizing that the service does not meet the expectations. All this can be avoided with the co-operation inside the company and constantly involving the customers.

The service provider can measure the success of the service products with certain tools for example form surveys, form interviews, online surveys, personal interviews, experimental researches, and observation. All these feedback methods help the service provider to understand what customers truly need and want. This enables the service to be productized in the right direction. (Villanen, 2016, pp. 259-260)

### 2.3 Service design and story design

Service design helps to gain a more customer-oriented point of view into the productization process. Moritz (2005, p. 6) determines the service design in the following way: "Service design helps to innovate (create new) or improve (existing) services to make them more useful, usable, desirable for clients and efficient as well as effective for organizations."

The picture below (figure 3) illustrates what are the elements in service design.

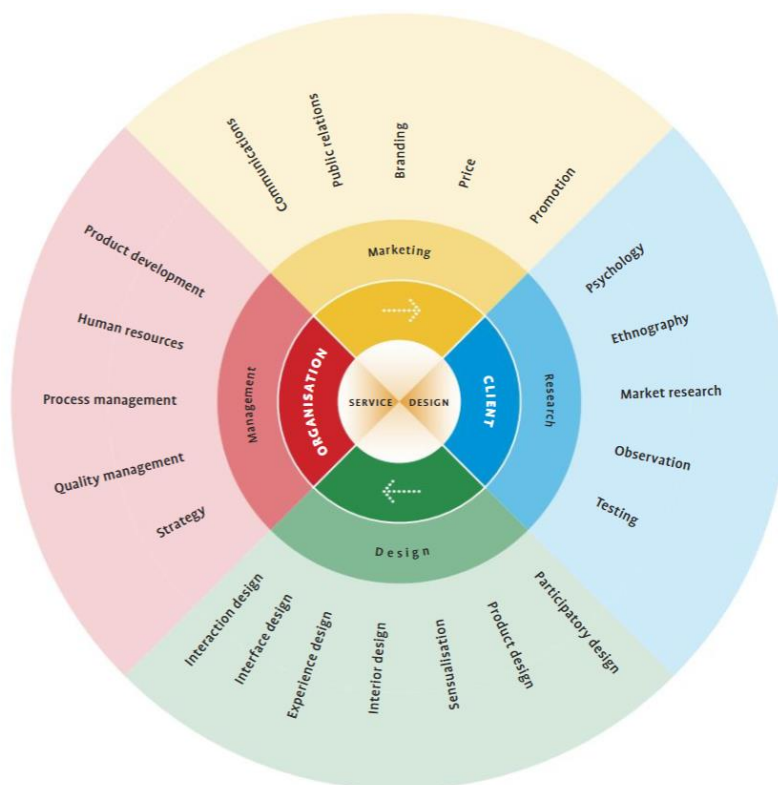


Figure 3. The service design areas (Moritz, 2005, p. 49).

The methods of service design assists in the productization process. Productization can be conducted with the help of story design.

Cambridge dictionary (n.d.) defines the word 'story' in the following way: "A description of events that actually happened or that are invented"

According to Tuominen et al. (2015, p. 33) stories can be basically anything: invented or true incidents, events, acts, and their outgrowths and consequences. Stories can be told from different perspectives, for instance from teller's point of view or someone else's.

Anne Kalliomäki founded a business called Tarinakone (n.d.b) in 2008. This forerunner of story-based service design is a book writer and a workshop organizer that also assists companies in story design.

Story design is about enhancing customer experiences through stories. It plays a big part not only in the productization but also in several other operations of a service provider. It is a part of marketing, branding, service design, strategy and so on. Story design is also known as storyfication or story-based service design. (Kalliomäki, 2014, p. 11, Tarinakone, n.d.a & n.d.b)

Stories are an important part of the productization process, because they contain plenty of information about people and the service product as an experience. The service can be developed based on the stories and stories can be analyzed from many angles as well during the development process. (Tuominen et al., 2015, p. 33)

Stories assist to create comprehensive services that emphasize the importance of experience for the customers. Stories give services a more relaxed image and make them exceptionally interesting to buy and participate in. Feedback from customers is important, it enables the further development of the product and its story. Happy and contented customers are the perfect marketing ambassadors and specialists on customer orientation as well. All this increases the value of the service from both perspectives - the customer and the service provider. (Kalliomäki, 2014, p. 11)

Stories are involved throughout the production process, from the beginning to the end. Stories assist to innovate the first visions and then conduct the ideas into new products or to enhance the already existing ones. (Tuominen et al., 2015, p. 30 & Kalliomäki, 2014, p. 11)

Actual experiences of customers and personnel can be used as a base when the intent is to modify already existing products. Experiences are collected and analyzed in a workshop. In the same workshop, experiences can be invented and tested for the development of a new product. (Tuominen et al., 2015, p. 34)

Kalliomäki (2014, p. 17 & 94) further points out that companies can use stories for several different purposes. A background story can be given not only for a product but also for the company itself. Stories can be used to describe the past or to vision the future. Reference stories convince customers on the purchase decision, and stories about products value finalize it. Stories can be about the manufacturing process, about the customer or how the customer experiences the service. Also, the surroundings where the service happens can be used as a so-called story stage. The company can, for example, tell about certain local traditions, folklore and history of the place. This story stage is possible to be put also on websites, marketing materials, social media and so on. Social media for example Instagram is a good tool for wide visibility achieved by story design. Users of Instagram can make short posts about the service experience, share pictures and mark postings with hashtags so that people all around the world are able to see the content.

## 2.4 Summary of the theory

The benefits that are achieved with productization are: homogeneity of a service, its repetitiveness, enhanced marketing, clear description of a service and comprehension of the development areas by first being able



to piece together the idea of the whole service as a package. (Tuominen et al. 2015, p. 7)

All this is possible with customer-oriented thinking, activeness, involving the customers and the workers of the company in the productization process. It requires constant observation and exploration of the feedback and actively considering how the services can be improved. Story design helps companies to differentiate from competitors with a similar service offering and at the same time to emphasize the experience for the customers.

### **3 TOURISM IN FINLAND**

#### **3.1 Tourism as business in Finland**

Business Finland is a corporation owned by the Finnish government. It provides companies funding and support to promote internationalization and innovation processes. The corporation plays a significant role in advancing the Finnish tourism industry. Visit Finland, on the other hand, is a unit of Business Finland. It is responsible for advancing Finnish tourism on an international level. It supports domestic companies and actors that operate in the field of travel and tourism. Supported operations are for example the development of tourism products, sales, and marketing. (Business Finland, n.d.a & n.d.b)

Tourism is an important industry for the Finnish economy that has naturally an effect on other industries such as logistics, trade sector, and construction. In 2017 tourism provided employment approximately 140 200 employees, being 5.5 percentages from the whole working population of Finland. Finland is a quite sparsely inhabited country; tourism supports the financial position of smaller localities. (MEAE, n.d.a)

In 2017 the number of foreign travelers was about 8,3 million, meaning that the figure has over than doubled since 2000. This figure consists mostly of European people, but the greatest potential is on Asian and Russian tourists. When looking at overnight accommodations in 2018, the figure was 22,1 million and the share of international accommodations was 6,8 million. (Finnish Hospitality Association MaRa, 2019)

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland (n.d.c), also known as MEAE, states that for many years the annual revenue from tourism has been over 14 billion euros. Since tourism in Finland has grown faster than other industries in recent years, it is estimated that the revenue will continue growing in the future as well. The figure might even reach as high as 20 billion euros by 2025.

A strategy, named as 'Roadmap for growth and renewal in Finnish tourism for 2015-2025' was put into operation in 2015. The sponsor behind this is the MEAE. The strategy included objectives such as investing in effective marketing, product development, and sales, reinforcing communication and networking between tourism service providers and simplifying the purchasing process from the perspective of a customer. (MEAE, n.d.b)

In 2015-2018 three projects of the roadmap were implemented: Archipelago, Finland Stopover and Finrelax©. The Archipelago was to make Finland internationally known from its archipelagos and Finland the Stopover was about enhancing Finland's position as a stopover country. Finrelax© concentrated on improving tourism with the help of wellness tourism. The target countries in the segmentation were Germany, Japan, and Russia. (MEAE, n.d.c)

Investing in networking internationally is a solution to the problem that Finland is not well-known worldwide, at least when compared to other Nordic countries. Although, the number of tourists coming to Finland is constantly growing, marketing Finland in a positive way and from the other perspective will speed up a tourism business. Globally the most important information to communicate to foreign tourists is that Finland is worthy to visit also during other seasons than winter. Wintertime is the most favored time due to activities such as skiing and husky safaris. Marketing the attractions of Lapland has been successful – possibly even so successful that Finland has been mainly considered as a winter destination. (Business Finland, 2018a)

Business Finland (2018a & n.d.c) states that features such as clean water, fresh outdoor air, beautiful and pure nature with the peaceful atmosphere are vantage points for Finnish tourism. Visit Finland has been working on marketing these elements to boost summertime tourism since wintertime obviously is the most attractive period. These before mentioned features are not self-explanatory, and they can be utilized to equalize the differences in annual tourist volumes between the four seasons of Finland. Foreign accommodations increased between summers 2016 and 2017 for approximately 14 percent. Investing in productization of tourism services from a customer-oriented perspective and developing product services as experiences with story design are methods of how different types of tourism for example wellness tourism enhance Finland's position in the industry.

### **3.2 Wellness tourism in Finland**

Wellness tourism is one of the most remarkable forms of tourism in Finland. Features for appealing tourists to Finland are pure nature, water and air, peacefulness, relaxation, stress removal, recreation and light

outdoor activities, healthy food, easy-going leisure time on a cottage and the Finnish sauna experience. Finland has great elements provided by nature that can be utilized in many ways that come to wellness tourism. (Business Finland, n.d.g & Visit Finland n.d.c)

Wellness tourism is a wide concept, so services and products are diverse. The products of nature can be used in pampering treatments for example in massages and peat treatments. The Finnish sauna experience as a service product can include sauna stories, traditional food, whisking, treatments and so on. A service product can be also a therapeutic walking trip into the woods to enjoy the silence, sights and peacefulness, possibly even have a picnic there. It can be a week on a cottage in the middle of nowhere or a fishing trip that includes cooking a healthy meal by oneself. There is an endless amount of activities that can be productized, and different combinations can be bundled into services. (Business Finland, n.d.g & Visit Finland n.d.c)

It has been also studied that tourists spend more money on wellness services than other tourism services. A modern lifestyle is quite hectic, people are willing to invest in wellness services so that the haste can be pressed to pause for a while. And a perfect way is to take a sauna – a Finnish one. (Business Finland, n.d.d, p. 4)

Services are developed based on wellness thinking; and it can be applied also to the surroundings where service happens as well for example beauty in salons, hotel rooms and saunas. This can be achieved by adding nature elements in interior decoration and products. Spaces are added peaceful colors, music and close-to-the nature products such as shampoos, soaps, care products, aromatic scents, proper ventilation and so on. Hotel rooms are equipped with luxurious beds that ensure good night's sleep. Some hotels also offer a possibility to call massage and beauty treatments into the room and some have even bathtubs and saunas in them. (Suontausta & Tyni, 2005, p. 144)

As mentioned before in 3.1, the Finrelax© was a growth-promoting project that was in progress from 2015 to 2017. The goal was to map out service providers with potential wellness products. This was conducted with product development competitions. The Authentic Relax Experience label was granted for the service providers that had a high-quality wellness product. The label is still in use and the companies make co-operation with Visit Finland still today. (Business Finland, n.d.g)

### 3.3 Finnish saunas

Finland is the best known from Lapland – the northernmost region - its' Northern lights and the Village of Santa Clause without forgetting the reindeers and ice swimming. Many know it also as a country of thousands of lakes that has beautiful and pure nature and most likely the best air

quality in the world. Of course, Finland is also known for its' saunas. And for a small country, the number of saunas is something quite unbelievable. The population of the whole country is roughly 5,5 million and estimation (from 2018) on the total number of saunas is over 2,3 million. (Discovering Finland, n.d. & Statistics Finland, 2019)

### 3.3.1 History of a Finnish sauna

Sauna is a remarkable part of the Finnish folklore. It has always had a special meaning for the Finnish people. Above all, it was for washing up, but also a multipurpose place from the perspective of daily life and chores. It was a place to do laundry and at the time of harvest, it was an ideal space to handle crops and other food. The heat made it a good place to dry flax, smoke-cured meat and malts were handled there as well. (Taskinen, 2015, p. 44 & The Finnish Sauna Society, n.d.f)

Back in the day, children were born in a sauna and the deceased were washed there, functioning as a gateway to ensure the last journey to the afterlife. It was a place to wash away the sorrow but also to honor life. Spells were believed to have a healing effect with their strong words and rituals had a big part on certain seasons, for example at the time of purification sauna, when winter started to turn into spring. Another one was during harvesting time to show gratitude to nature for providing nutrition. (Taskinen, 2015, p. 44 & The Finnish Sauna Society, n.d.f)

People believed in sauna gnomes that observed the behavior of the people and whose task was also to guard the sauna spaces. This made people mind their manners in a sauna. Present-day decorative gnome figures originate from this belief. (The Finnish sauna society, n.d.d)

So, the Finnish people had different beliefs about what came to the sauna. A bridal sauna with its rituals had an important meaning in the start of marital life. It was believed that a bridal sauna was a way to cast out evil spirits, leading into a happy and successful marriage. (Harju, 2016a, p. a3)

Saunas have not always located inside buildings. The first ones approximately 10 000 years ago have been just built over pits in the ground that were covered with animal skin. On the stone age saunas were made quite simply, having only walls, a wooden door and a roof made from a mixture of turf and wood. Logs were used as benches. Smoke saunas came along the Iron Age, at first being just a huge pile of rocks that were heated over a fire, even for eight long hours and then the smoke was led out. This enabled the space to stay warm for hours. (Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.f)

Around the Bronze Age, saunas were dug inside slopes and this kind of sauna is the ancestress to present-day ones. The location was ideal since

slope enabled only need to build one wall where a door was assembled. (The Finnish sauna society, n.d.d & Taskinen, 2015, p. 15)

According to the Finnish sauna society (n.d.d) the development of building skills brought along more advanced timber cottages. So, in the middle of the Iron Age saunas changed drastically. Still at this point saunas were smoke saunas, but ever since saunas have been built over the ground inside buildings. Still, nowadays, a timber cottage sauna is considered as the mother of any sauna.

The Finnish sauna society (n.d.d) also states that smoke saunas are not that fireproof, so around the late 1600s chimneys started to become more common and at a rather fast pace. In smoke saunas, the smoke stayed inside the hot room, but thanks to chimneys, now it was possible to lead the smoke out through a pipe.

At this point saunas located in own separate courtyard buildings. Since 1960's people started to build them inside private homes as well. An electric stove was invented in the 1930s and due to mass production in the 1950s, this kind of stove began to generalize. In the 1970s electric saunas were installed inside apartment buildings. (The Finnish sauna society, n.d.d)

As described, saunas have developed quite a lot over time, but also plenty has been preserved on a purpose. Some of the Finnish saunas are supposed to be as time-honored as possible.

The best example is a sauna village in Juokslahti, in Central Finland. The main point is to make people acquainted with the origins of the Finnish sauna culture and to be the number one sauna village worldwide with the biggest collection of smoke saunas. Part of the saunas are taken into use and some are renovated as museum buildings. (Juokslahti n.d. & Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.c)

Operations in the sauna village began in 1970 and the opening was in 1983. At the beginning the sauna village located in Jämsä, in Central Finland. The plan was to move the buildings from Jämsä to Juokslahti and restore them gradually. This project started in 2015 and the time estimate for finishing the transference process was 2019. It did not come as surprise, that moving entire buildings – particularly historical ones - is not only laborious but also time-consuming. (Visit Central Finland, n.d.c & Savela, 2018)

The restoration process was also expected to be slow, especially because it was planned to be conducted mostly with voluntary work. Procuring old construction material for the saunas was challenging. And the whole restoration process was funded with the support of sponsor companies, sauna shift fees and membership fees of the Finnish sauna culture

association (Suomen Saunakulttuuri ry) that is the project leader. (Visit Central Finland, n.d.c & Savela, 2018)

According to Savela (2018), a reporter from the Finnish broadcasting company YLE, in August 2018 the sauna village had 24 saunas that were moved to their new location and three of them were already renovated. Regardless of the ongoing renovations, tourists can visit the village and there has been a lot of interest in it.

### 3.3.2 Sauna & benefits to health and well-being

The health benefits of sauna bathing have been a controversial topic for a long time. However, the recent studies argue on behalf of the sauna being more healthy than harmful, and that there is scientifically verified findings to support this claim.

Laukkanen, Laukkanen & Kunutsor (2018) state in their medical research *'Other Health Benefits of Sauna Bathing: A Review of the Evidence'* in the following way: "Sauna bathing, an activity used for the purposes of pleasure, wellness, and relaxation, is linked to a remarkable array of health benefits. It is a safe activity and can even be used in people with stable cardiovascular disease, provided it is used sensibly for an appropriate period of time."

Professor Huttunen (2019), reviews before mentioned medical research in his column and also states that when the Finnish sauna is heated to 80–110 °C it can be a promoter of health. It reduces the risk to have cardiovascular diseases, having similar effects on the body than light exercise does. Sauna has only minor risks, those who have heart problems should be careful with dramatic changes in the temperature and those who have elevated blood pressure should take into consideration that the sauna combined with medication can lower the blood pressure too intensively and cause a blackout and possibly a falling.

From the health perspective sauna and cardiovascular diseases have been studied the most, but also several smaller studies indicate that sauna might have other health benefits such as easing pain in the muscles and joints, reducing headaches, depression, lung problems and so on. (Laukkanen, Laukkanen & Kunutsor, 2018 & Huttunen. 2019)

### 3.3.3 Sauna types

The most typical saunas in Finland are a sauna that warms with burning wood put in the stove, an electrically heated one and a smoke sauna. Steam saunas and infrared saunas are used as well, but these types are not that common. The Finnish saunas are made from wood, including

walls and benches. In other words, only the stove and floors are from other materials. Saunas are ventilated well, so that people can breathe in the humidity and that the spaces dry efficiently after the use. (Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.f)

Stones of the stove gather the heat. Vapor or steam ('löyly') is created when water is thrown over the stones. The ideal temperature is 70 – 100 Celsius. (The Finnish Sauna Society, n.d.a).

Smoke sauna is challenging and time-consuming to heat, one person heats it about the length of one workday. Smoke saunas burn easily, for this reason, it must be heated carefully, and the heater cannot be inexperienced. In this sauna type, the smoke stays inside creating a hazy atmosphere. This is possible because the smoke sauna does not have a smoke pipe that would lead the smoke out. (YLE, 2017 & Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.f)

The electric sauna is the most common in apartments, swimming halls and hotels. This kind of stove is the most effortless to use. There is only a knob that is turned on and the sauna will be ready in less than an hour. The negative side of electric sauna is that it does not give anywhere near good experience than the wooden one does, the reason being the dryer air in the hot room. (Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.f)

These days, mobile saunas are constantly becoming more and more popular. Sauna is built in a way that it can be pulled with a tractor, some of them are even built inside of a bus or on a ferry. Wooden bath barrels and outdoor hot tubs have been in demand in recent years too, quickly becoming a part of modern Finnish sauna culture. The creativity and passion of the Finnish people towards building saunas culminate as an ice sauna. It is an approximately 20 tons complex with wooden benches and ice walls that are sawed and placed like logs. (Harju, 2016a, p. 98 & Taskinen, 2015, pp. 109-110)

A tent sauna is a sauna that can be not only quickly assembled but it is also quick to take down. In other words, it is a removable temporary construction. The materials needed are either tent fabric or tarpaulin, a pipe frame where the fabric can be placed on, a stove and a chimney so that the smoke does not stay in the tent. The tent can be used without a chimney but in that case, the fire must be put out and the smoke ventilated out. The tent saunas can be made by oneself or bought ready-made. (Tamperelainen, 2015)

A sauna that is heated with burning wood put in the stove creates more humid vapor than the electric one. This type is also considered as the original Finnish sauna and it takes slightly over an hour to be heated as hot as desired. In this kind of stove, the wood is added regularly, and the

amount of firewood also regulates the temperature. (Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.f)

#### 3.3.4 Sauna culture and tradition

In saunas that locate for instance in swimming halls and spas, a swimming suit is not allowed to be worn in the sauna. For hygiene reasons, it must be put on after sauna bathing and showering, just before entering the pool section. In the beginning, the sauna etiquette and especially nudity can be confusing for foreigners. A good hint to a person not familiar with the Finnish sauna bathing: it is perfectly acceptable to get wrapped in a towel, regardless of the sauna type.

According to Taskinen (2015, p. 29) and Harju (2016, p. 49) whisking is an essential part of the Finnish sauna culture and tradition. A traditional whisk is bound from the branches of a birch tree (in Finnish it is called either 'vihta' or 'vasta'). The best time for preparing a whisk is in the middle of the summer. For later use, whisks can be either frozen or dried. Well-stocked department stores sell ready-made ones year-round. The whisk is supposed to be soaked in the water bucket ('kiulu') before use. In other words, the skin is always whipped with a wet whisk. The meaning is to cleanse the skin and increase its circulation and metabolism.

A sauna is a place for relaxation, without any rush. It is about sensual experiences as well. Whisking releases, a natural aroma of birch into the hot room. Some of the people pour beer over the sauna stones to create an aroma of malt and barley whereas the others use sauna fragrances. Ethereal oil drops, for instance eucalyptus-scented ones, are mixed in the water bucket before throwing water into the stones.

In Finland, the sauna has always been considered a sacred healing place to reduce the tension of the body and worries of the mind. Sauna treatments, massages and cupping have had a traditional part in sauna bathing for ages - and still have today. (Suomen kansanparantajaseura, n.d.)

Natural products are eminent and the most preferable ingredients in skin treatments. For example, salt, peat, honey, clay, chocolate, ethereal oils, different herbs are the most used ones. Treatments can be basically anything from treating hair and scalp to footbath and pedicure. Peeling the skin and putting on masks are ideal routines during taking a sauna because heat makes pores expand and at the same time softening the skin. A full-body treatment with peat is a traditional Finnish way to gain soft and refreshed skin. A well-moisturized skin after completing the beauty remedies enables the best result. (Mahla ry, n.d. & Sauna maailmalla, 2019)



According to Taskinen (2015, p. 67), this old method has been a forgotten type of treatment. In Finland, this treatment has been done since the 1400s, but it actually is over 5000 years old procedure. It presumably relieves muscle pains, skin diseases, migraine and cardiovascular problems. Alleged benefits for well-being are increased blood circulation and metabolism. However, this has not been scientifically proven. Savela (2016), a journalist from Finnish broadcasting company YLE, claims that cupping is becoming more common again, especially amongst young adults.

According to Harju (2016a, p. 41) and Taskinen (2015, p.75) the Finnish people have developed own versions of yoga and pilates: exercising on the benches in a sauna. Naturally, the temperature must be lower than usual, not exceeding 50 Celsius.

As mentioned earlier (3.3.1 History of Finnish sauna) a bridal sauna had and still has a part in the Finnish sauna culture. This ritual is hoped to affect the quality of marital life, leading to a happy one. At the present day, it is often called a bachelorette sauna. And it is more about spending time together and celebrating the future marriage according to the likings of the bride to create good memories and to share the old ones. Usually, the get together includes pampering treatments and for example before mentioned sauna yoga. (Harju, 2016, pp. 83-85)

Hot sauna dehydrates the body, so it is important to hydrate well and cool between the sauna sessions. Traditional activities besides sauna bathing in the summer are swimming in the lake, bathing in an outdoor jacuzzi (also known as a bathing barrel) and barbequing. A heavier meal is enjoyed after finishing with the sauna bathing. Grilled food is usually enjoyed traditionally with boiled potatoes and salad.

It is also common to have a smaller snack between the sauna sessions. One of the traditions is to prepare sauna sausages. A few cuts are made in the sausages. The cuts can be filled for example with cheese and tomato. Sausages are rolled in a tin foil, placed on the sauna stove (over the stones) for approximately 20 minutes and enjoyed with ketchup and mustard. The sauna sausages are popular no matter what the season is, even in the winter when barbequing outside is not the best option. (Taskinen 2015, p. 92)

Rolling in the snow and swimming in the ice-hole are refreshing wintertime activities. Both are safe for people that do not have any serious health issues. Both of them have similar well-being promoting qualities, such as releasing stress, lowering blood pressure and increasing energy levels. Against common impression, most of the (Finnish) people do not swim in the ice-hole. An alternative is to spend brief moments outside to cool off. (Taskinen 2015, p. 76)

Saunas are used no matter what the season is, but still, there are a couple of traditional (sauna) occasions: the midsummer, Christmas and New Year's Eve.

A Midsummer celebration is a Finnish tradition. The most typical way to spend it is at a cottage near a lake. Preparing whisks and flower garlands, sauna bathing, barbequing, lighting a bonfire and doing Midsummer spells are all relative components to this festivity. (Taskinen, 2015, p. 47 & Harju, 2016a, pp. 50-51 & 96-97).

Midsummer spells are fertility rites for finding a future bride or a groom. Several different ones are believed to lead to happiness. For example, the future partner will present oneself in a dream when seven different flowers or herbs are placed under the pillow. The same result is believed to be achieved by preparing a flower garland. By looking at the reflection on a pond, a well or even a water bucket will reveal the future spouse – but only if this spell is performed naked. One spell predicts that whisk thrown in the air will point out the direction where the future spouse will come from. (MTV uutiset, 2017; Anna, 2007 & Taskinen, 2015, p. 47)

Harju (2016a, pp. 96-97) indicates that a Christmas sauna is usually heated in the morning or around noon. It is common first to wash the sauna and then decorate it for instance with lanterns and candles to achieve a Christmassy atmosphere. Back in the day, the atmosphere included silence, being noisy was considered as bad behavior.

Taskinen (2015, p. 47) describes New Year's sauna in the following way: "On New Year's Eve, the sauna is the perfect place to wash away the past year's grime." In, other words, also New Year's Eve is the perfect time for a sauna.

Public saunas are not anything new in Finland, it has been a common form of sauna bathing since the 1800s. Back then the urban apartments were built without own saunas, but this changed around the 1970s. Naturally, the home saunas and a trend to rent sauna spaces for a private use together diminished the need for public saunas. Today, the enthusiasm for public saunas is returning and they can be found in every hotel, spa and swimming hall. It is estimated that currently, the number of spas is over 50 and swimming halls around 220. (Harju, 2016, pp. 34-39 & Saunat.co, n.d.a)

### **3.4 Marketing & the Finnish saunas**

#### **3.4.1 Sauna regions**

Central Finland has declared itself as the sauna region of the world since 1st September 2015. The Central Finland Sauna Region is a cluster

consisting of companies and enterprises that operate on tourism and manufacturing industries. The cluster provides sauna related products, services and events for domestic and foreign customers. (Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.a)

The website (saunaregion.fi) gives an extensive image of what the area has to offer. Firstly, there is basic information about the Finnish sauna and sauna culture. Sights and service providers are compiled so it is easy to find hotels, sauna packages and so on. The region has an annual region week in the summer, and the schedule is available on the website.

The page has a sauna map. It reveals saunas and spas located in the Central Finland. The map gives detailed information about service providers and locations of sauna spaces. Search can be done by choosing certain criteria such as sauna type, additional services, pricing, group size and so on.

Another declaration concerning sauna titles was done by the city of Tampere that locates in the Tampere region. It has named itself as the sauna capital of the world. (Sauna Capital Tampere Finland, n.d.)

The website is called Visit Tampere. It provides information basically about everything that can be done in the Tampere region from hobbies to culture and events. It also has own separate section for sauna: information and over 30 public saunas have been compiled there. (Visit Tampere, n.d.a)

#### 3.4.2 Sauna associations and collaboration partners

The Finnish Sauna Society is an organization that promotes the Finnish sauna culture by providing information on sauna bathing, traditions, and explaining what the meaning of the sauna is in the first place. The Society started its activity in 1937. It currently has about 4200 members, 12 saunas near a lake with other spaces such as a cafeteria, a library, and conference rooms. Saunas are open six days a week and members can bring guests. (The Finnish Sauna Society, n.d.e)

Sauna from Finland is an association having over 200 member companies that are all together working in the field of wellness tourism for promoting the authentic Finnish sauna experience. One of the most important tasks is to grow the awareness of the Finnish saunas, especially on an international level. For this reason, a networking event called Sauna World Forum was established. It is organized annually. In September 2020 it will be held in Tampere like in the previous year. Also, another international co-operation is with German sauna event organizer Messe Stuttgart concerning the Interbad-2020 sauna event. (Sauna from Finland, 2019a; World Sauna Forum, n.d.)

The International Sauna Association (ISA) was founded by members from Finland, Japan, Austria and Germany. It arranges international sauna congresses every four years. The main tasks are also to support scientific studies on sauna bathing and to promote sauna activities globally. (The International Sauna Association, n.d.)

Saunologia.fi is a Finnish blog site that is all about sauna. The blogger is Lassi A. Liikkanen who works as a docent on product design at Aalto University. The blog provides information about sauna bathing, products, technology, construction and renovating. Posts have a technological aspect and are written in an enthusiastic style that comes to new sauna innovations. (Saunologia, n.d. & Blogit.fi, n.d.)

Finnish Sauna Culture Ry (Suomen Saunakulttuuri Ry) is an association established in 2012 to preserve a whole sauna village by moving it from Muurame to Jämsä, since its operations in Muurame ended in 2010. Muurame is a municipal and Jämsä is a city, both are located in Central Finland. The sauna village was discussed earlier in the chapter 3.3.1 (History of Finnish sauna). The association was awarded in 2017 for its efforts to Finland and the Finnish sauna culture. (Juokslahti, n.d. & Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, 2017)

Sarvenperäset Ry is an association that organizes a sauna marathon event in Sarvenperä village, near the city of Jyväskylä in Central Finland. The idea is that participants bathe in 20 different saunas. Distances between saunas are covered either by walking or swimming. The total length is about ten kilometers, time estimation is approximately ten hours. This marathon is not about running or competing. It's meant to be a casual and communal event. (Sarvenperä, n.d.)

### 3.4.3 Finnish sauna campaigns, events and accomplishments

Titles and sauna campaigns are in a remarkable role what comes to productization and marketing the Finnish sauna not only globally but nationally as well. Recently the sauna has been acknowledged as a unique selling point in many enterprises and there have been several campaigns to advance its' culture worldwide.

In 2015 Vattenfall, a Finnish electricity company, made a sauna campaign called the great sauna experience ('Suuri saunaelämys'). The purpose was to gain positive visibility and encourage people on reasonable electricity consumption. This multi-media campaign was conducted through many different channels such as radio, television, social media, movie theaters and even having a mobile sauna moving from city to city while live broadcasting. This enabled the company to achieve wide coverage nationwide. (Markkinointi & mainonta, 2015)

Sauna from Finland (n.d.b) states that they have defined an Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience quality certificate that companies providing sauna services can apply. The certificate will be granted for those applicants that succeed to fulfill the following criteria: authenticity, multisensory, presence, relaxation, cleanliness, and wellbeing. The certificate is valid for two years at a time and it helps companies to market sauna services for example on their website to achieve a more credible image as a service provider.

Parties that work on advancing the Finnish sauna culture and several sauna associations - such as The Finnish Sauna Society – collaborated on the initiative that aims to get into UNESCOs 'Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity' by taking a sauna. The objective is to emphasize the importance of the Finnish sauna culture and reinforce its position globally. UNESCO will give a decision by the end of the year 2020. (The Finnish Sauna Society, n.d.b)

In 1986 The Finnish Sauna Society started to celebrate the second Saturday of June as the Finnish sauna day. However, it has not been an official flag day, flagging has been voluntary. The Sauna Society in co-operation with the Sauna from Finland has put up a petition that would make sauna day an official flag day. Votes are collected electronically through the petition website called adressit.com. Currently, the number of votes collected is 9137 (15th of March 2019). That is a rather small number of votes, indicating that it will take time to get the needed attention from the Finnish Ministry. (The Finnish Sauna Society, n.d.c; Adressit.com, n.d.)

Visit Finland created a marketing campaign to attract Japanese tourists to Finland. Japanese people have a popular hobby where stamps are collected into a booklet when visiting sights. This inspired Visit Finland to create a sauna booklet where stamps can be collected by visiting certain saunas in Japan and Finland starting from November 2018. The Japanese version of the Visit Finland website introduces 100 Finnish saunas. In Japan, it is fashionable to call an enthusiastic sauna bather as a 'saunner'. Because of its easiness, this new word has great potential to become a part of sauna vocabulary worldwide. (Business Finland, 2018b & Business Finland, 2019a)

The Visit Finland crowned 100 Japanese as Sauna Ambassadors. The meaning is to spread the word of the Finnish sauna around Japan and attract Japanese people to visit Finland to take saunas in the metropolitan area, in the city of Kuusamo and the Tampere Region. The campaign started in March 2019. (Lappalainen, 2019 & Sauna-lehti, 2019, pp. 52-53)

Pohjola (2018) a reporter of YLE news illustrates that especially young adults are eager 'saunners' in Japan. Sauna is marketed there as a

relaxation place for those who have stress because of work. The Japanese have discovered the point of the Finnish sauna, it is a place for calming down. Annually organized sauna events in Japan are extremely popular, tickets are sold out just in a few minutes.

Japanese sauna ambassador, Risa Tanaka, organized several sauna events to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Finland. There was even a theme day called Feel Finland. (Vaaraniemi 2019)

The Germans also appreciate sauna bathing. However, the sauna etiquette is stricter in Germany than in Finland. Only the 'saunamaister' from the personnel have a permit to throw the water ('löyly') to the stones. In a hot room, the ground rule is that bared naked skin must not touch anything, so there is no business in a German sauna without a towel. Still, the actual bathing happens naked as long as benches and the floor covered with a cloth or a towel. Women and men bathe at the same time. This explains the lack of teenager 'saunners' and some public saunas even have an age limit of 16 years. Silence in a sauna is more a rule than a custom. Despite the differences, the Finns and the Germans share the same goal with sauna bathing, the relaxation. Contrary to Finland, saunas are not available in every spa, swimming hall and hotel and therefore prices are costlier. (Saunologia, 2017)

According to Business Finland (n.d.e) a study 'A Market Review Based on the Visit Finland Visitor Surveys 2016–2018' points out that one of the top activities of German tourists in Finland is experiencing the Finnish sauna: Study says: "60% of all the German visitors are interested in the Finnish sauna and 41% have had sauna experience on their trip."

Germans were the second largest tourist group in 2017 after the Russians. The number of overnight stays was 622 900 and it means that the figure grew by 15 percent from the previous year. This can be explained by direct flights to Lapland from Germany. The interests of German tourists are on special accommodation, local food, cottage holidays and different organized activities. German tourists are demanding. Marketing, price lists and menus are expected to be in German, however, English is a suitable language during the customer service. (Business Finland, 2018c & Business Finland, n.d.h)

A campaign that was launched in 2019 called 'Slow down' is for German tourists where Finland is marketed from the perspective of nature and wellness tourism. In other words, strength being on pure and peaceful nature, culture, relaxation, enjoying good food, spending time on a cottage, sauna bathing and so on. The goal is to increase the accommodations of German tourists by 10 percent. (Visit Finland 2019 & Business Finland, n.d.f & Business Finland, 2019a)

The Finnish broadcasting company YLE arranged a national sauna day campaign that challenged people to take a sauna on the 27th of July 2019. The goal was to celebrate the Finnish sauna culture and get people to realize how out of the ordinary a national sauna culture and tradition truly is – in a positive way. With this campaign, YLE was able not only to market the Finnish sauna culture all around the world but also to advance the knowledge of potential public saunas that can be used by anyone. YLE gave companies, associations, and private individuals a chance to report their freely accessible saunas on the sauna day map. Over 1000 saunas were reported, and 203 037 individuals hit the sauna counter button on the website of YLE. (YLE, 2019a & YLE, 2019b)

A Finnish afternoon paper *Iltasanomat* (2019) reported that on the sauna day in Tampere, busses will not take any money from passengers that are wearing a bathrobe. This free ticket had just one requirement: discretion. People had to wear something under the robe, for example, a swimming suit to remain presentable. This kind of marketing brings visibility and it did create a relaxed image for the city of Tampere.

In their online poll, the Mint of Finland allowed people to influence on the images that were pressed into special euro coins. The vote revealed nine different national landscapes that are the most well-liked, two of them were eventually chosen to be put into the coins of 2018: the national park Koli and the Finnish sauna culture. The coin of the Finnish sauna culture has a beautiful image of cottage sauna by a lake. When a country is ready to memorialize something in their currency tells about the genuine significance of sauna culture and traditions to Finland and the Finnish people. (Iltalehti, 2018 & Mint of Finland, n.d.)

Rent a-Finn is a marketing campaign of Visit Finland that started in 2019 and it is about happiness. The study of the United Nations (UN) declared Finland as the happiest country in the world two times in a row, first in 2018 and then again in 2019. Visit Finland challenged the Finnish people to apply to become happiness guides. “The job” is about showing tourists why Finland is considered the happiest country. In other words, the Finns were challenged to show the home country to tourists so that they can experience the pure nature, peaceful life pace and so on. Brochure of Visit Finland describes what activities can be: “Experiences can be anything from visiting a national park to spending a weekend fishing at a real summer cottage, berry picking in the wilderness, enjoying a proper Finnish sauna – basically all the things that we Finns love to do in nature and what makes Finland the happiest country in the world.” (Visit Finland, n.d.b; Business Finland, 2019b & YLE, 2019c)

In the capital city of Finland, Helsinki, the Finnish sauna experience has been taken into the next level. Sauna is built in a cabin of a Ferris wheel. In other words, people can sauna bathe up in the air while enjoying the scenery of the city. Sky sauna is marketed for bachelor and bachelorette

parties and other get-to-togethers that are planned for 1-15 persons. (Sky Wheel Helsinki, n.d.)

Finnish sauna associations and societies organize annually a big number of different sauna events and get-togethers across the country. The events are on several website calendars. (Saunaseurat.fi, n.d.; Sauna from Finland, n.d.a; Central Finland Sauna Region of the World, n.d.b & Visit Tampere, n.d.c)

According to Sauna from Finland (2020c) the co-operation with different associations, companies and organizations in several countries on many projects and events has paid off. The Finnish sauna reached an international media audience of more than 500 million people in 2019.

#### 4 PRACTICAL RESEARCH ON SAUNA PRODUCTS

As mentioned before, this thesis compares the sauna culture productization between the Tavastia Region (Kanta-Häme) and the Tampere Region (Pirkanmaa).

Tavastia Region consist of 11 municipalities, three of them are cities: Hämeenlinna, Forssa and Riihimäki. The other ones are Hattula, Hausjärvi, Humppila, Janakkala, Jokionen, Loppi, Tammela and Ypäjä. The city of Hämeenlinna is the municipal center. The former municipalities such as Hauho, Lammi, Tuulos, Kalvola and Renko are part of Hämeenlinna. (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö, 2012, pp. 65-74).

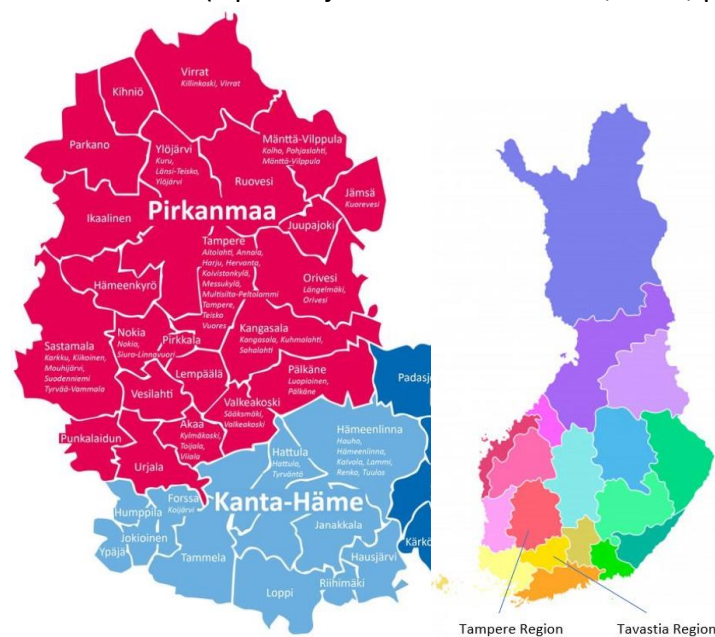


Figure 4. Tampere Region and Tavastia Region & Regions of Finland (MLL, n.d. & Freepik, n.d.).



The Tampere Region is formed from 22 municipalities, twelve of them are cities. The city of Tampere is the municipal center. (Pirkanmaa, n.d.).

This thesis had two research methods. A web-based mass survey, and benchmarking. As a case study, it relied more on the qualitative data, so the findings from the mass survey were limited to data that was considered relevant in this study. Another reason was to define outlines for the thesis so that the length remained in control. Benchmarking provided the rest information that was crucial to this study. However, the survey is in the end as an appendix (appendix 1).

#### 4.1 Data collection: Web-based mass survey

The mass survey was web-based and conducted with Webropol. It was used to map out sauna operators in the Tavastia Region that are interested in marketing co-operation and to receive a permit to put saunas on a sauna map in the website of Tavastia Region (visithame.fi) and to classify them by sauna types, by locations, public accessibility, accessibility with reservation and so on.

The survey was a result of collaboration by the fellow student, the author of this thesis and the HAMK Smart unit. The list of contact information was collected with the help of social media, the Internet and comparison between contacts of the Smart unit. The questions were compiled by the students. both considered relevant questions to own research.

To gain more visibility to the study the HAMK Smart unit put the survey link into a HAMK newsletter. Additionally, it was published in articles of two regionals, Hämeen Sanomat (news of Tavastia) and Forssan Lehti (Magazine of the city of Forssa). Both published electronic publishing and a printed one. (Hämeen Sanomat, 2019 and Forssan Lehti, 2019).

The content of the survey was reviewed by the HAMK Smart unit. After all the needed revision was done and an approval received, it was sent to 220 contacts via e-mail on the 30th of September 2019. The first reminder message was sent on the 7th of October and the third one on the 15th of October. The response time was from 30th September to 20th October 2019. In other words, the survey was open for almost three weeks. 28 replies came through open internet links and 72 through a link that was sent via e-mail. So, in total, the survey produced 100 responses.

The web-based mass survey provided both, quantitative and qualitative data. Although, this thesis relied more on the qualitative data, the purpose of the quantitative data was to increase the credibility of the study.

The survey was constructed in a way that it progressed in stages. Certain answers affected the number of questions asked and how the survey proceeded. Some of the questions were multiple-choice questions: the respondents were able to choose several options. Some had only two options: yes or no. And certain questions had an open text field where the answers were able to be written out. For privacy reasons, this report does not reveal the names or contact information of the respondents.

#### 4.1.1 Data analysis

The respondents were asked about the number of saunas. The quantity divided between 83 respondents in the following way:

- 40 respondents had only one sauna
- 25 respondents had two
- seven respondents had three
- five respondents had four
- one respondent had five
- five respondents replied that they have more than five saunas

Those five who had more than five saunas specified the total number in the open text field. Two respondents informed eight saunas, one said that there are six. One said that each rental space has one, this does not say how many in total, but it can be concluded that there are six saunas or more. One told that the whole area has altogether 19 saunas. Inferred from this the number of saunas in total must be over 180.

The next question concerned the locations of the saunas in the Tavastia Region. The picture (figure 6) below indicates the division by municipalities. Three replied that sauna or saunas locate somewhere else. These saunas did not locate in the Tavastia Region.

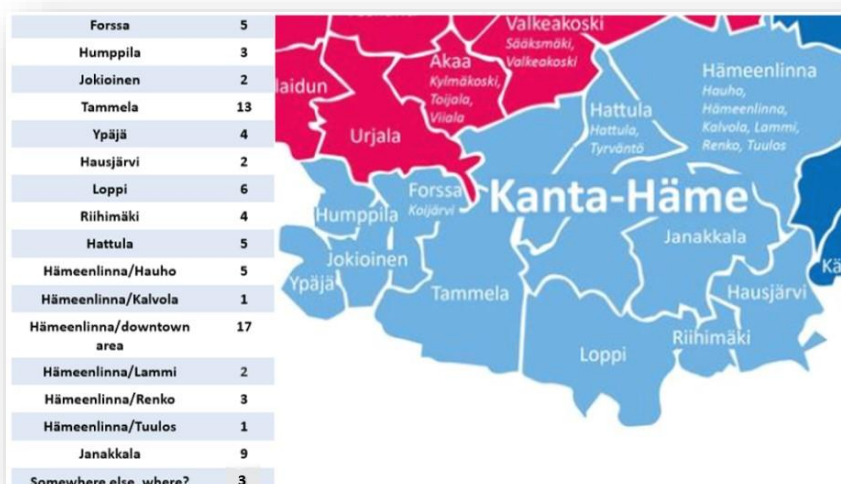


Figure 5. The municipalities of Tavastia Region (MLL, n.d.).

The picture below (figure 7) demonstrates what kind of saunas the respondents have. The largest group appeared to be electric saunas. Nine answered the type to be something else (but one answer was left blank):

- A tent sauna
- A lakeside sauna with a stove that is heated with wood and a possibility to use bath barrel
- A tractor sauna and a sauna bus
- A sauna with oil-fired stove
- A sauna that is heated with wood and possibility to heat it either continuously or at once, also locating by a small river
- A sauna that heats with pellets
- A ferry sauna
- Two saunas, both with own piers and boats

<b>Is it</b>	
Number of respondents: 83, number of selected responses: 153	
	<b>Number of answers</b>
<b>an electric sauna</b>	42
<b>a sauna with a stove that is continuously heated with wood during sauna bathing</b> (jatkuvalämmitteinen puusauna)	32
<b>a sauna with a stove that is heated ready at once with wood</b> (kertälämmitteinen puusauna)	13
<b>a smoke sauna</b>	8
<b>a lakeside sauna</b>	29
<b>a sauna near ice hole for winter swimming</b>	18
<b>an infrared sauna</b>	0
<b>a relax sauna</b>	0
<b>a steam sauna</b>	2
<b>something else, what?</b>	9

Figure 6. The types of the saunas.

It seems that the electric sauna is the most common one and the wood-heated comes as second. Many of the saunas locate near water and it is a strength for the area since swimming is strongly a sauna related activity. There are only eight smoke saunas, meaning that this type is rarer in the area. The heating of a smoke sauna can take easily eight hours to be ready so weekly sauna shifts require too much work, so the service providers can utilize smoke saunas by organizing sauna days now and then. A tractor sauna, a sauna bus, a sauna ferry and a tent sauna are specialties that with good productization and marketing can offer the visitors unique experiences, especially for foreign visitors. So, the existence of these rarities is profitable to be invested in with wide visibility as possible.

The survey asked about the ownership of the saunas. The answers of 83 respondents were distributed in the following way:

- A company: 36
- An association: 22
- A community: 3
- An individual: 8
- Something else, what or who: 14

Most of the saunas are owned by companies and the second largest group are associations. The survey did not have an option where a city, a town or the government was able to be marked as the owner. So, the open text field pointed out that seven is owned by cities, five by towns and one is under the ownership of the government. One answer said that the sauna is a rented space, but the comment did not reveal the type of the owner.

The picture below (figure 8) indicated that in the area of the Tavastia Region, most of the saunas are bookable. Only 12 of 137 responses referred to a publicly accessible sauna. Two of these are public swimming halls and the third one is a spa with public entry as well. One of the places offers accommodation and saunas are in the guests use, according to the website there was one event where sauna bathers were able to use the sauna with a single ticket. So, it seems, that a public sauna shift is only occasionally. One sauna actor offers also rental spaces that have saunas, and the event calendar has info about the weekly ice-swimming possibility with a single ticket. However, the info is outdated since it is from 2018. One association organizes open sauna shifts for a single ticket that is 5 euros and membership is not necessary and this information was easy to find with just one google search. One village has a calendar where village sauna shifts are marked to be on Wednesdays, the ticket is 3 euros. The service provider that has a camping area, has public sauna shifts three times a week, entry is free for those that stay overnight, and for other visitors' ticket is 5 euros. Another camping area has the same operating principle but different prices.

Five answered having a sauna shift where visitors are welcome. One is answered that an ice-swimming association has open sauna shifts that are accessible with a single ticket, but this information was not available on the website. This place has also a swimming hall for single visitors. Another service provider had plenty of information about sauna bathing on the website, but there was no information about public shifts. One offers rental space, but in the wintertime village association and the municipal organize together possibility for ice-swimming, but there was no additional information about the times. One of the respondents actually has a public sauna shift. It seems that public sauna bathing is quite nonexistent in the area and those that have sauna activity, the

marketing is insufficient. 17 of 100 respondents informed that there is no sauna at all.

Do you have a sauna	
Number of respondents: 100, number of selected responses: 137	
	Number of answers
that is freely available with an entrance fee?	12
that can be only booked to use?	46
that is always accessible during accomodation or renting other spaces?	27
that is booked separately during accomodation or renting other spaces?	22
just a sauna shift in sauna owned by someone else, where you bring also visitors?	5
just a sauna shift in sauna owned by someone else, where you do NOT bring visitors?	1
that is not open for outsiders?	7
I don't	17

Figure 7. The usability of the saunas.

The respondents were asked about what kind of people the sauna visitors are. The number of respondents was 74 with 140 selected responses:

- local visitors: 49
- domestic visitors: 56
- foreign visitors, from what countries: 35

11 said that the visitors come from several different countries, three mentioned that all around Europe, one said that from Asia. One listed countries such as Russia, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Kanada, Australia, Austria, and France. One mentioned Spain and the other one USA. In other words, visitors come all around the world. This points out, that there are also foreign visitors, but the number will be higher with productization, including adding language options to the websites and compiling the information to Visit Häme webpage so it is easier to find.

The survey mapped also the sizes of the groups. 75 responders marked 115 answers altogether. There were more groups since the number of markings was 67. Separate visitors were answered 48 times.

Also, the availability of the saunas around the year was figured out. The picture below (figure 9) points out that most of the saunas are usable year-round. This means that the service providers that have sauna by a lake can invest in ice-swimmers with sauna shifts. The information of the shifts must be easier to find, this is something that can be changed with the sauna map that will come to the website of Visit Häme. The map will come with a challenge: the information must be kept updated. The importance of informing changes to the website administrator must be

emphasized to the sauna actors. Credibility is easy to lose if the information is not accurate.

Is the sauna available	
Number of respondents: 75	
	Number of answers
in the summertime?	9
in the wintertime?	1
year-round?	50
variably? Please, specify.	15

Figure 8. Year-round availability of the saunas.

However, 15 responded that saunas are in use variably and the comments revealed matters such as:

- a tent sauna cannot be heated when there is more than five degrees below zero
- more than 10 degrees below zero is the limitation
- autumn, spring and summer
- year-around according to the reservations
- the smoke sauna is heated in the summer and the other one year-around
- the society has sauna shifts on Fridays and every other Tuesday
- sauna is heated every day in the summer, in the winter on weekends and the Wednesdays if required
- sauna is heated on a snowless season, approximately between May and October
- the lakeside sauna is heated only in the summer, but electric sauna year-around

The surveyors wanted to know that does the service provider heat the sauna from behalf of the visitors. 22 of 65 interviewees indicated that visitors heat the sauna by themselves and 43 replied that the sauna is heated for the visitors. Especially for foreign visitors, it is a good service to heat the sauna ready. Considering this from the perspective of productization, the heating process can be an experience for a foreigner and taken as part of the service. The service provider can teach the visitor and at the same time tell about the heating process.

One of the most important question for this thesis concerned the contents of the sauna products. This reveals what kind of additional services are offered to the customers and what are the possibilities from the perspective of productization. For example, 25 did not have any other services than the actual sauna bathing and 28 offered sauna bathing with a towel. So, it seems that the level of sauna productization is quite nonexistent. The challenge is to get the sauna actors to add additional

services to increase the attractiveness of the sauna experience. Only three offered sauna bathers a whisk, this minor gesture is easy to add in the service package of other sauna actors.

The contents of the sauna products are presented on the image (figure 10)

<b>What the sauna as a product include?</b>	
Number of respondents: 75, number of selected responses: 251	
	<b>Number of answers</b>
Only sauna bathing	25
Sauna bathing with a towel	28
Sauna bathing with a whisk	3
Sauna bathing with sauna stories	6
Sauna bathing and a possibility of swimming	47
Sauna bathing and the use of a bath barrel	16
A possibiity to cool off on the terrace during sauna bathing	50
Sauna bathing and a possibility to barbequeing	38
Sauna bathing + treatments, what kind of?	5
Sauna bathing + program services, what kind of?	12
Something else, what?	21

Figure 9. The contents of the sauna products.

The something else text field included three sections for the open comments of the respondents.

Sauna bathing and additional services such as:

- the use of a jacuzzi
- fragrant oil
- swimming in the ice hole
- an accommodation
- food services
- possibility to rent spaces such as a kitchen, a restaurant and a dining hall
- the use of an exercise area and a conference room
- possibility to rent a bath barrel
- possibility to order food at the sauna
- the use of a swimming pool
- facilities for young people in space that has games and a small kitchen
- the sauna space has well-equipped kitchen

- a room with a fireplace and services of the restaurant

#### Sauna bathing and program services:

- a Viking competition
- an opportunity to experience a ride in a rally car
- music shows
- a trip on a handcar and a guided tour in a railway museum
- a course that teaches you how to make chocolate candy
- activities on a team track
- tailored program services according to customer's needs or ready ones from the service providers list
- the sauna Olympics
- a wellness coaching
- guided nature exercise services

#### Sauna bathing and treatments:

- foot massages
- massages
- wellness services according to the needs of a customer
- physiotherapy
- relaxation treatments (for example with sound bowls)
- a peat sauna
- sauna yoga
- cupping

The open text field comments reveal that there are good additional services that can be adjusted with the productization and increasing the visibility of the services with marketing. The services must be studied, and the service providers instructed how to make the service package more attractive with story design to enhance the experience factor for the customer.

The survey mapped out websites and social media channels of the sauna owners. 18 answered that the sauna has a website and 45 replied that the owner of the sauna has a website. Four pointed out that there are only social media channels such as Facebook. Altogether 63 websites and social media channels were reported by the respondents. Seven answered that there is no website at all.

The picture (figure 11) helps to demonstrate where sauna operators market the saunas.



### Do you advertise the sauna

Number of respondents: 72, number of selected responses: 116

	Number of answers
on a municipal website	13
on Facebook	38
on Instagram	15
on Twitter	0
on the radio	0
Not anywhere at the moment	21
in newspapers, where?	7
in magazines, where?	0
in somewhere else, where?	22

Figure 10. The marketing channels

The survey mapped out also languages used on websites and social media. 67 said that website is in Finnish, English came as second with 29 replies. Only two sites were in German and none was in Japanese. According to the open text field, nine was in some other language. Five pages were in Russian and one of them only as partly Russian. Two were in Swedish, and one in Spanish. One was partly in English. The service providers must be encouraged to add language options, it is ideal that each page will be at least in English, to advance the number of foreign visitors.

The meaning was to receive permission to use the contact information of the saunas in the marketing of the Tavastia Region, 66 respondents allowed the use and 8 did not give permission.

Also, the interest in marketing co-operation was charted, 47 interviewees were interested in marketing co-operation concerning saunas, 30 was not.

The survey asked about the plans to develop the saunas and marketing, 29 had been planning development and 42 responded that they have not considered it. Those who answered yes were asked to write a comment about the methods for development. The answers included the following answers:

- additional marketing
- aiming the marketing also for non-golfers
- co-operation with other companies, a Facebook store and a webstore
- Google marketing
- Increasing the visibility of the services for the municipality residents
- rebuilding the website

- marketing with flyers
- increasing and targeting the marketing of the ice hole sauna since it has been popular
- constant marketing development
- an internet add, but it is still too costly from the perspective of the marketing budget
- adding language options to the website for example English and German
- marketing is under development
- the sauna shifts are constantly marketed on the Facebook
- off-season marketing on Facebook, website and via email
- a customer letter, homepage and Facebook
- sauna marketing is conducted as part of hotels marketing
- contemplating marketing co-operation with an airline
- adopting various theme days and activities in addition to space rental
- the development of graphic design and video marketing and possibly with different events at the marketplace
- The aim is to increase the use of the rental space and the sauna for outsiders and developing tourism packages
- A package for tourist groups is being prepared that includes guided tours to the village and in nature nearby

Many of the sauna actors have good ideas on marketing and development. There is clearly an interest to improve operations and help can be offered by involving the sauna actors to tourism development projects of the HAMK Smart with other entities in the area.

Seven of the respondents had a sauna but it was not open for outsiders and one answered that there is a sauna shift in a sauna owned by someone else, but not for visitors.

These eight answered a question concerning the possibility of renting the sauna in the future. Half of the interviewees said yes, and all indicated that the target group would be local visitors. When asked about the group size, three would rent the sauna for groups and one for both, groups and separate visitors. All four stated that the sauna would be used only during the summer times.

The respondents were given an option to receive the sauna instructions as a gift, as a sort of reward for answering the survey. 66 respondents wanted and 31 did not. The instructions were sent via e-mail in January 2020. The sauna instructions are at the end of this thesis as an appendix (appendix 2).

In total, the respondents left 76 contact details for receiving sauna instructions and for the marketing co-operation. This is important

information for the HAMK Smart concerning the development of tourism services in the area.

#### 4.2 Data collection: benchmarking

According to Tuulaniemi (2011, p. 60) benchmarking means performing a comparison between own and other organizations' operations. This kind of assessment is a good tool to enhance own operations by allocating weaknesses, gaining good advice on how to solve them and any way to get new ideas on how to develop own activities. Companies can compare processes of each other, or one company can assess own activities internally between different departments, but usually less successful or smaller operator aims to procure pieces of advice from a more successful competitor. Benchmarking can be executed for example by company visits, exploring books, articles or websites.

Although the method of benchmarking was originally developed for a comparison between companies, it is a powerful tool for other purposes as well, for example in this thesis as a research method.

Leckling (2002, p. 182) states that there are two ways to do benchmarking. Comparing the results and the performance levels or comparing the content of processes and work phases. A profound analysis is conducted with both.

##### 4.2.1 Data analysis: productization of saunas in Finland

The Finnish sauna is an asset. It has been realized to be a unique and part of the Finnish folklore that requires productization. The spaces already exist but, services are not often included, or the content has not been productized enough. Sauna has not usually considered as the core service where additional services are bundled around. The additional services can be for example a peat treatment, cupping, a massage, whisking, sauna yoga, sauna therapy, local Finnish food or something totally new. (Ruokoski, 2017)

People around the world consider sauna Finnish and three out of four foreign tourists want to experience the Finnish sauna on a vacation in Finland. Sauna is a year-around experience, no matter what the season is. That is a leverage for the Finnish tourism industry since it is not dependent on the weather. (LeviNyt, 2017)

According to Carita Harju, the executive manager of Sauna from Finland, there is a lot of content that can be added to the sauna package. The experience starts before arriving at the sauna spaces and often continues after sauna bathing as well. People make the purchase decision based on

the images and what the experience is expected to be, for this reason, it is important to describe the service well on the website and in other marketing materials. The service provider can achieve a memorable experience by considering it from the perspective of a visitor. Paying attention to the cleanliness, interior décor for example candles, lanterns, bench covers, sauna aromas such as birch tree scented one. Using Finnish items and design in the spaces support the authenticity and also providing visitors shower and beauty products that are made from pure Finnish ingredients give a nice additional touch to the experience. The foreign visitors might require more guidance than the domestic ones do, being an important matter to take into consideration. Equipping the spaces with printed sauna instructions is a part of the solution. (LeviNyt, 2017)

Sauna from Finland (2019b) states that the association has launched an Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience Sauna Gift Boxes. These boxes are for consumers, companies and hotels. So, the boxes are available for anyone to purchase from the net store of the co-operating partner Veico. The boxes have several purposes as business gifts or as gifts for people that sauna bathes often or companies can use them to enhance the sauna experience for the customers. Example hotels can contact Veico and order a tailored package for customers as a gift. (Sauna from Finland, 2019b & Veico, n.d.a)

The products are Finnish and packed ecologically into a wooden box. The website offers three different boxes that include specific products: The Relax Sauna Gift Box includes as seat covers, a wooden coaster for a glass or a mug, a blueberry shampoo made from the natural ingredients, leaf sachets to be soaked in the water bucket to create a scent of birch into the hot room when throwing water into the stove. (Sauna from Finland, 2019b & Veico, n.d.a)

A Recover Sauna Gift box has a Guasha tool that is made of genuine Finnish soapstone to release muscle tensions, improve metabolism and remove impurities from the body. This box has also a sauna hat, a bar of shampoo made from the natural ingredients such as clay and a birch scented sauna-aroma for the water thrown to the stove. The Enjoy Your Sauna Gift Box has a sauna elf, a seat cover, a sauna hat, a body scrub made from salt, a wooden interior luminaire with text sauna and a thermometer shaped as the head of a reindeer. The sauna product category has also separate items such as thermometers, coasters and sauna instructions with pictures. (Veico, n.d.b; Veico n.d.c & Veico n.d.d)

Unfortunately, often the sauna itself is the only service and maybe a towel is included in the price. All these products are good examples of how the service providers can add tangible items to boost the sauna experience for the visitors and even sell products as souvenirs.

In Finland, several retailers sell sauna merchandise in net stores and brick-and-mortar shops as well. A good example is saunalahja.fi that has both. This company specializes in sauna products. The category is quite wide: sauna textiles, aromas, thermometers, treatment products, shower products, dried whisks, buckets and ladles, dried whisks, ceramic items working as mosquito repellents. And the idea on a ceramic boat is that it is hanged with a chain above the stove to prepare sauna sausages. A ceramic owl figure is also hanged above the stove, but the purpose is to fill it with water and sauna fragrance. It will release not only moisture to space but also good scent. Like many others, the company sells dried whisks, but there is also a plastic one called Relax. It is more durable, easier to keep clean and it will not drop leaves around the hot room as the traditional one does. (Saunalahja.fi, n.d.a & n.d.b)

Sauna Inter is another retailer in the industry. It has over 5000 sauna and spa products that the company ships all around the world. There is a product called 'löylyn henki', it means the spirit of the 'löyly'. As mentioned before, 'löyly', is the vapor that is created after throwing water to the stones of the stove. The 'löyly' is the essence of sauna enjoyment. This product is also made from stone, having storage for the water and the fragrances. It is meant to be put over the stove among the sauna stones. The heat will release moisture and good aromas. (Sauna Inter, n.d.)

Even though many kinds of products are available, the best outcome is achieved when the sauna experience is a combination of tangible products and additional services.

Teemu Moilanen, a service design expert from the University of Haaga-Helia, gave an interview that was in the sauna magazine of the Finnish Sauna Society. Moilanen emphasizes the importance of service design at any trade including the sauna industry. It is essential not only to figure out the needs of the sauna visitors but also the needs of the parties concerned in the process. From the service providers, this requires knowledge of what sauna visitors appreciate and need from the service and what kind of elements are wanted in the sauna spaces. To contemplate how to differentiate from the competitors by developing the service offering and to come up with new ideas based on the needs of the customers. (Sauna-lehti, 2019, pp.32-35 & Harju, 2016b)

As mentioned before in 3.4.3, Sauna from Finland has an Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience – quality certificate that companies providing sauna services can apply. The certificate will be granted for those applicants that succeed to fulfill the following criteria: authenticity, multisensory, presence, relaxation, cleanliness, and wellbeing. The certificate is valid for two years at the time and it helps the companies to market sauna services for example on websites to achieve a more credible image as a sauna service provider. (Sauna from Finland, n.d.b)

In March 2020 Sauna from Finland published a guidebook that is about achieving an authentic Finnish sauna experience. It is called 'Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience Quality Handbook'. It works as a tool for sauna actors to get ideas in productization, service design and development. It includes information about the products and services of companies in the industry and instructions about safety and sanitation. There are also the quality criteria of the Authentic Finnish sauna experience certificate. The criteria can be benchmarked to own operations. The guidebook is available from the net store of Veico. (Sauna from Finland, 2020a; n.d.c & Veico, n.d.a).

Story design is an effective tool in the productization of sauna services. It can be adapted in several different purposes and stories can be either true, invented or something between. Stories can be about anything: the history of the sauna and its surroundings, folklore, traditions, customs such as the bridal sauna, the midsummer spells and so on. All these can be used to differentiate from the competitors. Stories can be added to the website and other marketing materials. Social media is a powerful tool to spread stories and pictures. The company and customers can make posts about sauna experiences for example in Instagram where pictures and hashtags enable wide and global visibility. The service itself can include stories that are told to the customers during the service experience. There can be for example a sauna guide that tells about the Finnish sauna culture and traditions and gives instructions also on sauna bathing. The program service can be for example a course where the customers are taught to bind sauna whisks, prepare sauna sausages, take part in the barbecue after sauna bathing or just relaxing in a Finnish unhurried and peaceful style. The service module can be a mixture of many separate services, based on the imagination and creativity but not forgetting about the feasibility.

There is a concept about slow experiences and saunas are strongly part of it. The name is SLOW - Wellbeing from the Finnish nature. The authentic sauna experience includes all the following traditional elements: water, wood, live fire and people with stories. (Slow Finland, n.d.)

Business Finland offers tourism actors an electronic learning material for internationalization. It can be ordered to e-mail from the website of Business Finland. It has information about products, pricing, distribution channels, marketing communications and so on. (Business Finland, n.d.i & n.d.j)

#### 4.2.2 Data analysis: productization of saunas in the Tampere Region

As mentioned before, the city of Tampere was declared as the sauna capital of the world in May 2018. This title was approved by the

International sauna association and the Sauna Society. This is not surprising because the area has more public saunas than the other regions and with high quality. (Koskinen, 2018)

The visibility on the sauna topic has been widespread on the Internet and social media so the marketing of saunas has been efficient. The state of sauna productization in the area is on a good level and clearly, there has been a lot of co-operation between the city of Tampere, different companies, associations and organizations such as Visit Finland and Sauna from Finland. In the Tampere Region, the Finnish sauna is not a side product, the potential has been utilized well and saunas have been made 'the product' and additional services have been built around it.

The website, Visit Tampere, has plenty of offering what comes to tourism and wellness tourism. In the activities section, there is its spot for program services that are about sauna as an experience and information about the service providers can be seen there as well. The site has also own place for saunas, where public ones are listed with informative descriptions and a map to illustrate the locations. The site separates saunas based on the location: public saunas in the area of the city of Tampere and saunas nearby in the Tampere Region. The amounts are twelve and 23. The info about saunas can be read in seven different languages: Finnish, English, Swedish, Japanese, German, French and Estonian. Multiple language options advance tourism and knowledge of the sauna services in the area since for example, the German tourists are precise about that information is available in German. The Japanese are also one growing segment, and when the information is available in Japanese, that is highly appreciated and important due to recent and on-going sauna projects and campaigns of Visit Finland.

As mentioned before in 3.4.3. Visit Finland appointed 100 Japanese people as Sauna ambassadors. These ambassadors spread the sauna enthusiasm and knowledge around Japan and attract visitors to Finland on the name of the sauna. The saunas picked in this campaign locate in the city of Kuusamo, the metropolitan area and the Tampere Region. This will increase the number of Japanese tourists traveling to Finland to seek the authentic Finnish sauna experience. (Sauna-lehti, 2019, pp. 52-53)

Given the above, the Tampere Region has been an active co-operator with associations such as the Sauna from Finland and the sauna services providers have been working hard on the productization of saunas and fulfilling the criteria to receive the quality certificate called the Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience. So far, it has been granted for two sauna actors in the area.

Sauna from Finland has a sauna auditor who inspects that certain features are fulfilled. To repeat, the following criteria are required to be completed: authenticity, multisensory, presence, relaxation, cleanliness,

and wellbeing. This means that the sauna providers have been concentrating on the sauna productization to produce high-quality experiences for the customers and consider every detail from the customer's perspective to get there.

In 2016 the quality certificate was granted to Original Sokos Hotel Ilves that locates in the Tampere city center. This was the first time when it was given to a hotel in the whole world. The hotel and Sauna from Finland conducted together a customer survey to find out what people appreciate in a good sauna experience. Based on answers of 2000 respondents, cleanliness, safety and good additional services were the most important features. This is how the quality criteria was developed. The personnel of the Ilves hotel is specially trained in cleaning including equipping the spaces with basic washing products. Instructions that guide foreign visitors were put to display in the spaces as well. It was made also sure that fresh flavored water is constantly accessible for the sauna bathers.

Sauna from Finland (2020b) states that the Lapland Hotels chain has received the Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience quality certificate twice. First, it was given to a Hotel in Helsinki in May 2019 and for the second time in February 2020 to a hotel in Tampere. As the name of the hotel chain indicates the experience for the customers is emphasized with carefully designed Lapland theme. This northern theme alone guarantees a unique experience in the Southern Finland, yet the experience is boosted with a possibility of yoga in an infrared sauna where the temperature is lower than in traditional ones. The sauna spaces have also an impressive city scenery since the sauna spaces locate on the top floor of the building.

Tampere Region has so many public saunas that there is something for everybody. Many of the saunas are also possible to be rented on other times when there is no public shift. Visit Tampere website provides a short introduction of each public sauna that includes the specialties, opening hours, contact details, links to websites and social media accounts. This increases the awareness of the destinations. Compiling saunas into one place makes it very easy for visitors to find. Here is information on some of the saunas that locate in the Tampere city area. (Visit Tampere, 2020b)

Rajaportti Sauna was built in 1906 making it the oldest public sauna in locating in Pispala approximately two and a half kilometers from the Tampere city center. This iconic sauna has been kept as time-honored as possible. Today the premises have also a cafeteria and massage services. The stones of the stove weigh over a thousand kilos, the same stove heats two hot rooms, one for men and one for women. It takes five to six hours to heat, correspondingly saunas remain hot for the whole day. (Rajaportti Sauna, n.d.)



Rauhaniemi public sauna is also about two kilometers from the city center. The building has been also preserved as original as possible; it was built in 1929. It is on a beach, having two saunas, a spa and a summer café. Ice-hole swimming is possible in the wintertime. Kaupinoja sauna also offers possibilities for ice-hole swimming, the spaces were renovated thoroughly in 2010. The sauna spaces of both destinations are possible to rent for private use outside the opening hours. (Rauhanniemen kansankylpylä, n.d. & Tampereen talviuimarit, n.d.)

Sauna in Viikinsaari is a lakeside sauna on an island, the specialty is boat rides. The boat collects the bathers from the dock of Tampere city center with the price of a ticket, the journey to the island takes 20 minutes. The summer theater organizes shows and plays on the island. There is also a service package that includes boat trips, sauna bathing and tickets to a stand-up show. (Viikinsaari, n.d. & Viikinsaaren kesäteatteri, n.d.)

Saunaravintola Kuuma (Sauna Restaurant Hot) describes the services in the following way: "Our company has developed a concept, which combines the Finnish sauna culture with the Nordic gastronomy and atmosphere, that we call a relaxation experience for all senses. We bring together people who appreciate the pleasure of enjoying high-quality food, a sauna and excellent service in amazing premises at the Laukontori square, right in the city center, not many steps from the main street." (Saunaravintola Kuuma, n.d.)

Although the sauna restaurant Kuuma locates in the city center, there is still an opportunity for swimming. There two saunas, one traditional one with a stove that heats with wood, and the other one is a modern smoke sauna. It is unusual to experience smoke sauna in the city center. This is a huge asset for the company and a unique enjoyment for the customers. Cooling off between the sauna session is possible in two terraces that are on two floors. (Saunaravintola Kuuma, n.d.)

Hiedanranta communal sauna is quite eccentric. It locates in a factory area, so there is no lake near. The dressing rooms are built inside freight containers. Sauna bathers are not charged with any entry fees. There is a stage that is freely usable for events, however, the events must be free of charge, without age limits and open for everyone. There is a culture coordinator that is responsible for the reservations and operations concerning the events. (Visit Tampere, 2020c)

Niihaman maja (Hut of Niihama) has a sauna by the lake that heats with wood. Niihama offers public saunas for joggers every Tuesday and Thursday. On the other times, it is heated for a reservation. The place is equipped with outdoor games such as darts, frisbee golf, table tennis and an outdoor gym. These are meant for the free use of the visitors; outdoor games are quite traditional entertainment in Finland. In the wintertime,

the service providers rent snowshoes, sleds and coasters. The lake ice is plowed free from snow so that the customers can ice skate and play hockey. An ice-hole is available for swimming as well. There is also a ski track nearby. The place has also three campfire areas around beautiful nature and 2,7 kilometers long nature trail. The entrepreneurs sell food and arrange program services for example companies that want to organize meetings and wellbeing activities for employees. There are also packages arranged for bachelor and bachelorette parties. The area has a lot to offer and clearly the service provider has invested in the services and productization. According to the entrepreneurs, for the customers, the hut of Niihama is a summer cottage just nearby the city. Unfortunately, the website is only in Finnish since this would be a very Finnish experience for foreigners, but luckily some information about the place is on the page of Visit Tampere. (Niihaman maja, n.d. & Visit Tampere, 2020c)

Nekala community sauna is in an allotment garden just a few kilometers from the Tampere city center. Sauna is heated for public use in the summers. A sauna bar sells beverages, grilled sausages and pancakes. (Nekalan Siirtolapuutarhayhdistys Ry, n.d.)

Tohloppi barrel sauna has a different shape than most of the saunas. There are no showers available in this one in Tohloppi, however, it is meant that people go ice-swimming straightly from the hot room. This barrel sauna is movable, and it is in use only during the wintertime. (Tohlopin Uimaseura ry, n.d.)

Several other public saunas locate outside the Tampere city, most of the destinations locate near a lake and offer a possibility for ice-swimming. And these are only the public saunas. There are also dozens of other saunas that can be reserved for private use. Visit Tampere website lists also service providers and the program services that are available in the area.

Finrelax© the growth-promoting program of Visit Finland chose 25 wellness products and the project called Culture Finland selected 20 new Finnish culture top products from all around Finland. More than 200 companies participated in this competition, seven awarded top products are in the Tampere Region, and four of these have sauna related services and products. (Business Tampere, 2017)

Adventure Monkeys is a program service company that provides local and sustainable wellness tourism services. It has a service that was rewarded with the Finrelax© label, a guided sauna and a swimming tour in Tampere. The guide meets customers in the Tampere city center, the journey starts with familiarizing to public transportation. Sauna bathing happens on a public sauna, and the equipment such as entrance fees to the sauna, the bus tickets, towels, swimming shoes, sauna hats, water

bottles and the actual sauna experience led by professional sauna guide are all part of the service. The guide tells also stories about the Finnish sauna culture. The tour is well productized, guidance is provided from the very beginning to the end and the touch is very customer oriented. The tour is perfect especially for those that do not have experienced the authentic Finnish sauna. In the wintertime the swimming happens in an ice-hole, adding own spice to the experience. (Adventure Monkeys, n.d. & Business Tampere, 2017)

According to Rapukartano (n.d.) the service offering consists of renting the spaces for conferences and parties including catering, accommodation, food services that focuses on using local ingredients, plenty of different guided activities, saunas and a sauna safari. The buildings are beautiful log houses, Rapukartano was given an honorable mention in the Finrelax© competition for advancing Finnish tourism, wellness tourism included.

There are four atmospheric saunas:

- a suite sauna with a jacuzzi usable during accommodation
- a separately bookable electric sauna styled with dark décor
- an idyllic pine snag sauna near a lake with a possibility to ice-hole swimming and separately bookable outdoor jacuzzi
- and a smoke sauna with dark and smoky atmosphere locating by the lake offering also a spot for barbequing

The sauna safari is an activity that is offered to groups from the reservation. The personnel heat the saunas ready and make other preparations, for example, equipping sauna spaces with washing products, seat covers and refreshments. The saunas used are the smoke sauna and the pine snag sauna next to the lake. The outdoor jacuzzi, campfire area and terraces are in use as well. The safari is considered so that the customers do not have to do anything else than concentrate on enjoying the sauna experience. (Rapukartano, n.d.)

Luomajärven hevostievari is a Horse Inn that provides several different sauna services. The Inn was another one that received the honorable mention title. Sauna hopping offers a ride in a horse carriage between two saunas. Saunas are a malt sauna with a herb bath in a bath barrel and a forest sauna with a bath barrel and an outdoor showering. The services customers can choose are sauna menus with local food, different treatments, special hand-made whisks, pampering product baskets, guided nature trips to spice up the sauna experience, sauna rituals including relaxation for the mind and treatments with products and with whisking. (Luomajärven hevostievari, n.d. & Business Tampere, 2017)

Frantsila is herb farm that produces organic products that were also given the Finrelax© label. The company has multiple products made from natural ingredients. For sauna bathers especially a face and body mask

made from peat provide a good additional experience to detox the impurities from the body. (Frantsila, n.d. & Business Tampere, 2017)

Visit Tampere website lists also few other experiences and program services from several program service providers. Sauna related services are listed under heading 'experiences'. The services are all strongly close to the nature experiences, tailored trips to the forest, sauna experiences in the wild, relaxations, sauna yoga and a possibility to book sauna guides. The labels such as the 'Authentic Finrelax© Experience' and the 'Official Partner of Visit Tampere' put to the websites help to indicate that the services are worthwhile to participate and that the service providers are skilled and reliable. (Visit Tampere, 2020a & Business Tampere, 2017)

In the Tampere Region, it is possible to study to become a sauna therapist. The trainers of the company called Saunaterapia® offer a wide range of different treatments in the training program: chocolate, peat, salt, ash, nettle and earth sauna treatments, bridal saunas, pampering treatments, purification saunas, water treatments, washing and washing massages, therapeutic whisking, cupping, full body and partial treatments with bandages and compresses, bamboo stick massages and treatments, hygiene training and so on. (Saunaterapia®, n.d.)

Exploring possibilities what kind of services can be added to the category to support the sauna experience is part of the productization process; all the before-mentioned treatments can conclude to new ideas and innovations. As it is, benchmarking the offering of the competitive companies in the industry helps to reflect possible shortages in own operations.

#### 4.2.3 Data analysis: productization of saunas in the Tavastia Region

In the Tavastia Region, there is one destination that has received the quality certificate from Sauna from Finland. Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna received the title in autumn 2019. The hotel has three saunas, two are in the hotel suites. The third one is a private sauna that is called tower sauna since the spaces are on the top floor. The interior décor is luxurious, the spaces include a sauna cabinet and the sceneries of beautiful lake Vanaja can be viewed from the window of the sauna during sauna bathing. According to the hotel manager, the hotel has invested in the well-being and an overall sauna experience because the sauna is a big part of the hotel experience. This was confirmed by Sauna from Finland in the sauna audit. The hotel locates less than two kilometers away from the city center of Hämeenlinna.

Unfortunately, Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna did not reply in the Tavastia Region sauna survey. The responses could have been informative and educational from the perspective of the sauna productization.

The website [saunat.co](http://saunat.co) is a website that lists public saunas around Finland. The site has listed 22 public saunas from the Tampere Region, but there are no saunas at all that locate in the Tavastia Region. (Saunat.co, n.d.b & n.d.a)

[Saunaonline.fi](http://Saunaonline.fi) is a website that lists saunas all around Finland. There are only three saunas that locate in Tavastia Region, while there are 27 saunas from Tampere Region. These are rentable saunas. One is in Hotel Emilia that locates in the center of Hämeenlinna city and has good spaces for conferences and other get-togethers. The hotel delivers food and drinks to space as additional services. The second one is MJK Sauna, space locates in municipal called Janakkala, approximately 13 kilometers from Hämeenlinna city center. The spaces have a modern outfit, there is a kitchen, a bar, couches and a separately bookable bath barrel. The third one is the sauna village of Willa Pintele, and the distance between the city center is about 35 kilometers. The Willa locates by the lake and there is a smoke sauna, a granary sauna and a bath barrel. Positive is that Willa Pintele has a website where one section is named experiences, offering instructed outdoor games, theme activities, theme dinners, yoga, Pilates, murder mystery parlor games, nature exercises and so on. Unfortunately, the page is only in Finnish, but the state of the productization of additional services is on a good level. (Saunaonline, n.d.c & Willa Pintele, n.d.)

Swimming halls and spas are reliable choices when seeking a public sauna for example spa hotel Scandic Aulanko is just a few kilometers away from the Hämeenlinna city center. Ahvenisto activity park in Hämeenlinna, near the city center, has a weekly public sauna shift that was taken into use in autumn 2018. At other times the sauna can be rented and paid through an electronic booking system. The door will open automatically since it has a remote lock. (Ahveniston toimintapuisto, n.d. & Hämeenlinnan kaupunkiutiset, 2018)

There are some public sauna shifts in the Tavastia Region, but the information is hard to find, or it does not exist due to lack of marketing. In other words, the sauna spaces are mainly rentable in the area. There is nothing wrong with the bookable saunas, but it limits the utilization rate and the spaces remain unused until someone makes a reservation. Renting is costlier than paying an entrance fee to a public sauna and that increases the hesitancy to book the spaces. It narrows it down to companies with meetings and sauna bathing is the side product or to individuals that have some uncommon special occasions such as birthday parties or bachelor parties. Public sauna shifts do not make people plan and make commitments like bookable saunas do. Public saunas can be attended spontaneously. And spaces do not have to be either bookable or public, saunas can be used for both purposes.

Still, today saunas appear to be an additional service, when it should be the actual service supplemented with extra services to emphasize it as an experience. The Tavastia Region has many potential destinations surrounded by beautiful nature, and many are by the lake. This is an attraction, although people have own saunas, not many have a sauna with a swimming possibility. The area is lacking public sauna shifts, especially ice-hole swimmers are one active group that has been waiting for open sauna shifts. The area has more traditional saunas than smoke saunas, a well-marketed sauna day with public entry to a rare smoke sauna will raise the interest especially when bundled with additional services into a service package with a solid price. A good example of productization is a sauna experience as the core service accompanied by a bus ride, activities such as sauna Olympics, live music, plays or stand-up comedy. The restaurant services will be available as well but not be included in the service package price. Productization defines clearly the package (and the prices) so that there is no doubt about the content.

Currently, the Visit Häme website lists 12 destinations that offer sauna services. The previously mentioned Ahvenisto is the only one with a public sauna shift (at least the only one with information that is quite easy to find). Also previously mentioned Hotel Emilia and Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna are on the page as well. (Visit Häme, n.d.)

Jalo-lautta is a rentable sauna boat that offers a unique possibility to sauna bathing and swimming while floating on the lake. It is possible to rent SUP boards including an introduction to paddling, also SUP safaris and trekking trips to surrounding forests are organized. Jalo-lautta offers a possibility to organize meetings on the boat, to have an unusual meeting experience. (Visit Häme, n.d.)

Myllytalo offers sauna experience in a spa that has been built in a barn, visitors are welcomed to stay over in a luxurious room that is renovated into an old cowshed. This idyll locates only 3,5 kilometers from the railway station of Hämeenlinna city. Hevossilta is a farm museum locating in the area of the city of Forssa. It is open for a reservation, offering local food, historic and rustic experience to the visitors. There are over 100-year-old traditional and smoke saunas. (Visit Häme, n.d.)

So, the area has potential destinations that must be marketed more. However, in the future, the Visit Häme website will change, as previously mentioned project called Western Lakeland includes renewal for the website. Compiling all saunas in a separate section with a map accompanied with information on the same style as in the Visit Tampere page will bring new visibility to the saunas in the Tavastia Region. Already this helps to increase the competitive strength concerning saunas. Positive is that the page is already in five languages: Finnish, English, Russian, German and Japanese.

### 4.3 Summary of the practical research

Without the survey, it would have been laborious to find out information about the service offering of the sauna actors in the area. The survey and observation of the websites made it clear that some of the service providers offer the possibility to a public sauna, but the information cannot be found easily by a Google search. So, there was a difference between the answers on the respondents and information on the websites.

So, the current state on marketing the saunas is not satisfactory, the problem is solved with the creation of the sauna map and co-operation with the sauna actors. It is challenging to get the service providers to add public sauna shifts, especially in rural areas. Also, another challenge is to get the sauna actors to invest in the language options on the websites. In this international world, every page must be readable at least in English. However, it is positive that 76 co-operation partners were found with the help of the survey. This helps to put the Tavastia Region on the sauna map and advance wellness tourism in the area.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS ON SAUNA PRODUCTIZATION IN TAVASTIA REGION

Since Tavastia has two names, 'Tavastia' and 'Häme', it can be confusing especially for tourists that do not know this or the area. It is recommended that referring to the region and in marketing, only one name will be used for the sake of clarity.

The sauna service providers must be challenged to change the fact that the portion of public saunas in the area is very small. The matter that the sauna can be both, public and private, must be emphasized.

A weekly public shift will be ideal for many of the destinations. The interest can be first tested, and then additional services added in the picture to enhance the service experience. During the process, the sauna actors are recommended to involve the visitors and collect feedback to have ideas for customer-oriented service packages where the sauna is the core product and no other way around as it currently seems to be.

The places that locate in a rural area can test the number of public visitors by organizing a sauna day, for example, a few times in the summer. This kind of occasion can be accompanied by additional services, for example, sauna Olympics and grilled food. This can be conducted also in the wintertime with activities such as ice hockey, skiing, sledging and after ski. The service providers that have saunas by a lake must be encouraged to invest in the ice-swimmers with sauna days or public sauna shifts. The

marketing co-operation with the HAMK Smart is inevitable since the coverage is weak without the help of web pages such as Visit Häme.

### 5.1 Online visibility of Tavastia Region saunas

Saunat.co website is about public saunas and at this moment there is not even one that locates in the Tavastia Region. Another website, saunaonline.fi introduces reservable sauna spaces. The Tampere Region has 27 saunas and the Tavastia Region only three. One of the recommendations is that saunas in Tavastia and areas near are added to these websites to promote online visibility. (Saunat.co, n.d.b & n.d.a)

Most importantly, the Visit Häme website must be remodeled as soon as possible to get the sauna map in use. The page is recommended to have a completely own section that is all about the sauna. The sauna actors must be involved in the process and to be asked to confirm contact details, opening hours and so on to avoid incorrect information. It is recommended also that the destinations have short introductions and the sauna actors are asked to tell about specific stories and features that make the place and the services worthy. In other words, to tell what the additional value for the customer is. The author of this thesis recommends that the sauna map will have also a search engine that enables searching with certain criteria for example locations, service providers, sauna types, public entry, private entry, additional services, prices, group sizes and so on.

As a part of the research, the author of this thesis created a user account on Instagram to learn the operating principle and to study the visibility of sauna culture in social media. Sauna is a hot topic on an international level, and it is easy to achieve coverage by posting sauna related pictures, stories and marking them with sauna related hashtags. The other Instagram users work as marketing ambassadors when attending Finnish sauna experience in the area and making posts with pictures and hashtags. Visit Häme has already an account, however, it is highly recommended that an Instagram account will be created that is all about the Finnish sauna. The name suggestions are SaunaHäme and VisitSaunaHäme. A similar account is recommended to be created into Facebook as well.

### 5.2 Campaigns

It is recommended that Visit Häme will start a campaign to find and recruit sauna guides. A sauna guide is an enthusiastic sauna bather that has a lot of knowledge about the Finnish saunas, sauna culture, tradition, folklore, knows how to prepare whisks, has good people skills and is not afraid to communicate in English since the main segment in this kind of



service are foreign tourists. This will be a dream job for keen sauna bathers or a new challenge for program service companies in the area. Many of the service providers already use outsourced services from program service entrepreneurs, this kind of sauna activity will be a new addition in the service offering. A sauna guide will be booked in the same way as any other outsourced service package. A sauna guide will cooperate with local tourism agencies that can book the service for the incoming tourist groups.

The other campaign recommendation is to challenge the inhabitants of the area to introduce a Finnish everyday life to international visitors. The Rent-a-Finn campaign of Visit Finland was mentioned in chapter 3.4.3. It was launched by inspiration from the declaration of the UN that Finland is the happiest country worldwide and for this reason, Finns were challenged to show the close to nature life to foreign tourists including sauna bathing as one significant wellness element. This kind of campaign can be utilized in the Tavastia Region as well to attract international tourists to the area.

### **5.3 Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience – quality certificate & handbook**

As mentioned in chapters 4.2.2 and 4.2.3, there are two sauna operators in the Tampere Region and one in the Tavastia Region that has received the quality certificate. The awareness of this certificate must be spread to the sauna operators in the Tavastia Region and to encourage sauna actors to pursue it. It is possible that there are already saunas that fulfill the criteria (authenticity, multisensory, presence, relaxation, cleanliness, and wellbeing) or will just with minor adjustments. Sauna from Finland organizes sauna audits to inspect the premises and to decide on the certification.

The handbook called 'Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience Quality Handbook' was mentioned earlier in chapter 4.2.1. This book is a helpful guide to assist the service providers in the productization of saunas to improve the quality of the services. It is recommended that his manual is procured for the sauna actors.

### **5.4 Sauna workshop**

The mass survey helped to compile a contact list of sauna actors that are interested in co-operation on the sauna topic. It is recommended to conduct a sauna workshop and send invitations based on the contact list.

The meaning of the workshop is to involve the sauna service providers to advance the Finnish sauna culture productization in the Tavastia Region. Lecturers will give information and tips on productization and how to utilize the service design method known as story design. It is

recommended to ask Anne Kalliomäki as one of the lecturers. Kalliomäki is a professional in the story design.

It is recommended to invite a lecturer from the association Sauna from Finland as well to tell about the sauna productization. This will encourage the sauna actors to start pursuing the Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience – quality certificate. The ‘Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience Quality Handbook’ will be given to participants to point out the direction. This will be also a start for co-operation between the association and sauna actors in the area.

It is recommended that an electronic data bank will be created that is about the story design and the productization of the Finnish sauna. The participants will be given access to the materials. Business Finland offers a freely accessible E-learning guide to companies to internationalize the operations (it was mentioned in 4.2.1). The link should be added to the data bank as well.

The participants can be challenged to write short descriptions or stories about own services: What makes the services special? What are the features that differentiate own services from the competitors? Are there interesting stories that can be utilized in the marketing or told to the customers during the service? Is there perhaps something unique about the place from the perspective of the Finnish culture, history, traditions, folklore or something else? What makes the services valuable, what problem does it solve for the customers (what are the benefits)? The results of the task could be utilized in many ways, for instance, to be used in the descriptions on the Visit Häme website.

The participants must be instructed on how to compile service packages that are attractive from the customers perspective where the sauna is the core product and that the content of the service package is defined clearly for the customers, how to standardize repetitive internal company operations such as report templates and collection of the feedback. The participants must be also instructed how to concretize the services for the customers with the help of social media, internet pages, marketing materials, references, guarantees and so on. And most importantly how to take the customers as part of the on-going development process to maintain a customer-oriented perspective.

One part of the workshop can be about how wellness as an element can be emphasized and utilized in the sauna spaces by interior décor, music, colors, products made from natural ingredients and so on.

## 5.5 Sauna as business

The capital city of the region is a good example. The city center of Hämeenlinna has only a few sauna spaces that all function with a

reservation principle. So, mapping out the empty sauna spaces owned by the cities and the municipalities is recommendable. Cities and municipalities can take the spaces into use and start sauna businesses. Sauna spaces can function as public saunas with predefined timings for the sauna shifts. For the rest of the time spaces can be rentable for private use.

The spaces must be most likely first renovated depending on the condition and furnished in a wellness style with peaceful colors and luxurious materials without forgetting proper air-conditioning. The spaces must have a small kitchen, conference equipment, relaxation area with couches and so on. The easiest option for the sauna stove will be a stove that is heated with electricity. The cleaners will be responsible for turning the stove to heating mode and equipping the spaces with domestic washing products, towels, bench covers and so on.

The spaces can work with an online booking system where the timings of public sauna shifts will be automatically marked as occupied. There can be also a possibility to book additional services on the spot for instance massages, beauty treatments, cupping and so on. This will require co-operation with local entrepreneurs that will inform schedules to the system and also receive an announcement when customers make reservations.

Access to the premises will work electronically with a passcode system. The place will not be licensed, so the visitors can bring own sauna beverages, this will increase reservations since most of the places do not allow own beverages and purchasing drinks on the spot makes the services too expensive for most of the people. This might cause loss of customers for other service providers in the area, but the sauna spaces locating around a residential would be open only until 10 pm due to possible noise nuisance and for this reason; it can advance the nightlife by increasing the number of people going to nightclubs. Restaurants can also get more diners because sauna bathing increases appetite.

## 5.6 Recommendations for further research

The author of this thesis recommends that the sauna spaces that are not in use will be researched for further utilization. This as a business idea will require also studying.

It is also recommendable to conduct a general marketing survey for people in the area. It enables observing sauna bathing from the perspective of the customers. It is recommended to create an electronic survey for example with Webropol to receive a great number of responses at once.

Studied subjects will be the interest in public saunas, private saunas, the interval of sauna bathing, what people appreciate in the Finnish sauna and what kind of additional services people want to experience. The study will also help to find out the channels people use to search for information about saunas in the area. This kind of information will provide important information for service providers in the productization of saunas; what kind of services are lucrative to add in the service packages and so on.

Music videos are powerful tool that can have a wide visibility internationally. It is recommended to find out the willingness of bands to conduct videos that present the Finnish sauna bathing and that way increase the interest on the Finnish sauna bathing culture worldwide. This will require studying what music genres are the most popular in specific countries so that the visibility of the music videos can be allocated from the perspective of marketing.

### 5.7 Reliability and validity of the study

The reliability of the mass survey was sufficient since it was created as a co-operation of two thesis authors and the HAMK Smart research department. The regional articles and the newsletter created by the commissioners increased the credibility as well.

The method of benchmarking supported the findings of the survey, revealing that the Tavastia Region lacks public saunas and that the productization is not on a satisfactory level, the sauna actors require help from the HAMK Smart, the cities, the municipalities and the sauna associations.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this thesis was to find out how to advance the Finnish sauna culture in the Tavastia Region. The mass survey helped to map out the current situation of the sauna actors. It provided a contact list that the HAMK Smart can utilize and start co-operation with local sauna actors and place saunas on the sauna map on the Visit Häme website in the near future. This is a good possibility to start sauna workshops to help the local sauna actors in sauna productization and to gain wider marketing coverage. The survey also revealed that some of the sauna actors already have potential wellness services to support the sauna experience, but on the other hand, some have not productized sauna at all.

Benchmarking revealed that the Tampere Region has sauna packages where the sauna is productized as the core product and the Tavastia

Region, on the other hand, considers sauna as a side service. The difference in public saunas is huge, the Tampere Region has a high number of public saunas and the Tavastia Region has only a few and the information is now hard to find. The creation of sauna packages and public sauna shifts can be utilized in the Tavastia Region as well. Sauna spaces can be set for public use with specific shifts and other times spaces can be rentable. The sauna as a service experience must be concretized to the customers with increasing online visibility, this can be done with productization and the uniqueness of the service and the service provider can be conducted with the story design. Sauna bathing has long roots in the Finnish culture: history, traditions and folklore are all topics that can be taken advantage of in the marketing descriptions, during the actual service experience and so on.

In tourism, sauna belongs in the category of wellness tourism. Wellness tourism is a wide subject and therefore additional services in sauna packages can be almost anything from cupping to walks in the forest. Wellness can be also utilized in sauna spaces with domestic interior design and products such as sauna fragrances, washing products and beauty products. The Finnishness can be utilized through wellness to highlight the Finnish sauna experience. The pure nature in Finland provides wellness elements and offers attractions especially for foreign tourists.

The campaigns and projects of the Visit Finland and several sauna associations have increased tourism by advancing the knowledge of the Finnish sauna culture globally. Tampere Regions has been an active co-operation partner and the media coverage has been wide as well.

Tavastia Region does not have own tourism organization, the development of tourism is conducted through different projects. The issue of this thesis is that it cannot offer ready solutions for the sauna actors in the area. However, it works as a trendsetter to pinpoint the problem areas in productization such as sauna being a side product and the lack of public sauna shifts and the quite nonexistent marketing. Advancing the productization of the Finnish sauna in the Tavastia Region require tourism development projects and workshops that are only about sauna, these will start the needed co-operation between the sauna actors, the HAMK Smart, the cities, the municipalities and involving the customers and taking part in the sauna projects of sauna associations such as the Sauna from Finland and the Visit Finland.

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## Tavastia Region sauna survey Q&amp;A in English

**The name of your company/association/society and the possible name of the sauna:**

### Do you own a sauna

Number of respondents: 100, number of selected responses: 137

	Number of answers	Percentage
that is freely available with an entrance fee?	12	12%
that can be only booked to use?	46	46%
that is always accessible during accomodation or renting other spaces?	27	27%
that is booked separately during acommodation or renting other spaces?	22	22%
just a sauna shift in sauna owned by someone else, where you are also allowed to bring visitors?	5	5%
just a sauna shift in sauna owned by someone else, where you are NOT allowed to bring visitors?	1	1%
that is not open for outsiders?	7	7%
I don't	17	17%

### The owner of the sauna is?

Number of respondents: 83

	Number of answers	Percentage
A company	36	43,37%
An association	22	26,51%
A community	3	3,61%
An individual person	8	9,64%
Something else, what/who	14	16,87%

### The sauna is located in

Number of respondents: 83, number of selected responses: 85

	Number of answers	Percentage
Forssa	5	6,02%
Humppila	3	3,61%
Jokioinen	2	2,41%
Tammela	13	15,66%
Ypäjä	4	4,82%
Hausjärvi	2	2,41%
Loppi	6	7,23%
Riihimäki	4	4,82%
Hattula	5	6,02%
Hämeenlinna/Hauho	5	6,02%
Hämeenlinna/Kalvola	1	1,2%
Hämeenlinna/downtown area	17	20,48%
Hämeenlinna/Lammi	1	1,2%
Hämeenlinna/Renko	3	3,61%
Hämeenlinna/Tuulos	1	1,2%
Janakkala	9	10,84%
Somewhere else, where?	3	4,82%

### Do you have more than one available sauna?

Number of respondents: 83

	Number of answers	Percentage
Only 1	40	48,19%
2	25	30,12%
3	7	8,43%
4	5	6,03%
5	1	1,21%
Even more, how many?	5	6,02%

### Is it

Number of respondents: 83, number of selected responses: 153

	Number of answers	Percentage
an electric sauna	42	50,6%
a sauna with a stove that is continuously heated with wood during sauna bathing (jatkuvalämmitteinen puusauna)	32	38,55%
a sauna with a stove that is heated ready at once with wood (kertalämmitteinen puusauna)	13	15,66%
a smoke sauna	8	9,64%
a lakeside sauna	29	34,94%
a sauna near ice hole for winter swimming	18	21,69%
an infrared sauna	0	0%
a relax sauna	0	0%
a steam sauna	2	2,41%
something else, what?	9	10,84%

### Are your sauna bathers

Number of respondents: 74, number of selected responses: 140

	Number of answers	Percentage
local visitors?	49	66,22%
domestic visitors?	56	75,68%
foreign visitors? From which countries?	35	47,3%

### Is the sauna available

Number of respondents: 75

	Number of answers	Percentage
in the summertime?	9	12%
in the wintertime?	1	1,33%
year-round?	50	66,67%
variably? Please, specify.	15	20%

### Is sauna bathing possible for

Number of respondents: 75, number of selected responses: 115

	Number of answers	Percentage
separate visitors?	48	64%
groups?	67	89,33%

### An open text question:

What is the minimum and maximum time to use the sauna?

### Is the sauna and other related spaces accessible without hindrance?

Number of respondents: 74

	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	23	31,08%
No	51	68,92%

An open text question:

What is the price of an entrance ticket to sauna what is the pricing policy?

**Do visitors have to heat the sauna by themselves?**

Number of respondents: 65

	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	22	33,85%
No	43	66,15%

**What the sauna as a product include?**

Number of respondents: 75, number of selected responses: 251

	Number of answers	Percentage
Only sauna bathing	25	33,33%
Sauna bathing with a towel	28	37,33%
Sauna bathing with a whisk	3	4%
Sauna bathing with sauna stories	6	8%
Sauna bathing and a possibility of swimming	47	62,67%
Sauna bathing and the use of a bath barrel	16	21,33%
A possibility to cool off on the terrace during sauna bathing	50	66,67%
Sauna bathing and a possibility to barbequeing	38	50,67%
Sauna bathing + treatments, what kind of?	5	6,67%
Sauna bathing + program services, what kind of?	12	16%
Something else, what?	21	28%

**Does the sauna have a website?**

Number of respondents: 74

	Number of answers	Percentage
Sauna has own website, the address is	18	24,32%
Sauna's owner has a website, the address is	45	60,81%
Only Facebook or other channel of social media, the address is	4	5,41%
No website.	7	9,46%



### The website is in

Number of respondents: 68, number of selected responses: 107

	Number of answers	Percentage
Finnish	67	98,53%
English	29	42,65%
German	2	2,94%
Japanese	0	0%
some other language, what?	9	13,24%

### Do you advertise the sauna

Number of respondents: 72, number of selected responses: 116

	Number of answers	Percentage
on a municipal website	13	18,06%
on Facebook	38	52,78%
on Instagram	15	20,83%
on Twitter	0	0%
on the radio	0	0%
Not anywhere at the moment	21	29,17%
in newspapers, where?	7	9,72%
in magazines, where?	0	0%
in somewhere else, where?	22	30,56%

### Have you planned to develop the sauna or marketing?

Number of respondents: 71

	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes, how?	29	40,85%
No	42	59,15%

### Are you interested in marketing co-operation related to your sauna?

Number of respondents: 77

	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	47	61,04%
No	30	38,96%

**Do you allow sauna's contact information to be used in Tavastia region's marketing?**

Number of respondents: 74

	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	66	89,19%
No	8	10,81%

**Would you like to receive a small-scaled sauna instruction via e-mail? Instruction is suitable for example in the sauna spaces for tourists that are not necessarily so familiar with the Finnish sauna culture.**

Number of respondents: 97

	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	66	68,04%
No	31	31,96%

**Questions for those who had a sauna but did not rent it or allow visitors:**

**Is it possible that you will rent the sauna in the future?**

Number of respondents: 8

	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	4	50%
No	4	50%

**Would the sauna be available**

Number of respondents: 4

	Number of answers	Percentage
in the summer	4	100%
in the winter	0	0%
year-round	0	0%

**Sauna would be available for**

Number of respondents: 4

	Number of answers	Percentage
separate visitors	0	0%
groups	3	75%
both	1	25%

**Target group would be**

Number of respondents: 4, number of selected responses: 4

	Number of answers	Percentage
local visitors	4	100%
domestic visitors	0	0%
foreign visitors	0	0%

Sauna instructions questions in Finnish

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## Kanta-Hämeen saunaselvitys

Tuodaan Kanta-Häme saunakartalle!



Seuraava

## Kanta-Hämeen saunaselvitys

### 1. Yrityksenne/yhdistyksenne/yhteisönne nimi ja mahdollisen saunan nimi \*

### 2. Onko teillä sauna \*

- johon voi tulla vapaasti sisäänpääsymaksulla?
- vain saunavuoro muun toimijan saunassa, ja otatte mukaan myös vierailijoita?
- vain varattavissa?
- vain saunavuoro muun toimijan saunassa, ettekä ota mukaan vierailijoita?
- aina käytössä muun tilavuokran tai yöpymisen yhteydessä?
- joka ei ole avoinna ulkopuolisille?
- erikseen varattavissa vain muun tilavuokran tai yöpymisen yhteydessä?
- ei ole.

### 3. Kuka saunan omistaa?

- Yritys
- Yhdistys
- Yhteisö
- Yksityinen henkilö
- Jokin muu, mikä/kuka

**4. Saunan sijainti**

- Forssa
- Hämeenlinna/Hauho
- Humppila
- Hämeenlinna/Kalvola
- Jokioinen
- Hämeenlinna/kantakaupunki
- Tammela
- Hämeenlinna/Lammi
- Ypäjä
- Hämeenlinna/Renko
- Hausjärvi
- Hämeenlinna/Tuulos
- Loppi
- Janakkala
- Riihimäki
- Muualla, missä

- Hattula

**5. Onko saunoja käytössä enemmän kuin yksi?**

- vain 1
- 4
- 2
- 5
- 3
- vielä useampia, montako?

**6. Onko saunanne**

- sähkösauna
- sauna avannon äärellä
- jatkuvalämmitteinen puusauna
- infrapunasauna
- kertalämmitteinen puusauna
- relax-sauna
- savusauna
- höyrysauna
- rantasauna
- jotain muuta, mitä?

**7. Ovatko saunojanne**

- paikallisia kävijöitä?
- kotimaisia vierailijoita?
- ulkomaalaisia vierailijoita? Mistä maasta?

**8. Onko sauna käytettävissä**

- kesällä?
- talvella?
- ympäri vuoden?
- vaihtelevasti? Tarkenna

**9. Onko saunominen mahdollista**

- yksin tulevalle?
- ryhmälle?

10. Ryhmän minimi- ja maksimikoko?

11. Saunan käytön minimi- ja maksimiaika?

12. Pitääkö vierailijan lämmittää sauna itse?

- kyllä  
 ei

13. Ovatko sauna ja siihen mahdollisesti liittyvät muut tilat esteettömiä?

- kyllä  
 ei

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14. Saunan hinta ja hinnoitteluperiaate? (€/krt, €/vrk, €/h, €/kk, €/jäsenyys tms.)

15. Mitä saunatuotteenne pitää sisällään?

- Pelkän saunomisen
- Saunomisen pyyhkeineen
- Saunomisen vihdan kera
- Saunomisen saunatarinoineen
- Saunomisen ja mahdollisuuden uimiseen
- Saunomisen ja kylpytynnyrin käytön
- Mahdollisuuden vilvoitella terassilla saunomisen ohella
- Mahdollisuuden grillata saunomisen yhteydessä
- Saunomisen ja hoitoja, mitä?
- Saunomisen sekä ohjelmalveluita, mitä?
- Jotain muuta, mitä?

16. Onko saunallanne nettisivut?

- Saunalla on omat sivut, osoite on
- Saunan omistajalla on sivut, osoite on
- Vain Facebook tai jokin muu sosiaalisen median kanava, osoite on
- Ei sivuja.

17. Sivut ovat luettavissa

- suomeksi
- englanniksi
- saksaksi
- japaniksi
- muulla kielellä, millä?

**18. Mainostatteko saunaa**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> kunnan nettisivuilla | <input type="checkbox"/> ei tällä hetkellä missään                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebookissa         | <input type="checkbox"/> sanomalehdissä, missä? <input type="text"/>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instagramissa        | <input type="checkbox"/> aikakauslehdissä, missä? <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitterissä          | <input type="checkbox"/> jossain muualla, missä? <input type="text"/>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> radiossa             |  |

**19. Oletteko suunnitelleet saunan tai markkinoinnin kehittämistä**

- kyllä, kuinka?
- ei

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- kyllä
- ei

**21. Olisiko sauna avoinna**

- kesällä
- talvella
- ympäri vuoden

**22. Sauna olisi saatavilla**

- yksittäiselle kävijälle
- ryhmille
- molemmille

**23. Ryhmän minimi- ja maksimikoko?**

25. Oletteko kiinnostunut saunaan liittyvästä markkinointiyhteistöstä?

- kyllä  
 ei

26. Saako saunanne yhteystietoja käyttää Kanta-Hämeen markkinoinnissa?

- kyllä  
 ei

27. Haluaisitteko vastaanottaa pienimuotoisen saunaohjeistuksen sähköpostilla? Ohjeistus sopii esimerkiksi saunatilaan turisteille, joille suomalainen saunakulttuuri ei välttämättä ole kovin tuttua.

- kyllä  
 ei

28. Yhteystiedot saunaohjeistuksen lähettämistä ja yhteistyötä varten

Yhteyshenkilön nimi

Sähköposti

Puhelin

Osoite

Edellinen

Lähetä

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24. Kohderyhmä olisi

- paikalliset  
 kotimaiset vieraat  
 ulkomaiset vieraat

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Sauna instructions



**SAUNA.  
A  
REAL  
EXPERIENCE  
ANYTIME.**



**IN THE HEAT OF  
THE SAUNA <3**

Temperature in the hot room is ideal when 70-100°C (158-212°F).

Sauna stove is heated usually with wood or electricity.

Stones in the stove will collect the heat.

Water thrown over the stones will create a moist vapor called "löyly".

## THE BASIC SAUNA EQUIPMENT



A BENCH COVER



A TOWEL AND/OR  
A ROBE



A SWIMMING SUIT



SHOWER  
PRODUCTS



BEVERAGES AND  
SNACKS OF YOUR  
OWN CHOICE

© Marika Koskinen



THE WATER BUCKET "KIULU"

© Marika Koskinen

## THE WHISK "VIHTA"

Experience "the feeling" when the wet birch branches hit against your skin, releasing a natural earth-like scent and atmosphere whilst improving your blood circulation.

A tip: although whisks are made during the summer, they can be frozen or dried for later use. Whisks are available from bigger department stores.



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## THE DRESS CODE

Nudity is a natural thing for many of the Finns, but still it is a very common thing to wear a swimming suit in a [private sauna](#) (in a mixed sauna, with half-acquainted people, sometimes even with friends and family).

However, in [public saunas](#) (such as swimming halls and spas) swimming suit is not allowed in the sauna. For hygiene reasons it must be put on after sauna bathing and showering, just before entering the pool section.

Regardless of sauna's type, it is perfectly ok to wrap yourself in a towel.



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Allow yourself to **relax** and take time for your own **well-being**, the best **sauna experience** is achieved **without any rush**.

**Sauna dehydrates** your body: **cool of** between **sauna sessions** and **drink** plenty of **water**.

Simply just have a tiny snack, socialize, swim or just **enjoy** the **silence** and the **beauty** of **nature**.

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## SAUNA TIPS

Pour some beer on the stove to create an aroma of malt and barley. This divides opinion, so maybe better ask first what others think.

Try sauna fragrances made from ethereal oil for example eucalyptus scented. Put a few drops in the "löyly" water before throwing it to the stones.

Try sauna treatments. Heat makes your pores expand, so it is a good idea to peel your skin and try for example a peat mask. It is good to put cream to your skin after sauna.

Try footbath, put salt or ethereal oil in the bath water to soften your skin before using foot rasp.

Try sauna honey, it is a natural product having several effects: it peels the skin, moisturizes and brightens it, enhances blood stream and so on.



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## SAUNA TIPS

### SWIMMING IN THE ICE-HOLE "AVANTO"

When sauna bathing in the wintertime this refreshing activity is something to consider. Don't worry, this is not mandatory, even most of the Finns won't do it.

### ROLLING IN THE SNOW

It is also worthwhile to try this other stimulating activity such as rolling in the snow between sauna sessions.



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## SAUNA TIPS

### BARBECUE

Preparing grilled food with boiled potatoes and salad is strongly related activity with sauna bathing.

### SAUNA SAUSAGES

Make a few cuts in the sausages, you can fill them for example with cheese and tomato. Then roll them in tin foil and place on the stove for about 20 minutes. Remove the package carefully, it is burning hot. Enjoy with ketchup and mustard.

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## SAUNA IS HEATED - THE ABC OF SAUNA BATHING

### IN THE DRESSING ROOM

- Undress. Take your shower products, swimming suit, towel and bench cover with you
- A tip: remove your jewelry in the dressing room, or at least water them regularly in the sauna with cold water to avoid burning your skin.

### IN THE WASHING ROOM

- Wash yourself briefly with water, it is ok to go to the sauna with dry or wet hair.
- Enter the sauna (according to the situation: either naked, wearing a swimming suit or a towel).

### IN THE HOT ROOM

- Place your bench cover on the seat and sit on it.
- RELAX.
- Throw water to the stones (a tip: it is polite to ask other their opinion about throwing "löyly").
- Hit yourself with a whisk if there is a one, and only if you feel comfortable about using it.
- RELAX. HYDRATE.
- Spend as much time in the sauna as you wish. Cool off outside. HYDRATE. Repeat, but listen to your body and soul.


### AFTER THE FINAL "LÖYLY"

- Wash yourself properly from head to toe in the washing room.
- Continue hydrating, eat well and rest.

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**FINNISH SAUNA = FREEDOM. APPRECIATED. GREAT. BEAUTIFUL. ENJOYMENT. GENUINE. EXPERIENCE. HOT. WET. EPIC. DEAR. TRADITION. SPIRITUAL. HISTORICAL. REFRESHING. WAY OF LIFE. TIMELESS. NATURAL. WOODEN. CLEAN. SOCIAL. UNITING. CULTURAL. PHENOMENAL. PURE. PLEASURE. NATIONAL TREASURE. ENTERTAINING. PROMOTER OF WELL-BEING. AWESOME. SOOTHING. MEETING PLACE. POPULAR. SPECIAL. LOVED.**

**FREEDOM. APPRECIATED. GREAT. BEAUTIFUL. PEACEFUL. NATIONAL. UNIQUE. PUBLIC. MODERN. PRIVATE. IMPORTANT. AUTHENTIC. CLASSICAL. INTERNATIONAL. ESSENTIAL. WARM. REAL. MAGICAL. DARK. FOR EVERYONE.**



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## Sauna survey article in the newspaper

KANTA-HÄME

## Missä pääsee saunomaan? Hamk kerää juuri nyt tietoja Kanta-Hämeen saunoista ja saunavuoroista, vastaajille luvataan saunaelämys

© 11.10.2019 18:40 Päivitetty 11.10.2019 18:40 Jani Suhonen



Avantouimarit nauriskelivat löylystä Ypäjän Piiänkankaalla. Saunaselvityksessä etsitään maakunnan kaikkia saunoja ja saunavuoroja, joilla kuka tahansa voi päästä saunomaan. Arkitokuva. Kuva: Seppo Pessinen

Kanta-Hämettä yritetään tuoda Suomen saunakartalle nyt rytinällä.

Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulun (Hamk) opiskelijat tekevät parhaillaan selvitystä, jossa yritetään löytää kaikki maakunnan julkiset saunat ja saunavuorot sekä palvelut, joita nämä saunat tarjoavat.

Opiskelijoiden mukaan nyt on aika tuoda Kanta-Häme saunakartalle niin saunapääkaupunkina tunnetun Tampereen kuin saunamaakuntana itseään pitävän Keski-Suomen rinnalle

- Ja mennä näistä mielellään vielä ohikin, Hamkin tiedotteessa linjataan.

**Verkossa tehtävän** saunakyselyn vastaajat saavat kiitokseksi saunaohjeistuksen, jonka avulla kuka tahansa voi kokea nautinnollisen saunaelämyksen.

Kysely on avoinna 20.10.2019 saakka. [hasa](#)

Saunakyselyyn voi siirtyä tästä linkistä: <https://hamk.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5ec4b29a3591d9271cab69d3e&id=ac17f72941&e=f1d27a0d4a>