



Creating a Business concept for a Vietnamese restaurant in the Metropolitan area: The Banh Mii House

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The purpose of this thesis is to create a business concept in the Metropolitan area called “The Banh Mii House”. The Banh Mii House focuses on making and promoting Banh Mi, Vietnamese signature street food. Main customers are the citizens looking for a new cuisine to taste, either for lunch or for dinner. The thesis covers the background of banh mi and its variations in different regions, a theoretical background to how to create a simplified business concept and service design, and finally, the implementation stages of The Banh Mii House restaurant. The theoretical framework incorporates various sources, including published literature and online articles.

The research was conducted both in Finland and Vietnam in order to have different approaches and insights. In Finland, data were collected through an online questionnaire to receive the main idea of the decision making process when choosing a restaurant and what affects restaurant quality besides the food. Moreover, there are some insights of people’s eating-out behaviors. In Vietnam, a non-participant observation method was chosen and restaurants of various sizes were observed. The main purpose of this method is to observe how to run a real business such as the operations, products, customer range, decorations and menus, which are the practical aspects of the concept. Business Model Canvas and Service Design are the two main methods used in both the theoretical framework and implementation stage.

The key outcome of this thesis is a restaurant concept in the Metropolitan area, which serves symbolic Vietnamese banh mi. The restaurant would be set up as a fast casual eatery that offers a lunch buffet as well as an ala carte menu. The concept is formed based on the informative and practical research, which also provided information about the locals’ eating habits. The restaurant is believed to be suitable for different customer segments. Therefore, other aspects such as the customer journey map, menu, and especially the value propositions are all designed to fit and attract different customer ranges.

Keywords: Banh mi, Business Concept, Service Design , Vietnamese Cuisine

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1 Introduction

Since the Metropolitan area is the most populated place in Finland, there are more and more exotic cuisines imported here, especially Vietnamese restaurants. Even though Vietnamese have been to Finland since 1979, building up their great community in the country, their homeland's cuisine is not popular among Finnish people. Not until a few decades passed did the locals pay more attention to Vietnam's food culture. The most significant and traditional food in Vietnam has been introduced to the locals, which are "Pho" - a typical beef noodle soup and spring rolls or summer rolls. It is not so difficult to find these kinds of food in Vietnamese restaurants around Helsinki, Vantaa and Espoo, Finland. However, "Banh Mi" - a well-known Vietnam sandwich, which has been a great fever to all food lovers around the world, is hardly sold and recognized in Finland. In this thesis, the two authors will develop a business concept for a Vietnamese restaurant that is named "The Banh Mii House". With a great attempt to make the concept successful and feasible for future business, the authors have applied various theoretical and practical knowledge for the entire process.

The main objective of the thesis is to build a concept for a Vietnamese inspired restaurant in the capital area by offering an iconic Vietnamese street food - banh mi, which is also popular throughout the food culture around the world. The authors will go into details of two main parts - Theoretical and Practical Implementation, each of which will be thoroughly analyzed and explained. In the second chapter, the authors will initiate with the historical stories related to banh mi and its origins a long time ago. A clear-cut definition of the food, additionally, is mentioned and well explained so that readers can understand the idea properly. As Banh Mi has been invented and brought into use for more than fifty years in Vietnam, it has been varied in different regions with spectacular features. As a result, the differences of Banh Mi throughout the country will be presented in detail to show how local people customize it with their homemade recipes. Moreover, in the following subchapter, the authors also demonstrate how popular banh mi is when it comes to other parts of the world.

Respectively, in chapter Three, detailed theories about the essential steps of restaurant ideation will be clarified to form a firm background for further research in the following chapters. Therefore, the theories are examined through several sources such as academic printed books, reliable electronic articles as well as practical surveys and questionnaires to ensure the given data is accurate and informative. After going through all the fundamental theories, two authors will exceedingly focus on the research methods applied in the thesis and its outcomes.

The principal parts of the thesis, chapter Four and Five, will be about the research methods - service design and practical implementation resulted from the research stage. Chapter Four,

in particular, defines the vital theories of Service Design in Stickdorn's process model and how they are implemented to the thesis based on the authors' needs. There are three steps included in the process, which are respectively Research, Ideation, and Implementation. For the first stage, known as Research, Non-participant Observation and Questionnaires are used to collect data and inspirations from the actual business in Vietnam and people's opinions on the future possibility of "The Banh Mi House". Subsequently, to broaden the database, an actual brainstorming session is carried out and recorded in the thesis. In every step of the process, theories, processes and results will be intensively clarified. Last but not least, in chapter Five, a clear feasible concept, considered main outcomes, will be developed based on the previous studies and research.

2 Banh mi in Viet Nam's culinary culture

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the word "Banh mi" was universal enough in daily conversation to be added to the canon of the existing 600,000 words in March, 2011. It is defined as "a sandwich consisting of a baguette (traditionally baked with both rice and wheat flour) filled with a variety of ingredients, typically including meat, pickled vegetables and chili" (Lexico 2019.) There has been a rising popularity of banh mi throughout the world for the past few years. However, not many people are truly aware of the origins and stories behind banh mi. In the next subchapters, the authors will thoroughly explain interesting stories about banh mi, how it was created and modified after decades by the locals, how varied it is regionally and how popular it is around the world.

2.1 Historical backgrounds and banh mi's origins

The history of banh mi, considered a long story, possibly began with the extension of Christianity in Asia, especially in Vietnam. Back in the 17th century, many French missionaries were sent to Vietnam to convince the locals to follow Catholicism. As the local authorities were overly cautious of foreign influences, it was understandable that they carried out harassment to the missionaries and France, as their sovereign, stood out to protect its people. When the Emperor Tu Duc executed two Spanish missionaries in 1857, it happened that France's military was nearby in a fight with China. (The culture trip 2018.)

Due to the occurrence of execution, they decided to punish Vietnam by attacking Tourane, which is Da Nang at present, to force the Emperor to allow Catholicism. France proposed that Catholics be able to practice their faith and religion, but the proposal failed.

Afterward, they attacked and occupied some parts of Saigon but the Emperor did not seem to be swayed. Over the course of the next two years, after the war with China, the French military invaded Saigon and the surrounding area with 70 ships. By 1862, the French required to have

three provinces and free use of trading ports throughout the country, which began the French Colony of Cochinchina - the South of Vietnam (The culture trip 2018) In those days, it was not easy and convenient to send large amounts of European food from France, so the colonizer introduced to Vietnamese their crops and livestock, known as coffee, dairy products, and deli meats, to keep their eating diets going. However, wheat simply could not grow here. As a result, the French had to import wheat from abroad and at that time, only French people could afford it. Not only did the French use their wealth and technology to confirm the colonial hierarchy and its dominance over Vietnamese, but also formed a separated line in food culture from “us” and “them”, which referred to “European” and “Southeast Asian”. (Stanley 2016.)

“Bread and meat make us strong, rice and fish make them weak” was a common adage back then, when there was a myth that the rice-centric diet of Southeast Asians mainly resulted in their imperial subjugation. Consequently, the French colonists, believing in that adage, for a long time, disapproved of any French that ate Vietnamese food or the other way around and kept continuing their European diets. At that time, the bread was baked thin and long (figure 1), like the baguette that is known today, and was served together with a plate of ham, paté, cheese and butter. In figure 1, the baguettes were produced in thin and long shapes, with some slits along its body. After being baked, the bread came out of the oven with a golden and crispy crust. However, World War I in Europe did make the culinary boundaries between French and Vietnamese food shattered for long. (Stanley 2016.)



Figure 1: The French baguettes (Baking Mad 2019)

At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, The French colonial government forced Germans to leave Indochina, known as a group of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Meanwhile, the two biggest German exporters were seized by the French, leaving their warehouses full of European stocks. Due to the large amount of stock availability and the fact that French troops sailed for France for the war effort, the government decided to spread the stocks to Vietnamese markets at low prices. For the first time, many Vietnamese from lower classes could afford to eat imported

cold cuts, paté, cheese. Baguettes, at the time, became staple food among Vietnamese. (Lion Brand 2018).



Figure 2: Vietnamese banh mi (Nguyen 2014, 50)

However, the banh mi nowadays, as shown in figure 2, did not come until the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The usual eating habit, which was having baguettes with some slices of cold cuts, paté and cheese on the side, was eventually changed to something else. After France left, the Southern locals were free to modify their baguettes with local ingredients. According to this figure, the later version of banh mi has been modified to fit the local's needs and used until today. Banh mi, since then, has had shorter length, fluffier shape but the golden crispy crust and lightweight are still its unique features. (Lion Brand 2018.)

The first banh mi, which was similar to the ones today, was born in Saigon in the late 1950s. Leaving to Saigon to settle down, Mr. and Mrs. Le were considered the first to invent the modern banh mi. The Le family came from Hoa Ma, a small village in Ha Noi. In the scene that Vietnam was divided into two parts, Southern Vietnam, known as Saigon and Northern Vietnam, known as Ha Noi, the Le family fled Ha Noi and moved to Saigon. In the beginning, they set their business on Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street but after two years, they moved to operate their new store in 53 Cao Thang Street, naming it Hoa Ma after their hometown. In figure 3, it shows their second store back to 1960. At the time the photo was taken, they had just moved to a new location as an announcement sign was hung on with their new address and the date they were moving. They did not only tell customers about their moving but also mentioned their menu and offers on the sign, so that customers could notice. Back to the story of banh mi and the Le family, as Mrs. Le had worked in a French-owned company, which supplied French-styled ham and processed meat to French restaurants, she had learned some skills from them. She then applied her skills and recipes to produce the meat and cold cuts for Hoa Ma store. (Stanley 2016.)



Tiệm Bánh Mì HÒA MÃ, ảnh năm 1960.

Figure 3: The second Hoa Ma store in 1960 (Trithucvn 2019)

At first, banh mi was still served separately with sizzling skillets of cold cuts, homemade paté and cheese together with some sauces. However, due to the constant stream of students, officers and workers coming to their shop, not having much time to enjoy banh mi there, the owners finally decided to stuff all the ingredients inside the bread and wrapped it simply with a piece of paper to carry along. This was, at the time, a revolutionary change in Saigon for its perfection in the hustle and bustle of the growing city. To make it affordable for everyone, Mr. and Mrs. Le also reduced the baguettes to 20 centimeters, adding more fresh herbs, vegetables and pickles to decrease the greasy taste. (Stanley 2016.)

Plenty of food carts and vending stalls popped up all over Southern Vietnam. American wheat shipments made it even easier to grow the banh mi culture. Banh mi was freshly baked every day and distributed to every corner of Saigon to make sure the sales went smoothly. For its cheap price but nutritious ingredients, banh mi was one of the most favorite among Vietnamese. Not until the end of Vietnam's war in 1975 did the rest of the world know about this spectacular sandwich. Many Vietnamese people emigrated to America, Europe and Australia, bringing their recipes and started the business in the new land. According to Nguyen (2014, 19-20), many banh mi shops were established in big and crowded cities in the US, such as Baquette in New York, Baguette Box in Seattle, Bun Mee in San Francisco, and Saigon Sisters in Chicago at the time. With some help from Western food writers, journalists, and food bloggers, banh mi was introduced and became well-known among foreigners around the world. Its

recipes happened to be in cookbooks, newspapers, magazines or on television shows. Surprisingly, the baguette was chosen for the cover of *Sunset Magazine* in July 2012 and *Minnesota Lunch*, a book on the local food history of Minneapolis-Saint Paul Area. Nowadays, you can easily find banh mi on sale in stores and food trucks in plenty of places. (Nguyen 2014, 19 - 20.)

2.2 Banh mi's Exposal

As the authors have clarified the origins of Vietnamese banh mi in the second chapter, they will continue to provide more data about Banh Mi itself and the ingredients that people often place inside it. Apparently, because of its worldwide popularity in the past few years, there have been several different versions of it with different recipes and fillings. However, in this chapter, the authors will solely concentrate on the most common version of banh mi that every Vietnamese knows and loves.

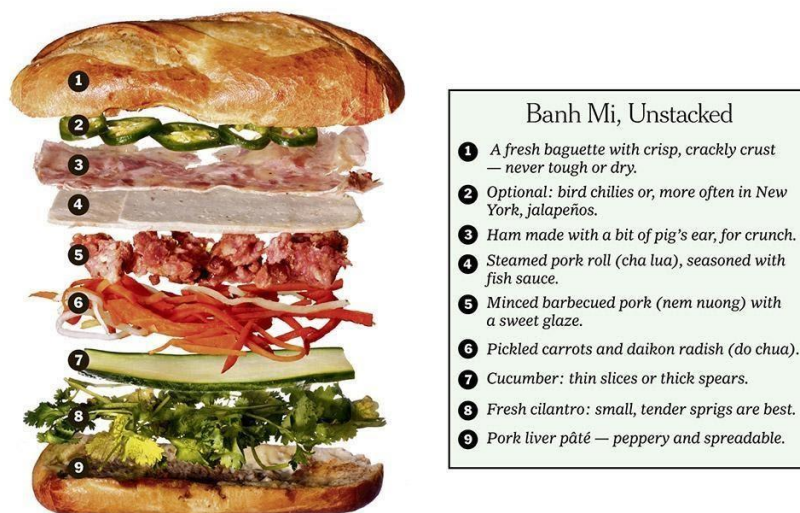


Figure 4: Banh mi, Unstacked by Tony Cenicola (The New York Times 2009)

Figure 4 is the closest demonstration of the favorite Banh Mi in Saigon now and then. A perfect banh mi is defined as “golden-crust” baguette, “quickly sliced then smeared generously with paté and mayonnaise, filled with pork terrine, pork belly, pickled vegetables, cucumber and coriander” as well as “a sprinkle of chili, a dash of soy sauce”. (Nguyen 2011, 167). To make it easier to understand, the authors divide banh mi into four main parts: bread, fillings, condiments, and veggies. The first and the most important is the bread, which is considerably different from French baguettes. Banh mi, in straight translation to English, is “wheat cake” since it is originally made of wheat flour in the first days. However, to make it different from French baguette, the locals add rice flour to make the crust lighter and crispier so that it does not overwhelm the fillings. The perfect bread is supposed to have airy and crispy crust outside but soft and tender inside, with a shorter length to make it portable for the hustlers. Besides,

Vietnamese people often stuff several kinds of fillings inside so the baguettes with thick and dense crust are not appropriate. (Vietnamvisa-easy 2016.)

The second main part of banh mi is the protein sources that usually are cold cuts, pork rolls and meat. Cold cuts, as it is named, are made of pork with strips of fat around. Pork rolls are made of ground pork and wrapped with banana leaves then steamed or boiled until cooked. The meat inside banh mi can be pork, chicken or even canned processed fish. The most often used meat is grilled pork, sliced and marinated before being grilled on charcoal. It depends on different families and owners that there is a wide variety of recipes for this grilled pork. (Vietnamvisa-easy 2016.)



Figure 5: Banh mi thit nuong (Grilled pork banh mi) (Sprinkles and Sauce 2014)

Figure 5 illustrates the regular “Banh mi thit nuong” (Grilled pork banh mi) in Saigon so that the readers can relate. In some places, it is also common that they use shredded chicken for the main fillings because of the customers’ preference. Special homemade meatballs, known as “xiu mai”, are also local’s favorites, which are marinated and slowly cooked in tomato sauces. For lighter options, people regularly choose fried eggs as their main fillings, cheap but nutritious enough for a meal. Unfortunately for vegetarians, there are not many places that offer other options for them. Alternatively, tofu and other vegetables are mainly used instead of meat for vegetarians and vegans. (Nguyen 2014, 32 - 34.)

The part that cannot be excluded in banh mi is the ingredients that are homemade mayonnaise and paté. In the very first days in banh mi’s culture, mayonnaise was imported from France and served alongside the bread. Nowadays, Vietnamese people have created themselves a different kind of mayonnaise, less thick with a hint of sourness and grease. As there are two sides of banh mi, people add mayonnaise on one side, and apparently, paté on the other side. This creative way makes the taste even more balanced and decent. In her book, Nguyen (2014, 28 - 29) also suggested readers to replace homemade mayonnaise with in-store premade versions, European-style salted butter or seasoned avocado. Moreover, some places are well-known not because of the bread but their homemade paté. It is often made of chicken, goose or pig liver, seasoned with lemongrass, crushed shallots, pint of salt and pepper. (Vietnamvisa-easy 2016.)

Last but not least, veggies bring freshness to banh mi. They are usually slices of spring onions, cilantro and cucumbers, served freshly and added after other fillings. Pickled carrots and daikon are thinly sliced or shredded and soaked in a mixture of vinegar or lime juice and a tiny bit of sugar and salt, then left for at least an hour. When the combination of meat, mayonnaise and paté makes banh mi heavy, the sourness and salty of pickles will save it all. Moreover, to make it slightly spicy, people also add small slices of fresh chilies. To sum up, with all of the ingredients above, the perfect banh mi is ready to be enjoyed. (Vietnamvisa-easy 2016.)



Figure 6: Basic banh mi assembling instructions (Nguyen 2014, 32 - 34)

As Figure 6 illustrates, there are a few simple steps to make banh mi. It is notified that vegetable add-ons need to be prepared and set aside before getting the bread ready. To make it crispy, it is suggested to place it in the toaster oven at 160°C for 3 to 6 minutes and cool it down for a few minutes. After that, the bread is slit lengthwise with the backside still attached to hold the sandwich together. The next ingredient to be added on two inner sides of the bread is either mayonnaise or butter with preference. Maggi or other liquid condiments are drizzled to get the bread seasoned or instead, salt and pepper are sprinkled on. From the bottom up, the filling (pork, chicken, fish, tofu), pickles, chilies, cucumber and herbs are respectively layered on. In the end, after closing the sandwich and cutting it, people can finally enjoy it. (Nguyen 2014, 37 - 39.)

2.3 Variety of banh mi stores in Viet Nam

Firstborn in the 1950s in Saigon, Vietnamese banh mi has gradually marked its name in every corner of the country. Since people realized that banh mi deserved more than a type of snack, more and more banh mi stalls and stores have been established. However, banh mi culture seems to be more popular and well-known in the South and Central of Vietnam, especially in Saigon, known as Ho Chi Minh City and Hoi An, a famous old town recognized as UNESCO's World Heritage Site. In this chapter, the authors will introduce the most traditional and famous banh

mi stalls in these two cities, which have a huge stream of customers including locals and tourists.

2.3.1 Hunt for banh mi in Saigon

Banh mi can be found everywhere throughout the country, but certain places are well-known for their traditional and satisfying banh mi. With previous experiences and some research, the author will shortlist three of the most popular banh mi stores in Saigon, first of which is “Banh mi Hoa Ma” as the author previously mentioned in the history of banh mi. Located at 53 Cao Thang Street, District 3, Hoa Ma is always full of customers. With more than sixty years of establishment, there are changes about the store due to time, except the taste from their banh mi. The present owner, Nguyen Dinh Dung, now is the third generation to run his family’s business. (Thanh Nien Online 2018.)

Considered the most traditional banh mi store in Saigon with more than sixty years of sales, “Banh mi Hoa Ma” becomes a memorable place for old-time people. They come to Hoa Ma not only to have good banh mi but also want to rewind the old memories of Saigon to the 1950s. Hoa Ma mainly serves takeaway banh mi due to their small location, but if customers want to sit down and slowly enjoy the food, tiny plastic tables and chairs are always available beside the store. Since the beginning, their menu has stayed simple but satisfying, reflecting two different styles of eating banh mi. The first dish on the menu is stuffed banh mi, which is often taken away due to their lack of space. The crispy crust banh mi then is added with lots of pâté, mayonnaise, ham, pork slices and some veggies on top. The second dish, as shown in figure 7, is banh mi served with a skillet full of pork roll slices, fried eggs, ham, homemade pâté as well as some daikon and cucumber. The food is not seasoned too much so that customers can adjust by themselves with some salt, pepper, soy sauce, and chili sauce. Their pickled cucumber, carrots and daikon are also praised since they make the taste fresh and less greasy. (Thanh Nien Online 2018).



Figure 7: Banh Mi served alongside food (Thanh Nien Online 2018)

The second most popular place in Saigon for its banh mi is “Banh Mi Huynh Hoa”. Located in 26 Le Thi Rieng Street, Ben Thanh District, “Banh mi Huynh Hoa” has a cult following, not just among locals but foreign tourists also. Many food bloggers and travelers, such as Wiens (2016), have been talking about this place in their channels and that makes the place even more popular nowadays. Coming to a small store on Le Thi Rieng Street, customers are expected to queue up about ten to fifteen minutes to get their Banh Mi, which is a usual thing here. However, there must be a reason for their long-lasting reputation. “Banh Mi Huynh Hoa” is known to have the best homemade paté in town and such meaty stuffed banh mi. There are five or six layers of meat slices in the bread together with layers of paté, mayonnaise and sprinkles of pork floss. As shown in figure 8, the fillings are served quite generously under slices of pickles, cucumber and cilantro. Even though the price is a bit higher than other stores around the corner, it is worth the price. (Wiens 2016.)



Figure 8: Banh Mi Huynh Hoa and their well-stuffed banh mi (Wiens 2016)

The third place on rank is “Banh Mi Hong Hoa”, also a family-owned banh mi store on 62 Nguyen Van Trang Street, Ben Thanh District. Unlike “Banh Mi Huynh Hoa” with fully packed banh mi, this place has a simple version of banh mi at an affordable price. Open since early morning, the store is always filled with lots of people coming for their freshly baked bread. Most of the customers come to buy the popular pork banh mi with the right amount of meat and topped with cucumber slices and sweet and sour pickles, as in figure 9. All of the ingredients are stuffed in just enough so that they do not overwhelm the crispy crust of banh mi. On the other hand, some smaller banh mi vendors also come to buy fresh bread every morning. It is not surprising in the early morning that customers see fully loaded banh mi baskets in front of the store, for which the vendors’ owners buy the freshly baked bread for retailing. One of the most highly recommended reasons here is the friendly customer service, even though they are always busy. (Wiens 2016.)



Figure 9: Banh Mi Hong Hoa and their simple pork banh mi (Wiens 2016)

2.3.2 Hunt for banh mi in Hoi An

Beside Saigon - the origin of Banh mi's creation, Hoi An is also well-known among locals and tourists for its banh mi. Located on the central coast of Vietnam, Hoi An is a peaceful city with an ancient town that attracts thousands of travelers every year. People around the world come to Hoi An not only for its breath-taking scenery but also for many famous banh mi stores here. The journey here begins with "Banh mi Phuong" - the most famous banh mi store in the world. Seven years ago, when the celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain had a chance to visit this place, he ordered a banh mi from Banh Mi Phuong and said that it was the best banh mi in the world. (Springer 2018.)

With his fame and influences on food culture, Banh Mi Phuong has got lots of international attention and become much more popular around the world. The family's business was first started roughly 55 years ago by Truong Thi Phuong's (as known as Madam Phuong) parents. The couple ran the place for 25 years and then passed it to their eldest daughter - Madame Phuong. After that, she stopped working as a teacher and together with her boyfriend Dang Ngoc Chau at that time, now her husband, continued the business. As long as they noticed that their banh mi became popular among the locals, they moved to a brick-and-mortar restaurant, next to the best bakery in the town. The special thing about Banh Mi Phuong is that they have such good and fresh baguettes, which were made next door in the bakery now and then. Moreover, the owners have developed their menu so well that provides customers everything from vegetarian banh mi to chicken and beef. (Springer 2018.)



Figure 10: A mixed banh mi with omelette and meat in Banh mi Phuong (Temple and Tree houses 2019)

As shown in figure 10, their banh mi looks delicious with a crispy crust and lots of fillings such as meat, omelet, lettuce, sliced cucumber and pickled carrots. Lots of food bloggers have also followed Anthony Bourdain to the place after that and there are many different opinions about the price and quality of Banh Mi Phuong. However, they said that the price was slightly higher than other stores and the volume of banh mi was reduced, compared to the old days. (Temple and Treehouses 2019.)

The next popular place is “Madam Khanh” - The Banh Mi Queen. Located at 115 Tran Cao Van, Minh An District, Hoi An, “Madam Khanh” is nicknamed “the Queen” for a good reason. The owner, Nguyen Thi Loc, now in her 90s, started the store in 1975 and has run the business nearly half of her life. Despite passing the business to her daughter nowadays, she still comes over every morning to help. Unlike “Banh Mi Phuong”, “Madam Khanh” has a simple menu with fewer options but still satisfying. There are some meat options to choose such as chicken, fish, beef but people often go for the mixed banh mi since it is traditional here. (Springer 2018.)



Figure 11: A mixed Banh mi in “Madam Khanh” (Temple and Tree houses 2019)

As in figure 11, the mixed banh mi is stuffed with vegetables, pork, ham, fried eggs, homemade paté, mayonnaise, papaya and cucumber. The owner, for many years, has made paté on her

own, straight from pig liver with a mixture of crushed shallot, lemongrass, pepper, salt and a pinch of MSG. It is also claimed that banh mi from “Madam Khanh” is spicier than “Banh Mi Phuong”, which reflects more the food culture in Hoi An and makes the place more popular among the locals. (Springer 2018.)

In conclusion, in the first chapter of the thesis, the authors have thoroughly introduced and explained the stories of traditional banh mi in Vietnamese cuisine. By telling the story of banh mi, the authors wanted to use it as the key inspiration of their restaurant concept, known as “The Banh Mi House”, with the hope to inspire all the customers every time they visit the place. Moreover, by providing clear information about banh mi’s ingredients, the authors can make their menu more familiar and understandable to all readers. Showing various versions of banh mi in different regions in Viet Nam also enables the authors to have a large variety of items for their implemented menu.

3 Basic business preparation

Opening a restaurant is exciting but challenging work, it involves many steps before a restaurant can be operated thoroughly. Not only the restaurant soon-to-be owners have to come up with a good culinary concept but they also have to think about what kind of customers they want to attract most, how to maintain and operate the restaurant smoothly, and how the restaurant could outstand other competitors in the market nowadays. This chapter will go through the core steps of opening a restaurant. Readers will gain knowledge on the types of restaurants and also what is a business model canvas, and why it is important to focus on the potential customer segments.

3.1 Deciding restaurant type

Every restaurant has its characteristics and targeted customers. The atmosphere characterizes the type of restaurant, not just only about the food. However, they can all be categorized by some common factors. Those factors are: formality spectrum, and price. The formality spectrum is about the restaurant’s decoration, dress code for guests, table service and counter service, or the attentiveness of servers; a restaurant can be classified as fine dining, casual dining, fast-casual, pop-up restaurant, and so on.

Fine dining restaurants require formal dress code for guests, they usually have luxurious decor and formal atmosphere, and all the servers are more attentive and follow certain etiquette for serving meals. Moreover, there are specially designed menus which could feature a chef’s specialties or seasonal ingredients, the wine list has to be perfectly paired with the menu items. And those reasons explain why the price range is much higher than other types of restaurants. Customers usually come here for a special occasion. (Garvey et al. 2019, 22-23.)

Casual dining restaurants often offer more moderately-priced menus, casual and trendy atmosphere, and table service. Generally, it is about the ambiance of the place and the style of the service that takes an important part of the business. In this segment, food and service quality would be various, only the dress code remains consistently: casual setting. The whole concept is people can get fresh and high-quality food while wearing jeans and sandals, and no reservation needed. (Garvey et al. 2019, 24.)

Fast-casual restaurants offer quick bites but healthier than fast food and considerably cheaper than casual dining restaurants, with casual decor and counter service. Characteristics of fast-casual restaurants are: high-quality ingredients, made-to-order food, self-service formats, takeaway meals. The amount of fast-casual restaurants is growing up with new concepts constantly establishing. (Walker 2011, 35.)

Fast food restaurants primarily focus on quick service, offer processed food, with a casual ambiance, counter service or drive-through. Pop-up restaurants are a new trend that allows owners, chefs, and customers to try new restaurant concepts or ideas, as they are operated temporarily (for a few days or months). Buffet restaurants allow customers to design their dining experience by providing a wide range of food to choose, the prices are usually fixed, food is displayed at the food counter so that customers can service themselves; most of them usually feature a theme, such as Chinese, Nepalese, or pizza buffet, salad buffet. (WebstaurantStore 2018.)

3.2 Creating simplified business model canvas

Business Model Canvas is a strategic and management tool to expound and enunciate a business concept or idea expeditiously and straightforwardly. It is simply a one-page document that informs the essential components of a business or product, shaping up an idea in a coherent method. The Business Model Canvas has many advantages if it is used efficiently: lucidity (all the information is presented on one single page and it is easy to understand); flexibility (it is fast and easy to modify the model and sketch out several ideas); customers focused (the canvas requires users to think about the values that they provide to the customers, and how or what it takes to deliver those values); elements connection (the graphical nature of the canvas exhibit how the different parts of the model correlate to each other, easy to understand (thanks to its clarity and simplicity, it is easy to share and discuss the idea easily with other team members).

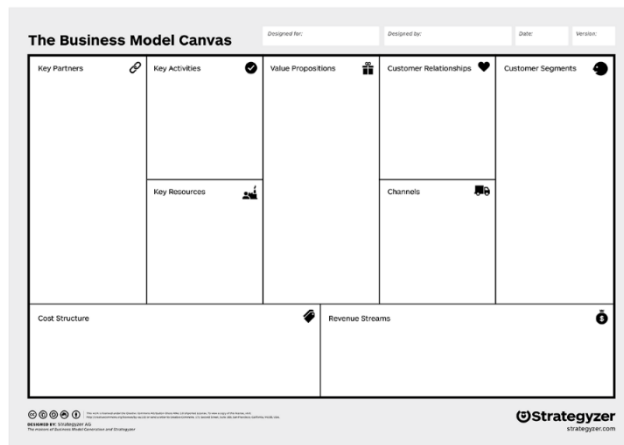


Figure 12: The Business Model Canvas (Ebinum 2016)

Figure 12 illustrates a blank Business Model Canvas. It contains nine core elements: value proposition, customer segments, channels, customer relationship, key resources, key partners, key activities, cost structure, revenue streams. The upper seven building blocks that are precisely linked to the previous service design tools. Meanwhile, Cost structure and Revenue Stream are combined into one group, known as Financial block, which indicates the potential profitability of the business model. Below, there are explanations on each element of the canvas in a respective order. (Ebinum 2016.)

The value proposition is fundamental to any business, it describes the values the business wants to offer to the customers, including intangible values or physical products, which differentiate them from other competitors. Value is traded from a customer for money when a problem is sorted out for them by the business. By looking at the customer segments and figuring out how or where to solve customer's problems, it would be a good step to build up this element. And in the end, the business owner should be able to answer the question: why customers would purchase or consume products from this company. (Osterwalder et al. 34, 2014.)

Customer segments: this block of canvas is used for entering the different customer targets that the business aims to. Customer base should be separated into groups of individuals that share common characteristics; such as age, gender, spending habits, profession or similar service needs. There are four main types of segmentation: Geographic, Demographic, Behavioral and Psychographic, each of which has its feature. By separating the customers into several groups, business owners would get more ideas on the market from a micro and macro perspective, increase competitiveness, estimate price range as well as concentrate on their main aims. Furthermore, the business runners need to decide the customer segment's size to determine the value they contribute. (Insanegrowth 2020.)

Channels refer to how the business distributes its products/services to customers, or how customers can connect to the business and become a part of the sales cycle. Channels can be established by the business itself or through separate partners and they can be online or offline, depending on the business's aims. It is essential to understand how to reach customers in appropriate ways that attract them most. Frequently, there are several common channels such as social media, affiliate, trade show, offline advertising (TV, billboard, radio) and so on. (Ebinum 2016.)

Customer relationship is described as how a business associates with its customers. The easiest step is to create a customer journey and walk through it in detail. It elaborates the points of engagement between customers and the business; shows how customers find out the business and products, and how they manage after purchasing products. Based on the customer segment, a company can decide what kind of relationship they want to build with their customers. Eventually, most of the companies always aim to build a long-term relationship with their customers, which means that they have to convince people to be loyal to the brand. (Ebinum 2016.)

Key activities, which sum up the company's backstage processes, are the most important strategic works that have to be carried out. Key activities should relate directly to the business's value proposition. If key activities are not relatable to value propositions in the business model then it is not right as the activities, which are also the most important things, would not be delivered to the customers. Key activities could be categorized into three main types: productions (refers to delivering the products to the customers), problem-solving (consulting agencies or service providers have to come up with new solutions to individual customers) and platform (relating to network or computing platform). (Ebinum 2016.)

Key resources describe the most crucial strategic assets that are compulsory to operate the business. There are four main categories that key resources can be divided: physical (such as machines, buildings, vehicles, tables), intellectual (such as brands, partnerships, databases, copyrights), human resources and finances. They are all practical needs to undertake the business. (Expert Program Management 2018.)

Key partners are a list of other external companies/suppliers that the business may need in order to achieve the key activities and deliver value to the customers. With this element, it is about listing the tasks and activities that are important but the business cannot do by itself. Instead, suppliers and partners are used to make the business model work. (Ebinum 2016.)

Cost structure is characterized as the monetary cost of operating as a business. It relates to the amount of money to achieve the business's key activities, the cost of key resources and key partnerships, or how much money to hire a new employee. It is very important to ensure that costs are aligned with the value proposition. (Expert Program Management 2018.)

Revenue stream means where the revenue is generated, or how the business converts its value proposition to customer's problems into finance again. It is not simple to figure out as it sounds like. In other words, the business has to clarify what strategy to use in order to capture the most value from its customers. It includes the amount of money taken from customer's consumption and the amount it contributes to the total revenue through sales, licensing or marketing. (Expert Program Management 2018.)

4 Service Design methods and implementations

Recently, the term "Service Design" has become quite popular in many fields, especially Hospitality Field. Millennials are applying Service Design in their projects, business or their corporations. However, many people may not know clearly about its definition. Service Design is a complex process that helps organizations observe their services from a customer's perspective. Including several steps, service design helps organizations to create new services to meet the demand of their customers and balance the needs of customers and the company's goals. According to Moritz (2005, 39), service design helps to create and develop services to make them more useful and desirable for customers and at the same time, effective for the organization. (Moritz 2005, 39.)

In this chapter, the authors will mainly focus on the theory of the Service Design Model as well as the research methods used during the process. All the tools of Service Design will be mentioned but only some of them are applied to the thesis. In each stage, there is a clear explanation of the method, how the research has proceeded and what its results are. To be specific, for the Research stage, two methods Non-participant Observation and Questionnaires will be implemented respectively. For the following stage, Ideation, authors use brainstorming to collect opinions from different attendants. In the end, all the results will be used for the last stage, Implementation.

4.1 Theory of Service Design & Process

Service design, perhaps, started to grow since Brandon Schauer of Adaptive Path happened to do some research on it in 2011. He found out that the United States had spent approximately \$2 billion every year on "planning and designing service" but only \$70 million of this, which was 3.5%, was spent on "service design". The 96.5% of the work was done by people that did not consider themselves "service designers". Nevertheless, the trend seems to change. Recently, a customer's experience has considerably influenced many organizations and apparently, design thinking has become a key innovation and management methodology. Now it is not only referred to the state that designers create the services but also everything related to the process to please the customers. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 24.)

Frequently, tools and methods are combined to explain some objects but Stickdorn stated that they are essentially different. Tools are concrete models that are built from several templates. Meanwhile, methods indicate the procedure to accomplish something. Specifically, tools are “what” designers use and methods are “how” they carry out the process. Five basic design tools are mentioned and analyzed, each of which has its definition and usage. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 36.)

The first and also one of the core tools is Research Data. To be specific, data is made up of facts that are usually collected, synthesized and analyzed to solve research problems. There are two types of data, which are known as raw and interpreted data. As to how it is named, raw data refers to any data collected without being sorted up. Meanwhile, interpreted data indicates the researcher’s efforts to explain or understand the raw data. Being analyzed by some particular researchers, apparently it is influenced by their education, beliefs and experiences. Consequently, it is essential for researchers to always have raw data as a backup to minimize the potential bias. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 37.)

The following tool is Personas, which are profiles presenting specific groups of people. This is not a stereotype but based on real research that helps to gather groups with similar service needs. Although it makes the process easier to be analyzed, it sometimes cuts across several groups, thus holding back service design efforts. In a persona, there is some certain required information such as portrait image, name, demographics, quotes, mood image, description and statistics. Moreover, persona is advised to have an expiry date in 12 months so that researchers do not happen to use old data. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 40.)

A journey map is the third tool in the “toolbox”, which visualizes the experience of a person over time. For instance, the overall experience that a customer has with a service point or a brand can be visualized on an end-to-end customer journey map. Consider a human-centered tool, journey maps are not only about the steps that customers have with a brand but also about how they get to know the brand, what they are impressed with and how they consume the products or experience the service. Consequently, by revealing all the main activities of the experience, the journey map can show the gaps in the service and help the company to find out their potential solutions. Depending on the purpose and goal the company proposes, the journey map can have several different scales and scopes. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 56.)

Furthermore, there are some important terms used in the journey map, which are “steps”, “touchpoints” and “moment of truth” (MoT). As it is supposed to describe an overall experience, there is always a main actor. The actor, thus, can play a role of a customer, a user or a target group. The first popular term is “steps”, which indicates any activities the main actor has, for example, walking by the store or having a conversation with someone about the brand.

Meanwhile, “touchpoints” reveal all the interactions that the customer has with a brand. Depending on different channels customers have, those touchpoints can be direct or indirect. Last but not least, “moment of truth” refers to those steps that are crucial for a customer. MoT shows the impression of the customer when they use or try the actual product for the first time, which leads to their decision for being loyal to the brand or not. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 56.)

Respectively, system maps are also one of the mentioned tools, which are visual or tangible map demonstrations of the key components of the system that an organization or a service is applied to. There can be several constituents in the map, which are separated into tangible (people, stakeholders, physical products) and intangible (insights, KPIs). Frequently, service designers will utilize system maps to point out not only the current-state systems but also the future-state systems in order to show the influences of decisions, new components or modified relationships. Depending on the organization, they are divided into three common types: Stakeholder, Value Network and Ecosystem Map. As its name, the first type of map demonstrates several stakeholders involved in a particular experience to point out their activities in the process as well as their relationships with the organizations. The broader version of the Stakeholder map is the Value Network map, which shows how stakeholders exchange the value within the network. The considered value can be money, stocks, services or data. Last but not least, Ecosystem map is the extended version of the second type, in which the complex systems that include a variety of components (humans, engine, device) as well as their relationships and interdependencies. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 57.)

The following tool is Service Prototypes, in which the term “prototype” originates from the Greek “prototype” - the first or early form of something. As it is named, service prototypes are replications of any stages of a service in varying contexts. This tool is utilized for the designers to explore, estimate and link the service ideas during the service design process. Consequently, in the designer’s “toolbox”, this is considered a vital tool to text concerning ideas so that the organization can eliminate bad ideas and develop potential ideas further in the future. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 64.)

As mentioned above, Service Design involves a complex combination of various tools and methods, which enables designers to develop their business. Besides the special “toolbox” that the professionals are applying, there are some core activities which need to be concerned about. Above all, in any activities, there are some specific patterns illustrated, so are core activities. Simply saying, those patterns are all about the repetition of creating and eliminating options. For instance, during research activities, designers often gain lots of knowledge and then only focus on their key insights. Same with Ideation activities, firstly people try to generate a handful of thoughts and decide which are most potential ideas later. Prototyping and Implementation activities are not exceptional, in which the same patterns are utilized. In this stage of activities, designers also conduct research and develop the possibilities at the beginning and

then primarily concentrate on the potential solutions. In essence, these patterns are academically called “divergent” and “convergent” thinking and doing, which were first defined by psychologist Joy Paul Guilford in 1956 and were first introduced into the field of Design and Architecture by Paul Laseau in 1980. After exploring it, they both figured out that the coordination of these two opposing factors (divergent and convergent) can lead to great success in the service design process. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 84.)

After exploring the core patterns, it is essential to thoroughly understand the precise process and its core activities. As there are plenty of designers working in the huge field, several different service design processes are generated. Although there are many differences in the description as well as the number of activities, steps, and phases in those processes, some particular same mindset and ideas are still found out and utilized. Among several service models, the authors decided to focus on exploring Stickdorn’s model. According to Stickdorn et al. (2018, 92), four core activities are Research, Ideation, Prototyping and Implementation. The following figure will illustrate the core activities and patterns in the chosen model.

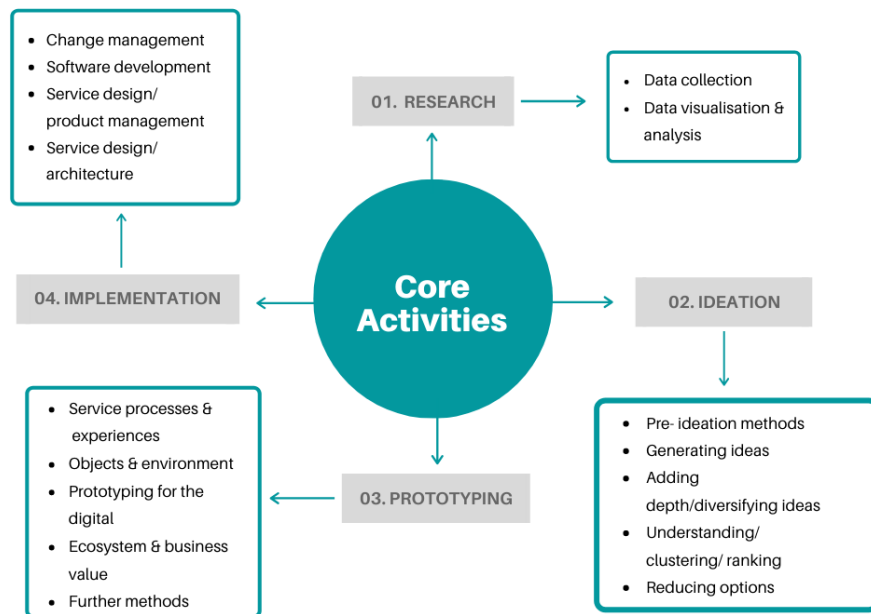


Figure 13: Four core activities of the service design process (Stickdorn et al. 2018)

As shown above, figure 13 illustrates the four concrete activities in Stickdorn's model, known as Research, Ideation, Prototyping, and Implementation. Each of those stages has its own patterns and methods that are applied. In the process, the Research step enables designers to figure out how people behave towards a service or product, whether it is physical or digital. There are two main activities in this first step, which are Data Collection and Data visualization

and analysis. The second step, considered Ideation, includes many methods that are pre-idea- tion, ideas generation, idea depth and diversity development, understanding, clustering, rank- ing and options deduction. Ideation, assumed to be crucial, however, does not matter the most in the process. In fact, the concrete value is not about the ideas themselves but the results that derive from them. As mentioned before, Prototyping is respectively the following step. It is used to analyze, rate and demonstrate people’s behaviors and experience in the upcoming service situation. In this aspect, it is quite similar to the Ideation stage, which means that it also has several methods such as service processes and experience, objects and environment, prototyping for the digital, ecosystem and business value and further methods. Lastly, there is one step representing the prior period of experimenting and testing called Implementation. Since its outcomes are useful and applicable, it is used in several fields such as Change man- agement, Software management, Service Design in Product management and Architecture. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 90 - 93.)

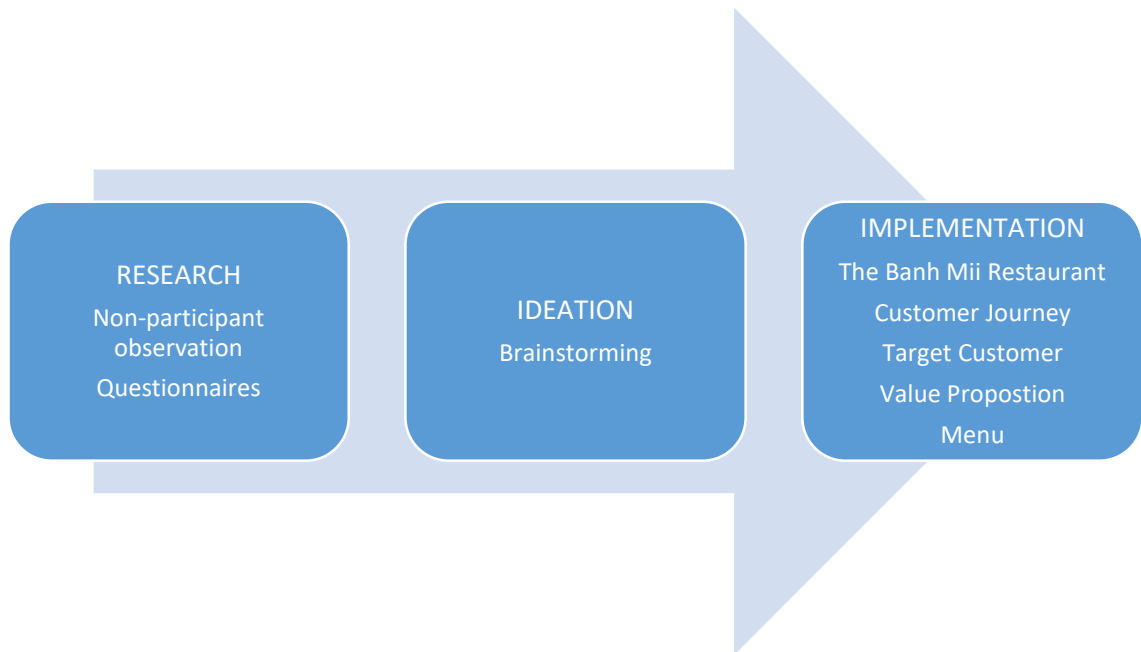


Figure 14: Process of Service Design used in the thesis

Figure 14 presents the process which will be used in this thesis. In the research phase, the authors used a non-participant method, which took place in Ho Chi Minh City. The main purpose of this research is to observe the service flow of different restaurants which have various business scales. Following the Research stage is the Ideation stage. At this step, a brainstorming method was chosen in order to generate ideas and opinions as much as possible. The original process concludes four stages, but the authors decided to exclude the Prototyping stage due to the lack of resources. Last but not least, at the Implementation stage, the authors will write about the value proposition and menu, which are the main outcomes of this thesis.

4.2 Research

In order to get more data to have a deep understanding of some specific aspects, it is advisable to do research on them. In service design, research takes an important role as it helps the design team to work further on assumptions. Generally, research could be categorized into two types: quantitative research and qualitative research. Those two types are very useful in service design. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 97.)

The main purpose of quantitative research is to gather objective measurement or mathematical, statistical or numerical analysis. The final aim is to classify features, construct statistical models to explain what was observed. On the other hand, qualitative research focuses on words or images, not numbers. As words and images may have multiple meanings because it could provide clear or unclear messages, it is essential to extract and process the results carefully. This chapter introduces the research methods chosen by the authors, which are on-participation observation and group interview.

4.2.1 Non-participant observation

In order to get more data to have a deep understanding about some specific aspects, it is advisable to do research on them. Different methods can be used. Depending on what kind of data or answers need to be collected, a suitable method will be chosen to serve the purpose. There are two types of research: quantitative research and qualitative research.

Observation method is a coherent approach to collect data by observing people in natural conditions or scenes. Even though it is mainly used to collect qualitative data, it can also be used for collecting quantitative data. There are two different types of observations: simple or behavioral. By using simple observations, data would be collected in numerical type, such as how many customers walked in a restaurant in one hour. On the other hand, behavioral observation is used to observe and construe people's behavior; for instance, how a waiter greets and takes customers to the tables. Observation method is usually considered as an inexpensive but effective way to collect data as researchers record the data themselves as there is no participant needed for reporting answers, and its flexibility is also taken as an advantage since researchers can start and stop observing anytime they want. However, it requires skills and well-trained time for researchers to take on observations and record it correctly, sometimes researchers might lose their time if the situation does not occur to be observed, or the data might be biased as the participant happens to know that they are being observed. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 123.)

There are two types of participant observations: participant or non-participant. Non-participant observation means researchers would not identify themselves, nor expose the purpose of their

activities to those they would observe. This method is used to understand an event or community by entering it while staying separated from the activities which are being observed. (O’Gorman et al 2015, 131.)

4.2.2 Process and results of Non-participant observation

As the need of the appropriate information for the author’s restaurant establishment, a non-participant observation was carried out in the biggest city of Vietnam - Ho Chi Minh City. Since the main topic is about the business with the main product is banh mi, there were three different stores concerned to be suitable, which were Chao restaurant, Banh Mi Huynh Hoa and Banh Mi Nhu Lan. The reason for those objectives to be chosen is their great popularity and good reputation among the locals and even tourists. Customers have given lots of good reviews on their banh mi throughout many years. Additionally, three places have their ways to run business, which results in a wider angle for the aspects of the research. After thorough consideration, two authors decided to pick these places from the most potential suggested options. In the following paragraph, these three selected restaurants are shortly introduced when a detailed process and results of the observation are explained and analyzed thoroughly. In the process, since the authors directly experienced and observed the service, they consider themselves “customers”.

Established in 2015, Chao restaurant has become quite popular among Vietnamese youngsters with their modern way of business. Aiming at young customers and those who want to try fusion dishes, Chao Restaurant offers a modern and spacey eat-in area that customers can come in as a group of friends or family. Having decided to carry out the observation here, the authors visited Chao as their customers to experience the service as well as the atmosphere, for which they would describe the process by using the term “customers”. To have more time to observe, they decided to visit the place during the lunch time instead of their rush-hours, which was evening time.

Located at 31 Tran Quang Dieu, Ward 14, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City, Chao has a nice position, on a crowded street with plenty of clothing stores nearby. With a motorbike parking right in front of the restaurant, customers could easily park their motorbikes in a secured parking lot and go straight to the restaurant. When getting in the restaurants, they were greeted, seated and handed menus so that they could take some time to consider. At the time they arrived, although the place was slightly full with office workers and college students, it was spacey enough for everyone to have their personal spaces. After handling the customers menu, the staff tried to explain some basics about food and beverages. Since the menu was quite long with many options in Vietnamese, the authors have sorted out the most crucial information from it and created a summarized table (table 1) to make it easier to understand. In the menu, there are five categories of products for sale, which are salad, main course, snacks, add-ons

and drinks. The price varies based on particular products, however, it is believed to be quite affordable.

Options	Price Range (€)
Salad	1.12 - 1.91
Main course	Banh mi - Fries: Single Combo: 2.87 - 3.66 Double Combo: 5.22 - 6.85 Hot pot Set: Double Combo: 7.81 Family Combo: 15.29 Rice Set: 2.75 - 3.31 Spaghetti Set: 2.43 - 3.31
Snacks	0.88 - 3
Add-ons	0.28 - 1.59
Drinks	0.52 - 0.84

Table 1: Chao's Simplified Menu

When they were ready to order, waiters would approach to take orders and serve drinks. It took them about 15 minutes to get the food ready to be served. As the name of the restaurant is "Chao", which means a small pan in the Vietnamese language, this is also a signature of the restaurant: they will serve food on a sizzling pan with house-made fresh bread. There are different combos and portions for customers to select, the pan in Figure 15, for example, is for two diners. In this combo, French fries and soft drinks are also included. When served, the food was so hot on the pan with a sizzling sound, bread was warm and soft and the French fries were crispy.



Figure 15: A portion of food served on a sizzling pan

The atmosphere was quite open as they used glass walls and customers could see all the activities on the streets. In the end, customers could decide to pay at the table, which can be seen in figure 16, by either cash or card. The bill was brought directly to the table so customers could check and pay. After that, they were supposed to wait for a while when the staff came to the cashier counter to proceed the payment to get back change or their receipt. Additionally, as in figure 16, the staff had a proper uniform, a black T-shirt with a restaurant's logo on the back, which showed their professional system.



Figure 16: Inside Chao Restaurant

Unlike Chao restaurant, Banh Mi Huynh Hoa is well-known for its traditional takeaway baguettes for more than a decade. Although they have considerably higher prices than a lot of other places, their popularity seems not to stop. According to VN Express (2017), Banh mi Huynh Hoa is considered one of the most popular banh mi stores in Ho Chi Minh City. Talking about the

quality and price, Wiens (2016) also complimented on their “meat packed” and “worth the price” banh mi when he had a chance to come there.

Their store has always been full of locals and foreigners because of their great baguettes, which is the main reason for the authors to carry out their observations. Located at 26 Le Thi Rieng St, Ward 1, Ben Thanh District, it was not too difficult for the researchers to find, especially when there was always a long queue in front of the door. Banh Mi Huynh Hoa was organized as a food stall which only offered takeaway banh mi. There was only one open-air food stall, in which the ingredients were filled up neatly and well-organized, as shown in figure 17 below. All the cold cuts were pre-sliced and placed ready on the shelf with pork floss on the left side. Pate, mayonnaise and other condiments were set up underneath.



Figure 17: Ingredients on Banh Mi Huynh Hoa’s trolley (Tin Tuc 2018)



Figure 18: Banh Mi Huynh Hoa from outside (Beirutibrit 2019)

Figure 18 shows Banh Mi Huynh Hoa food stall and the customers queue. In order to order and buy food, customers had to queue along the pavement as there was not any parking lot. Since there were not many customers on the day researchers arrived, it only took 5 minutes to wait for their turns. They had a very simple menu with the main product was banh mi at a fixed

price, especially convenient for tourists not to bargain at all. Moreover, to raise the revenue, they tried to promote another product, steamed bun, by hanging a small sign on the left of the door. The researchers, apparently, chose the regular banh mi with all the condiments included. When they approached the food stall, there would be one staff taking care of receiving orders and payment, cash only. Another staff, usually more than two, prepared and packed the food in front of the customers and handed them immediately.

The staff, to be frank, seemed not to be happy and cheerful, probably because of a long day with a long queue of people. However, they were still helpful to customize the baguettes based on customer's preferences, either by adding or excluding ingredients. It took less than five minutes to prepare as all the ingredients were premade and the staff were undoubtedly experienced. After waiting for some time, customers finally got the baguettes packed in a paper bag with a brand name on it. Surprisingly, the baguettes were so heavy that the weight could not be from the bread itself, instead, it came from thick layers of cold cuts, ham, pate, mayonnaise and fresh vegetables inside the bread. However, the interesting thing about the system here was that customers would pay only after receiving the food to a particular responsible person, who is usually the owner or manager of the store.

Last but not least, Banh Mi Nhu Lan, known as one of the biggest banh mi stores in Ho Chi Minh City, is considered to be a part of the research. Founded in the 1970s by Mrs. Nguyen Thi Dau, Banh Mi Nhu Lan now has two stores on Ham Nghi Street and Hai Ba Trung Street, where they do not only sell banh mi but also plenty of local specialties. Banh Mi Nhu Lan does not offer eat-in area, they only serve takeaway customers as shown in figure 19 below. According to the figure, they have a much bigger store compared to Banh Mi Huynh Hoa, which proves their wealth and the scale of business. The place is not only the place to sell baguettes but also an open kitchen, where they produce fresh banh mi and house-made ingredients. Additionally, on the store signs, the contact information is clearly mentioned together with their specialties (on the right side) that customers can order in big quantities.



Figure 19: Front side of Banh Mi Nhu Lan (Foody 2019)

Visiting the Nhu Lan store on Ham Nghi Street, the researchers ordered two meat baguettes to experience their service. They did not have a written menu but the names and price tags were attached directly at the food counter, in Vietnamese, which caused inconvenience for foreigners who do not know the Vietnamese language. Having a similar system as Huynh Hoa, here the customers had to order food at the counters which they could see and choose the food. As shown in Figure 20, a large variety of products were displayed at the front counter so that the staff could easily reach and sell them to customers in a short time. The products from Nhu Lan varied from dry-processed packages to freshly made food such as banh mi and its condiments. Behind the counters, the Nhu Lan store had many staff to meet the high demand so waiting time was much shorter compared to Huynh Hoa. At the time customers got the products (baguettes), they handed cash to the responsible staff and got back changes after some moments. In fact, researchers found that their service was okay enough to please their customers. However, the quality of service would be influenced if there were plenty of customers at the same time or lack of employees.



Figure 20: Customers order food in front of the counters (Foody 2019)

In Figure 20, there were many staff standing behind the counters, but at different food sections. The counters were set up right in front of the building so it was convenient for walk-by customers, or for those who commuted by motorbikes and cars. There were not any security guards to take care of the vehicle, in fact, customers were responsible for that while purchasing. Since the first day of business, they have always been busy developing their baguettes and other specialties such as cold cuts, sausages and meat floss, which leads to their great success nowadays.

After experiencing the service of three stores, the researchers have collected the main points and created a comparison table (Table 2). The whole process was observed and written by two authors and eventually summarized shortly so that readers find it interesting and understandable. There are similarities as well as differences related to these research objects, which are analyzed and compared after the non-participant observation. As shown in Table 2, these three locations are all private businesses and established by private entrepreneurs with their main sales based on banh mi, which are two similarities among the objectives. On the other hand, there are several uncommon points in their scales of business, established time, products, price range, service, capacity, accessibility, customer segment and marketing methods, all of which will be thoroughly explained in the next paragraph.

		Chao Restaurant	Banh Mi Huynh Hoa	Banh Mi Nhu Lan
Similarities	Private business by entrepreneurs Main product - Banh Mi			
Differences	Scale of Business	10 - 20 employees	10 - 20 employees	50 - 70 employees
	Established time	2015	2009	1970s
	Products	Local & International food Fixed and seasonal menu	Local food Fixed menu	Local & International food Fixed and seasonal menu

	Price	Starts from 1€	Starts from 2€	Starts from 1.5€
	Service	Eat-in & takeaway	Takeaway	Takeaway
	Payment method	Cash & Card	Cash	Cash
	Capacity	50 - 60 seats	None	None
	Parking	Available	Unavailable	Unavailable
	Customer Segment	Locals/Foreigners Students/Families/ Office workers	Locals Tourists/Office Workers	Locals Families/Tourists/ Office workers
	Marketing Methods	Social Media & Word of mouth	Word of mouth	Word of mouth

Table 2: Non-participant Observation Results from three research objectives

While Chao Restaurant and Banh mi Huynh Hoa have approximately ten to twenty employees, Banh mi Nhu Lan has fifty to seventy staff in their stores as a result of their high reputation and business longevity, which has been over fifty years. Business established time also affects the restaurants' menu. Nhu Lan has been considered as an iconic banh mi restaurant in Ho Chi Minh city and a part of the city's history, therefore, they want to offer traditional products that stand for the nation's culture. Meanwhile, Chao Restaurant focuses on trendy food, they try to internationalize local food so that customers, both locals and foreigners, could experience the unique tastes, which is completely different from what Nhu Lan and Huynh Hoa do.

About the products, Chao and Nhu Lan offer a wider range of options including both local and international food when Huynh Hoa keeps focusing only on local baguettes. In this case, Chao and Nhu Lan have quite many things in common, which shows that they have both fixed and seasonal menus, approximately equally priced products. Specifically, for Chao, they have lots of seasonal offers within a year as well as promotions on combo or set menus for younger

customers. Meanwhile, Nhu Lan's business is more about traditional offers that families want to purchase, especially during national occasions such as Lunar New Year and Mid-Autumn Festival. Furthermore, providing an eat-in area and table service allows Chao to focus on serving families or groups, who want to spend time together over lunch or dinner. Unlike the competitor, Huynh Hoa only offers a fixed menu with takeaway service all year round. Without offering a place to eat in, Huynh Hoa & Nhu Lan focus on customers who want to grab quick but quality meals, such as office workers during lunchtime, or tourists. With a contemporary mindset, Chao's owners are also aware of the importance and convenience of card payment, thus it is available at their restaurant while Nhu Lan and Huynh Hoa only accept cash payment. Apparently, offering an eat-in service, Chao has to provide the parking place for their customers, which the other two do not have for their premises.

Last but not least, the marketing method of each business considerably matters to their success. Known as an old-school business, Huynh Hoa and Nhu Lan gain their reputation from word-of-mouth effect while Chao restaurant is more aware of their social media marketing. Chao has been proactive on Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok, which leads to their great popularity among Vietnamese youngsters and foreigners since they even have English information on their Facebook page and English-speaking staff. On the other hand, at the beginning, Huynh Hoa and Nhu Lan get customers mainly from word-of-mouth power but after that, thanks to many food bloggers around the world, resulting in their rise of popularity.

4.2.3 Questionnaires

The Questionnaire method is the most popular method to collect quantitative data. Either named as a questionnaire or a survey, it is usually written on hard-copy version (paper) or soft-copy one (digital form). Researchers design the questions and give them to their sample, and the participants will answer the question. Each participant will be asked to answer a similar set of questions, therefore, it allows researchers to collect responses from a large sample prior to quantitative analysis. A questionnaire mostly has closed-ended questions, which means the participant will select the answers from given options. Sometimes, open-ended questions are also provided to get some different perspectives. A good questionnaire should have clear objectives, correct grammar and spelling. (Saunders 2016, 439.)

Advantages of Questionnaires method: It takes less time than other methods to collect data, simple and easy-to-use, could be cost-effective when collecting data from a large sample. Limitations of Questionnaires method: responses might not give good insight and informative data, a long questionnaire might disinterest and bore participants, the respondent might give inexact answers due to questions misunderstanding. Also, it is not possible to get back to the participants who choose to take part in anonymously and collect additional data. (Saunders 2016, 439.)

There are different types of questionnaires, they are categorized by how it is delivered and collected. For example, there are self-completed questionnaires (respondents will complete and return the questionnaires by themselves via internet or postal), interviewer-completed questionnaires (interviewers will record respondent's answers), or face-to-face questionnaires (this is also known as structured interviews, interviewers meet and ask respondents physically). The authors decided to choose a self-completed method via the internet as it would allow the interviewers to reach more respondents and collect more information. (Saunders et al. 2016, 439.)

4.2.4 Process and Results of Questionnaires

In order to collect opinions of citizens in the Metropolitan area on customers' eating out behaviors and decision-making process when choosing a restaurant, the authors created an online questionnaire form to gather data. The target respondents are those who live, study and work in the Metropolitan area. The respondents will be given a link to a questionnaire form which they can read and answer the questions in both types: multiple choice and open-ending question. The purpose of giving open-ending questions is to give the respondents the flexibility in answering the questions so that they can also give suggestions freely.

QUESTIONS	CHOICES/ANSWERS
1. What's your age?	(18-27) - (28-37) - (38-45)
2. What is your profession?	(Open-ended question)
3. What is your monthly income?(€)	(Below 2000) - (2000 - 4000) - (Over 4000)
4. How often do you eat out per week?	(More than 3 times) - (Less than 3 times)
5. When do you usually eat out?	(Breakfast) - (Lunch) - (Dinner)
6. With whom do you often dine out?	(Friends/ Colleagues/ Classmates) - (Family members) - (None)

7. Beside food quality, which is the most important criteria for you to choose a restaurant?	(Location) - (Price) - (Variety of choices)
8. Beside food quality, which criteria makes you come back to a restaurant?	(Location) - (Price) - (Variety of choices)
9. Evaluate the effect of these features on restaurants' business?	(Food visuality) - (Restaurant's Interior) - (Packaging) / (Important) - (Not important)
10. Have you ever tried any places that sell banh mi in the Metropolitan area?	(Yes) - (No)
11. Are you interested in trying out a new banh mi restaurant?	(Yes) - (No) - (Maybe)

Table 3: Online questionnaire content

Table 3 displays the questions asked during the research phase. The questions are prepared according to the information needed for the outcomes of the thesis. The questions are carefully designed in order to get the ideal results. Since the authors want to focus on the age range from 18 up to 45, the option for above 45-year-old participants was not included in the survey.

After being edited and published through an online platform, the questionnaire forms were sent out via emails and Facebook users to figure out what affect customers' decision when choosing a restaurant to eat, or what do they think about a new restaurant concept. 100 forms were sent out via 80 personal emails and 20 Facebook users. There were eleven questions covering different aspects of the restaurant business. Respondents were also asked about personal background so that demographic information could be extracted later on.

In total, 90 responses were recorded. Participants have different backgrounds: student, manager, software developer, waiter, bartender, chef, engineer, teacher, and so on. 80% of the participants eat out no more than 3 times per week, they tend to go out for lunch (56.7%) rather than dinner (43.3%) and surprisingly, nobody buys breakfast. Nearly three quarters (73.3%) usually eat with friends, colleagues or classmates, one quarter go with family members and only one participant (3.3%) decides to eat alone.

When it comes to how to decide a restaurant to eat in, assuming that all the restaurant will provide good quality food, participants are asked to choose one important criteria that they will use to make a decision. Half of the participants (50%) voted that price would be the first option they thought of, following were location (26.7%) and the variety of choices (23.3%). Price is also the most important factor that could make customers come back for another time, according to the survey. Meanwhile, the variety of choices took 33.3% of the votes and location had the lowest result, only 16.7%. As shown, besides the food quality that the restaurant could offer, customers expect acceptable prices of the food whenever they want to eat out, either at a new or similar place. By making customers come back for not only the second time but several times in the upcoming period, that would allow restaurants to gain more loyal customers and build good relationships with them.

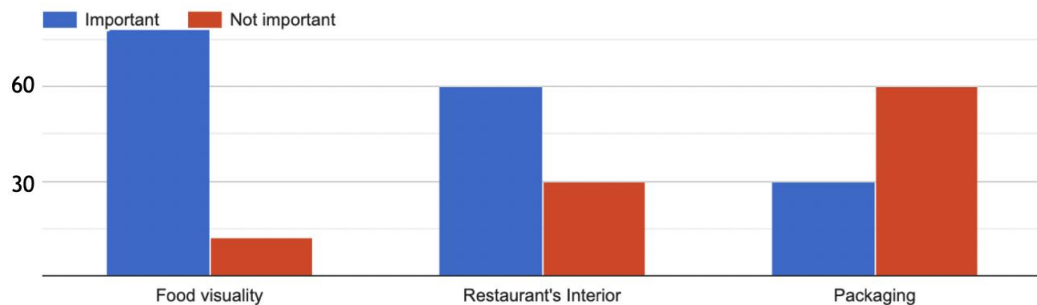


Figure 21: Criteria that affect restaurants' business (n=90)

Figure 21 displays how customers rate the importance of food visuality, restaurant's interior and packaging to the restaurant's business. According to the result, 86.7% of participants agreed that food visuality is very important, while only 13.7% voted the other way. Two-thirds of the participants voted that the restaurant's interior takes an important role in the business, and the same amount said that packaging is not considered to the business.

Participants were also asked about their own experience on banh mi and the new restaurant concept, whether they would like to try out a new banh mi restaurant. Almost half of them had already tried banh mi in the Metropolitan area (46.7%) and another half had not tried (53.3%). And when it comes to the new banh mi restaurant concept, 70% voted that they want to try out, while some participants said they might want to (23.3%), and the rest (6.7%) voted they would not. In order to get more insights into the new business concept, the two authors decided to process more information on the participants who are interested in trying out the new banh mi restaurant (Group 1) and who have not tried banh mi but wanted to try (Group 2). Group 1 (n=39) contains participants who voted "Yes" in both question number 10 and 11. Group 2

(n=45) covers who chose “No” in question number 10 (including those who voted “Maybe” and “Yes” in the next question).

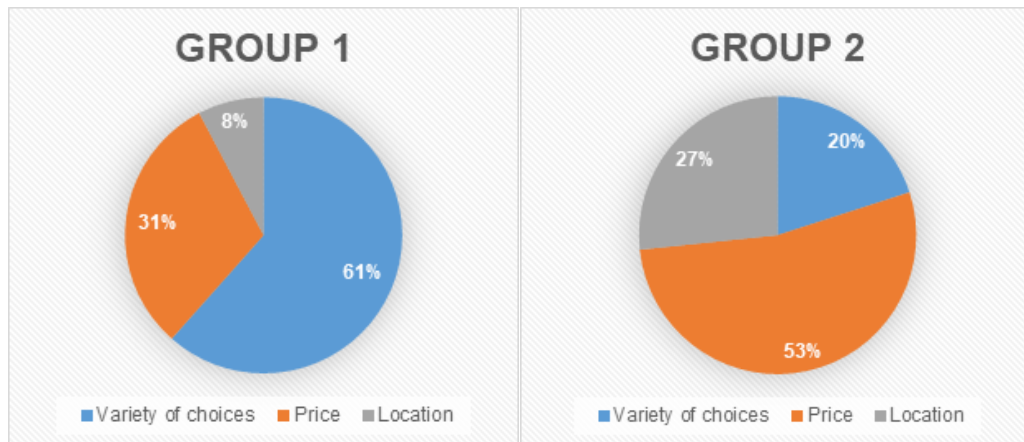


Figure 22: The influencing factors when choosing a restaurant (Group 1: n=39; Group 2: n=45)

Figure 22 shows the difference in participants’ interests when choosing a restaurant. In Group 1, as the participants already tried banh mi, the authors would like to know the core elements that make them return to try the same type of food (as in question 8). As can be seen from the chart, customers would come back for the variety of choices, which marks up 61%. Price is also a considerable element since it takes 31%, which is almost 4 times higher than the location’s. It can be inferred that customers are willing to come back to a specific restaurant several times to keep trying out its extended menu since the restaurant had satisfied them before with good quality and reasonable price, despite the location factor. Meanwhile, with Group 2, when being asked what would be the key elements to choose the new restaurant, or try the new concept of food (question 9), more than 50% participants chose the price of the food, location and variety of choices share the same level of importance, with 27% and 20% respectively. It is clear to see that with two different purposes when deciding a restaurant, customers have different priorities to think of. Based on this result, authors can process and create suitable strategies to approach the right customer segments.

4.3 Ideation

Ideation is one of the crucial steps in service design. It includes different stages of how to generate, diversify, develop, sort, select ideas. There would be tons of spontaneous ideas that researchers can think of when working on a project, but sometimes, they have to intentionally create suitable ones, or fix the ideas that they already had. After having as many ideas as they have expected, it is necessary to decrease the number of options, assemble them in a usable content.

Talking about generating and selection ideas, multiple methods can be applied in order to carry out the whole ideation process. These methods are categorized by their natures: for pre-ideation, there are slicing the elephant, splitting the image, ideas from journey mapping, ideas from system mapping. For generating ideas, brainstorming, brainwriting, 10 plus 10 could be used. Moreover, in order to add depth and diversity, there are bodystorming, using cards and checklists. Octopus clustering, Benny Hill sorting, idea portfolio, decision matrix are used for understanding, clustering and ranking options. Last but not least, to reduce options, it is suggested to use quick voting methods and physical commitment. The authors of this thesis decided to choose brainstorming as the preliminary method for ideating. (Stickdorn et al. 2019, 176.)

4.3.1 Brainstorming

Different from other ideation methods, brainstorming is used to resolve and improve a problem. This method works best when it is carried out in a group, even though it can be used individually too. Once the problem is decided, participants will focus on generating and specifying ideas so that they can bring up many basic answers. Moreover, brainstorming is also considered as an innovative technique to discover new solutions or ideas through the group work. Every member of a team is encouraged to figure out as many ideas as possible, despite the level of irrelevance or feasibility of the idea. Only when the meeting is over and transferred to the evaluation stage that discussion and comment are allowed. (Curedale 2013, 16.)

Brainstorming method is not specifically used in any field but it is beneficial to various sectors: advertising, process management, crisis management, or so on. Business managers can use brainstorming methods to evaluate ideas, find solutions for difficult tasks or problems. As a result, the workload would be solved more efficiently if this method is used correctly. The more participants in a group have, the more solutions it can offer while brainstorming.

In order to bring out the best result, there would be a facilitator who leads the sessions and makes sure the discussion goes smoothly between the participants. First off, the participants will be given the rules of the session, such as not commenting or criticizing other opinions, focus on the topic, and contribute individual ideas. Secondly, participants will be given tools (papers, pens, boards, markers, or so on) to jot down their ideas. Finally, after all the participants finished their work, or after a certain period of time, ideas will be collected and processed in order to provide the final result. (Curedale 2013, 18-21.)

4.3.2 Process and results of Brainstorming

Specifically, the brainstorming method was chosen by the authors in the ideation stage. The two authors organized a brainstorming session, together with two more guests, who are also Vietnamese students of Laurea University of Applied Sciences. The first attendant is from the same major with authors, Restaurant Entrepreneurship, thus she has a great fund of knowledge

about the field while the second attendant is a student in Business Management major, whose strength is business establishment. Although they have different majors, they both have lots of experiences in the area gained from working and also, since they are from Vietnam, their viewpoints are more realistic and applicable. As having more guests invited to the sessions, it would allow the authors to gain more objective and out-of-the-box ideas. Furthermore, with two experienced attendants and their objective points of view, the process would be carried out more smoothly.

The main purpose of the ideation session was to generate ideas, opinions, conceptions for menus and value propositions. In the process, two authors were responsible for carefully instructing the guests about the steps as well as recording the results afterward. It was essential for the whole group, especially the guests, to thoroughly understand the topic and its purposes. As authors wanted to receive as many ideas as possible, there were no other certain rules or requirements but being relevant to the main topics. At the beginning of the process, all attendants would be provided a blank sheet of paper so that they could make their own mind map. Every one of them, then, sat separately to concentrate on brainstorming the ideas in a particular period of time. Eventually, all mind maps were collected, listed and added into the following figure (Figure 23) and tables (Table 4-5-6), in which the ideas were divided into two groups: Similarities and Differences.



Figure 23: Four attendants' mind maps in brainstorming session

Menu		Ideas
Similarities		Vegan options Kid's menu Combo/ Set menu Special drinks (Vietnamese coffee)
Differences	Participant 1	Plain Banh mi available
	Participant 2	Banh mi of the month Seasonal products Side dishes
	Participant 3	Banh mi with chicken/ Seafood/ Beef/ Pork
	Participant 4	Banh mi & Sandwiches Customized banh mi

Table 4: Menu brainstorming results

Business Concept		Ideas
Similarities		Vietnamese casual dining restaurant Located in Helsinki city center/ metro station/ shopping malls Self-service
Differences	Participant 1	Different Lunch & A la carte Menus Central Viet Nam's theme
	Participant 2	Pay at the counter Catering service No reservation

	Participant 3	Fast food that has many elements Food chain
	Participant 4	Food truck/ kiosk Tick & Pick: Pre-order ⇒ pick up food

Table 5: Business concept brainstorming results

Value Proposition		Ideas
Similarities		Nutritious food Unique restaurant's decoration/ food display Attractive takeaway packaging Exceptional service
Differences	Participant 1	Good vibes Food authenticity
	Participant 2	Local/ house-made ingredients Good price-to-quality ratio
	Participant 3	Fast service with short waiting time Quick/nutritious breakfast grasp
	Participant 4	Quick serving time Developing fast food culture

Table 6: Value Proposition brainstorming results

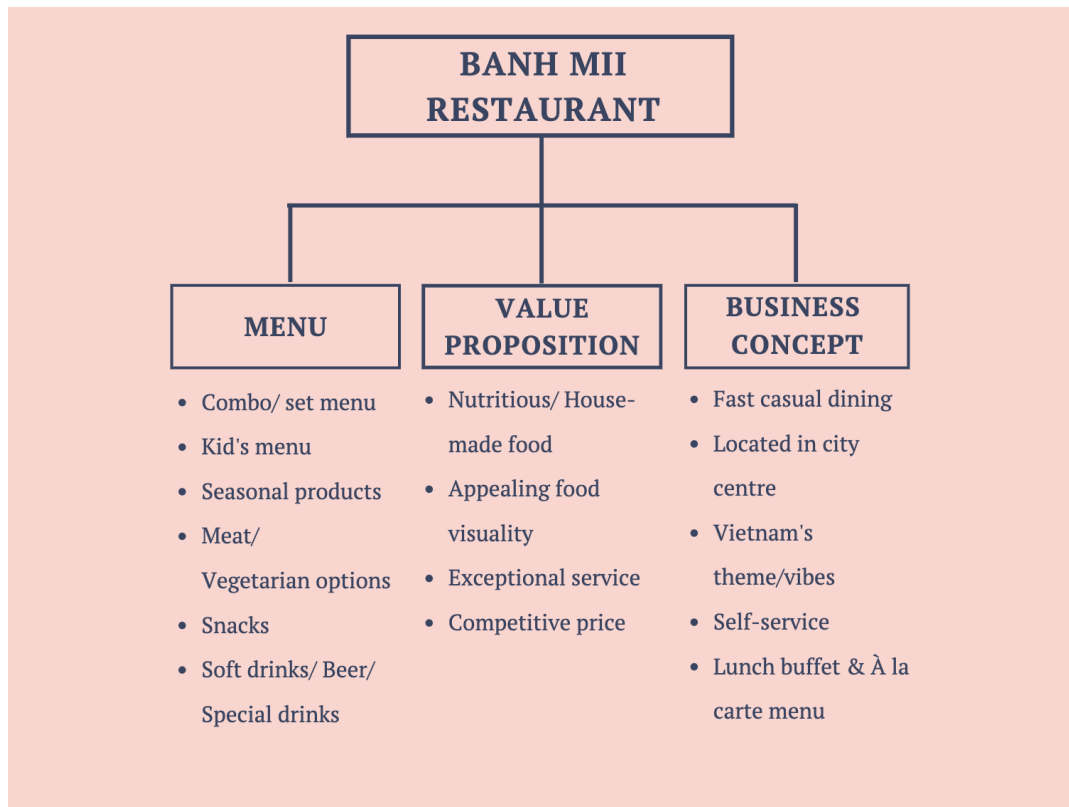


Figure 24: Brainstorming Result Summary

After the brainstorming session, the authors had come to a unanimous conclusion about given topics, which was shown in figure 24 above. All good and potential ideas were put into consideration and then listed in the figure shortly to make them easier to understand. However, they are only basic and general ideas about the menu, value proposition and business concept at the time. To result in a successful plan, many aspects need to be concerned, for which a detailed business concept will be thoroughly explained in the following chapter.

Furthermore, creating Customer Personas does not only help the authors to clarify the target customers but also considerably contributes to the restaurant concept, menu and value definition. Specifically, with different customer groups, authors are able to create an appropriate theme, vibes and interior for their future restaurant as well as the type of service they want to provide. Additionally, defining different target groups with particular needs and eating habits is beneficial to menu design and items selection. For instance, as groups aged 18 - 27 and 28 - 37 often dine out with friends and colleagues during lunch time, it is necessary to focus more on the lunch offer, known as salad buffet and complimentary drinks. Additionally, knowing these two younger groups are willing to experience new food and drinks as well as to socialize, the restaurant will provide special set menus and drinks. Meanwhile, groups aged 38 - 45 are about elder people with kids, so a family-friendly menu is concentrated to meet their demands. Besides, customer personas also influence the business value proposition. Different

customers have certain diets due to their religions, nationalities, ages and eating habits, thus it is helpful to define the key values to build a great customer relationship further on.

5 The Banh Mii House concept

The final aim of the thesis is to create a business concept that could be applied practically, which means the implementation stage is the most essential in the service design process. Implementation is detailing what should be done after analyzing, experimenting, producing and exhibiting. This stage requires diverse skill sets, such as change management (which includes training, coaching, recruiting), software development or product management. In the thesis, the authors will focus on creating a concept for a new restaurant so that it could be executed in the near future. The main aspects are the type of restaurant, menu, customer journey map and finally, the target customer.

5.1 The Banh Mii House Concept

To lead to a successful restaurant, it is vital for its owner(s) to come up with a great concept. As a concept represents an entire impression or image of a restaurant, it has become considerably essential for every business. No matter what kind of restaurant it is, from a food stall to a fine-dining restaurant or from a fast-food chain to a themed restaurant, the concept has to be whole-heartedly illustrated so that its image is appealing to customers. Consequently, everything affecting a place's image is related to the concept, especially its name, logo, menu and interior. However, considering this thesis idea as an initial plan, some factors such as logo or interior will be excluded, while the restaurant's name, menu and service are explaining in detail. (Walker 2011, 63.)

To contribute to the uniqueness of banh mi, the concept restaurant was named "The Banh Mii House" by the two authors. While bearing the name of Vietnam's iconic food, The Banh Mii house is expected to expand the perception of banh mi and Vietnamese food culture in general to the Metropolitan citizens, not only to the locals but also to the multi-cultural citizens and tourists in this area. Based on the types of restaurant study, authors have come to a decision that The Banh Mii House will be operated as a fast-casual dining restaurant. This type of restaurant offers food and beverages at reasonable prices with a trendy atmosphere and counter service, in which the customers have to help themselves at some points.

With the strong passion of Vietnamese banh mi, the owners would design the place with a Vietnam local theme to give the customers as strong an impression as they have. Moreover, it is also a unique experience for Vietnamese students and workers here in Finland to be nostalgic when visiting The Banh Mii House, with memorable scenery and fresh smell of banh mi. Nevertheless, not only the restaurant images have to be concerned but the provided service, targeted

customers as well as its key value are also important. In the following sub-chapters, a detailed explanation of the important factors such as Menu, Customer Journey Map, Customer Personas and Value Propositions will be brought forward to visualize The Banh Mii House's concept.

5.2 Menu

According to Walker (2011, 114), a menu is the heart of the restaurant that shows everything offered for food and beverages. Thus, restaurant owners must be aware of the type of menus they follow and the factors related to it. There are several types of menus applied in the restaurant business, some of which mentioned here are slightly more popular than others. Lots of fancy restaurants use French-tradition menus with classical order of dining: hor oeuvres (appetizers), soup, seafood, entrées, grilled meat items, vegetables, salad and desserts. On the other hand, some others use a similar type of menu but with the house's specialties offered in a separate group or section. Meanwhile, coffee shops often have a separate page of breakfast items even if they offer it for the whole day. Furthermore, one of the most popular types of menus is *À la carte*, a French-rooted word that means "from the menu". Simply saying, this type of menu offers customers separate items at fixed prices to order, rather than a set meal. (Walker 2011, 132.)

In the meantime, menus can be divided into different types in a chronological way, known as lunch and dinner menus. There are often some small differences in these two types, for instance, serving time and content. Due to the fact that people usually go for a quick meal during lunchtime, it is vital for the owners to reduce the offers and make sure to serve the eaters quickly. The content of the lunch menu is also required to be easy to understand so that people need not to spend much time on consideration. On the contrary, dinners are considered meals that diners go for leisure, thus having more items and more complex content. For dinner menus, service speed is not the main focus but the items' variety. It is understandable that the portions and prices of the dinner menus are larger and higher compared to lunch versions. (Walker 2011, 133.)

Selecting appropriate menu items is also an important step since it reflects the nature of a restaurant. For instance, independent restaurants menus seem to be more innovative and courageous while chain restaurants menus appeal to focus on popular choices for the mass market. Depending on the type of restaurants that owners follow, the options vary in different ranges, but they should not be either too narrow or broad. It means, in that case, having too few options on the menu decreases customers' interest and on the contrary, offering too many items can lead to eaters' confusion. As a result, the menu planners are advised to conduct a thorough market research in order to know what their customers want or desire. Besides, for those places whose target customer is families, offering kid menus is an advantage. (Walker 2011, 129.)

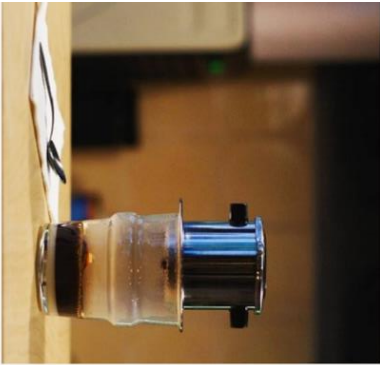

After considering, two authors decided to bring forward a sample À la carte menu for The Banh Mii House Restaurant, in which main food and beverages are demonstrated and explained. Specifically speaking, the items and prices are only for demonstrating and explaining, not for the final decision. Coming to the Banh Mii House, customers can experience both lunch and À la carte menu during weekdays. It means that the menu items remain the same for the whole day, but lunch portions and prices are deducted. Furthermore, during lunchtime (11.00 - 14.00), the place will offer its visitors a salad buffet and complimentary drinks such as tea and coffee. Afterward, the À la carte menu will be applied until they close.

The menu is divided into two parts: Banh Mi and Drinks that are shown in figure 25 below. Based on the results of the brainstorming process previously, authors were suggested to have both vegetarian/vegan and non-vegetarian/vegan options. Consequently, there are four types of banh mi with different protein sources: pork, chicken, egg and tofu, each of which has short descriptions and fixed prices to make it easier for diners to decide. Also, the Banh Mii house also offers a special menu that is highly recommended to all the customers.

The Banh Mii House	
KID'S MENU	
EGG BANH MI 1/2 banh mi, homemade pâté, mayonnaise, sunny-side-up egg, soy sauce €5.90	
VIETNAMESE-STYLE MEATBALL BANH MI 1/2 banh mi, homemade pâté, mayonnaise, meatballs, soy sauce €5.90	
BANH MI	
PORK BANH MI Homemade pâté, mayonnaise, grilled pork, pickles, cucumber, coriander, soy sauce €8.90	
CHICKEN BANH MI Homemade pâté, mayonnaise, shredded chicken, pickles, cucumber, coriander, soy sauce €8.90	
FRIED-EGG BANH MI Homemade pâté, mayonnaise, 2 sunny-side up eggs, pickles, cucumber, coriander, soy sauce €7.90	
TOFU BANH MI Mayonnaise, braised tofu, pickles, cucumber, coriander, soy sauce €8.90	
ADD-ONS	
Pâté/ Mayonnaise €2.90	
Plain banh mi €2.90	
Pork/ Chicken/ Egg/ Tofu €3.90	
SPECIALTIES	
Food is served on a sizzling pan together with pâté, mayonnaise, sausages, sunny-side up egg, cabbages, tomatoes and corn. Plain housemade banh mi is included in the meal. Choose 1 kind of protein sources • Beef • Pork • Chicken • Tofu €12.90	

**Should you have any food allergies or intolerance, please inform our staff in advance.*

The Banh Mii House

COFFEE	
Vietnamese iced-coffee (milk/ black)	£4.50
Egg coffee	£4.50
Coconut coffee	£4.50
OTHERS	
Soft drinks (Coke/ Fanta/ Sprite/ Novelle)	£3.50
Beer/ Cider	£6.50
SNACKS	
Banh mii & custard dip	£4.50
Garlic butter banh mii	£4.50

Figure 25: Food and Drink Menu of The Banh Mii House

In the special section, food is served on a sizzling pan with paté, mayonnaise, sausages, sunny-side-up egg, cabbages, tomatoes and corn and plain house-made banh mi is included in the meal and customers are free to decide what kind of meat they want for the meal. For big eaters, should they want something extra such as mayonnaise, meat or banh mi, there are add-ons options available around the clock at reasonable prices. Not only adult customers are cared for but also their children are concerned. Coming to The Banh Mi House with parents, kids can join to have a simplified version of banh mi either with fried eggs or meatballs and apparently, the portion will be smaller and charged less. In addition, the menu also clarifies that in case of allergies or intolerance, customers have to inform the responsible staff immediately to avoid any problems.

In the drink section, different trendy types of coffee in Viet Nam will be introduced respectively. Based on the idea of traditional Vietnamese filter coffee, coconut coffee, and egg coffee are also many people's favorites, for which the authors decided to put them for sales. Moreover, regular soft drinks, beer and cider are also included in the menu, together with snacks. In case customers are not hungry at all, they can try the small bites, which are garlic butter banh mi as a savory option or banh mi with custard dip as a sweet version.

5.3 Customer Journey Map

As mentioned and analyzed previously in the theory of Service Design, Customer Journey Map (CJM) is one of the essential tools to visualize customers' experience throughout a service. With the help of CJM, a company or an organization will be able to understand what their customers need and feel about the service, thus planning and developing their system effectively. Although each of the journey maps has its structure and characteristics, there are still several different types of them. However, it is not too tricky to determine a map's features, quality, focus and level of detail but designers can take advantage of some key factors. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 46.)

Based on the reliability factors, maps can be separated into assumption-based or research-based that refer to the applied sources of data. It is also possible to differentiate the maps by defining their states such as current-state or future state. From the main actor or the perspective, a company is also able to use either a customer or employee map, whose experiences are the key factor. Furthermore, journey maps can be defined as high-level or detailed maps based on different scopes and scales. Last but not least, should the designers consider to develop a map with a clear focus, it is highly recommended to use a product-centered or experienced-centered map, which will be analyzed and utilized in the thesis. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 48.)

There are some significant differences between these two types of maps that the service designers are advised to have proper understandings. The first type, product-centered journey map mainly demonstrates touchpoints that represent an interaction between customers and

service providers. That means all the steps happening outside the reach of a company are excluded or not analyzed in detail. In contrast, an experience-centered journey map mostly describes situations of context and how the touchpoints are inserted in the whole experience. Thus, in this journey map, company service and products are not the main goal to be achieved. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 50.)

Since having a small-scale business, the Banh Mii House's owners decided to follow the product-centered journey map, in which all the interactions between customers and the company and their touchpoints are thoroughly concerned and described. Additionally, to minimize the scale of the map, only the onstage actions are demonstrated. As mentioned in the Menu section, there is a small difference in the offer between lunch and dinner time, which is the salad buffet. Noticing a greater variety of activities in the lunch service, authors have chosen it to describe their customer journey map.

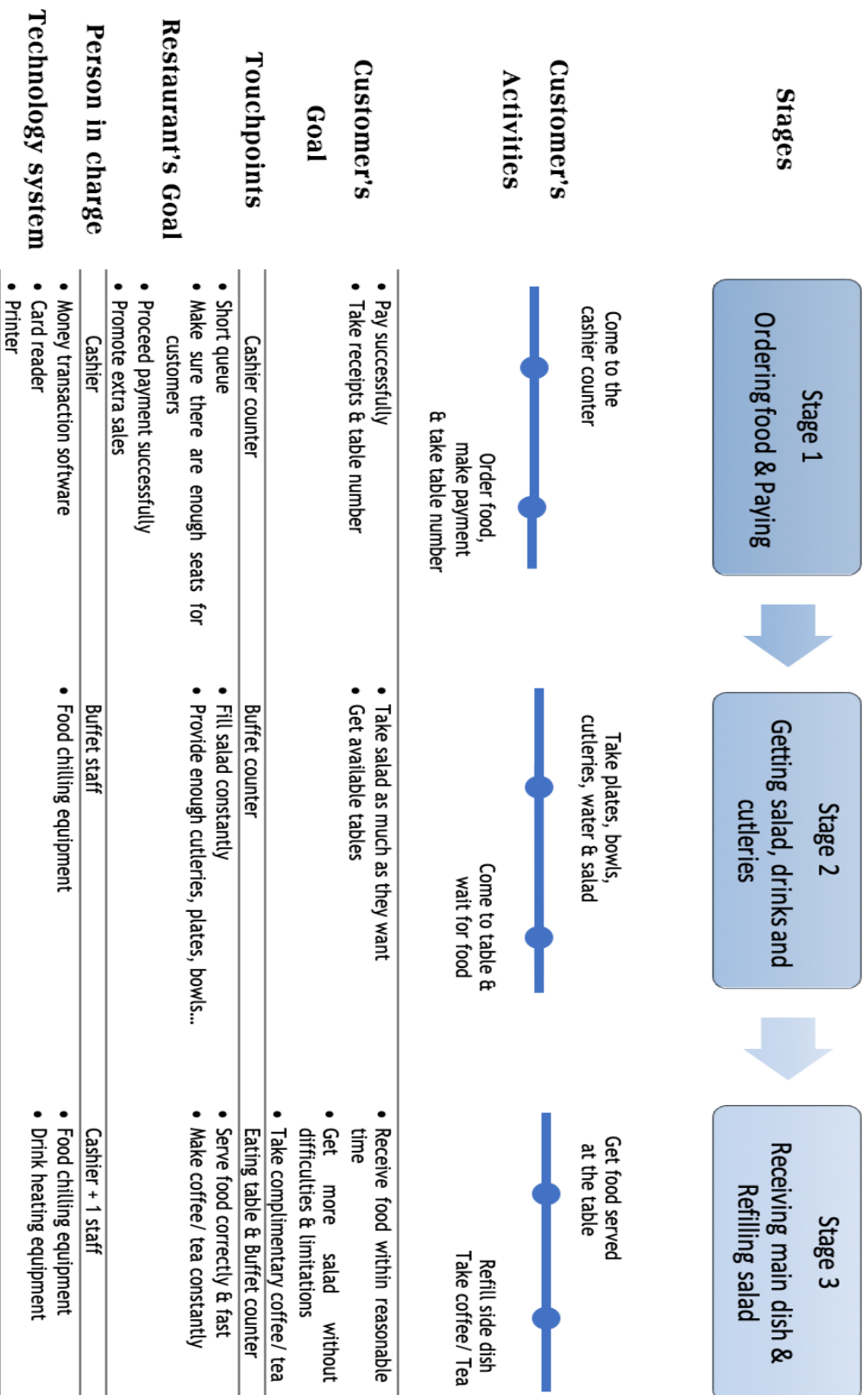


Figure 26: Customer Journey Map for The Banh Mii House

As demonstrated in figure 26, there are three stages of actions with different activities that customers have since they come to the restaurant until they leave. At the first stage, customers can spend some time reading the menu and decide which items they would like to have. Since the restaurant does not provide proper table service, the eaters need to order and pay at the counter beforehand. It is believed that this model of the system will help to reduce a lot of problems as well as give the customers the possibility to have any questions or requests before the final payment. After the payment is done successfully, customers will receive table numbers from the cashier so that food can be served straight to their tables. During this stage, the cashier has to make sure there are enough seats for the customers so they need not have to wait to get seats.

Respectively, in the second stage, customers are expected to take side salad as well as necessary cutleries, napkins and water provided from a buffet counter. With buffet features they provide, there are no limits for what eaters want from the buffet counter. After taking enough side salad, customers can have a seat with the table number to wait for the main food to be served. During this period, customers are supposed to wait for a short time so that kitchen staff can proceed with the order and bring food straight to their tables.

Lastly, the third stage is about receiving food and refilling the side dish if needed. After some time of waiting, customers can eventually get food served and enjoy it. It is possible for them also to get more salad and water from the buffet if they want during this stage of experience. At the end, there is hot coffee and tea available for the eaters without any extra cost.

5.4 Target Customer

Every business has its own customer segment. Focus on the right group of customers allows the business to reach the majority of potential customers. Restaurant business also shares that characteristic, even though everybody can walk in a restaurant but it does not mean that person is a part of the group that the restaurant has been trying to attract. In order to specify the potential customers of The Banh Mii House, the authors decided to create PERSONAS, fictional customer profiles which each of them will represent for a group of customers who share some common interests. (Sneider 2011, 172.)

Based on the result of the online questionnaires in Chapter 4, the authors will create 3 PERSONAS which represent 3 groups of potential customers. The survey had 90 respondents who have different professional backgrounds, such as students, engineers, managers, teachers, hospitality-related workers, aged from 18 to 45. Customer profiles will be divided into 3 categories based on the age.



Figure 27: Customer Persona of 18 to 27 years old group

Figure 27 shows the customer profile of people from 18 to 27 years old. According to the online questionnaires, they are mostly students and fresh graduates, they do not eat out frequently, usually below 3 times a week. They tend to gather and socialize with friends or classmates during dinner time. The most important factor when they choose a restaurant is the price of food. And it is also the main aspect for them to come back to a specific restaurant. They are interested in trying different cuisines.



Figure 28: Customer Persona of 28 to 37 years old group

With the age range of 28 to 37, people usually eat lunch together with their colleagues. Besides the food quality, location takes a major part in their decision- making process when choosing a place to eat. They will look for nearby restaurants due to their short lunch break. Food variety also takes part in building customer loyalty, customers might not come back to a restaurant with very limited choices. Sometimes, when they do not have enough time to go out for lunch, they will opt for food delivery service and in that case, food packaging also matters.

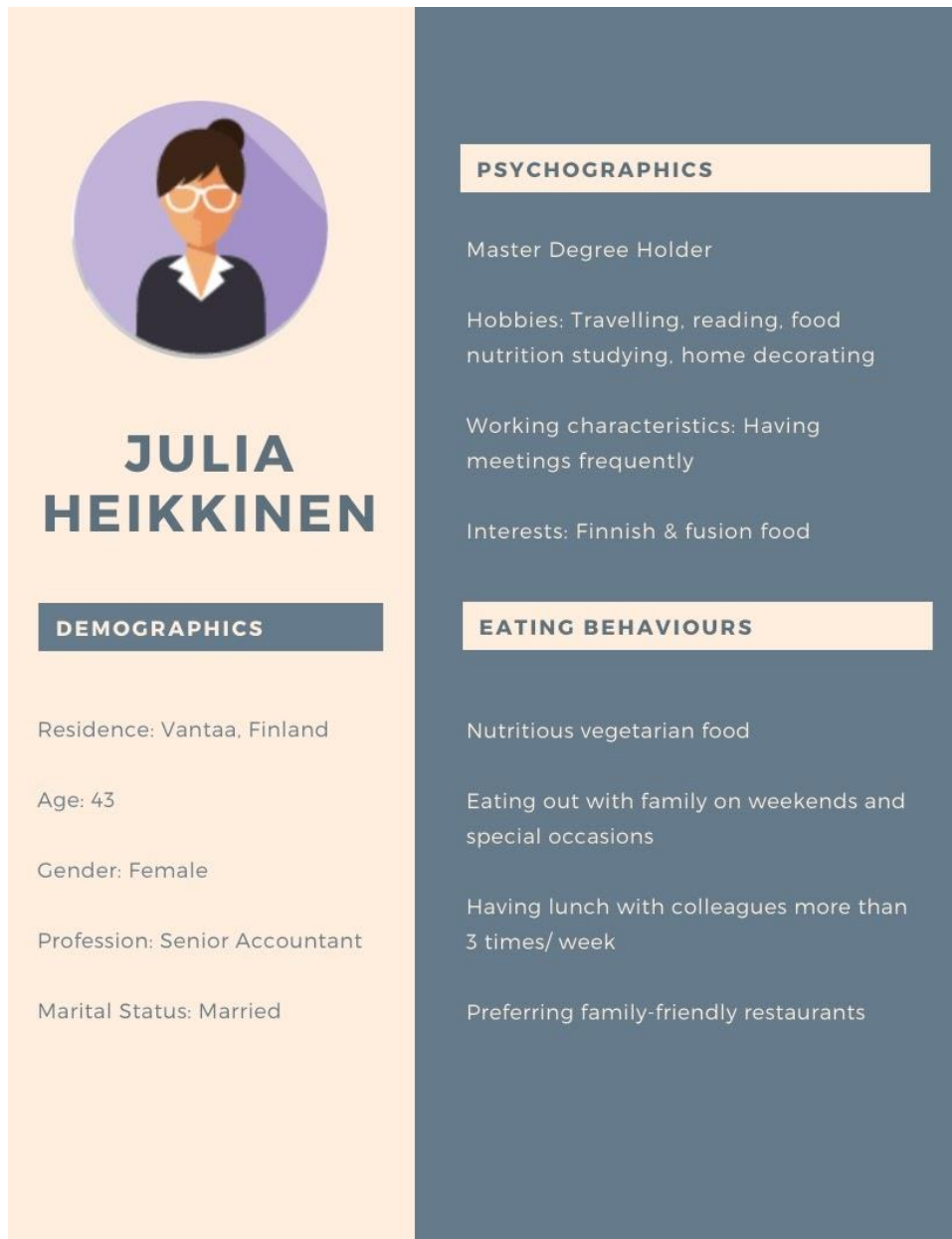


Figure 29: Customer Persona of 38 to 45 years old group

People in this group usually eat out during the weekend with their family, besides having lunch with colleagues or business partners. Therefore, they often choose restaurants that have family-friendly menus, meaning that there would be options for both kids and adults. With this age group, a restaurant's interior is also a considerable factor when choosing a restaurant, they prefer attractive places with interesting decorations.

5.5 Value Proposition

Every business owner has to determine the core values that they offer to their customers before the actual business is established. However, according to Spencer (2013, 27), the value turns

out not only to be judged by the owners but also by the customers' objectives. It means, when customers consider to experience a product or service, it has to help them to solve the interfering problems. Once problems are solved successfully by what they used, they consider them valuable. Thus, the more a product or service helps, the more valuable it is. Every customer is driven to consume and experience what is offered by a complicated demand and desires. (Spencer 2013, 96.)

Apparently, it is so common that customers always put the costs and benefits into consideration before any purchase. In this case, benefits can be everything they like or need that can affect them emotionally, physically or mentally. And to get any benefit, they have to pay for its costs. But there are always some trade-offs that customers have to face, which mean they need to choose what they are truly concerned about, the benefits or the prices. For instance, some customers are willing to pay more to get a better product or service when others would rather travel for 30 minutes to get it at a cheaper price. (Spencer 2013, 98.)

However, business owners have to understand that there are several similar products offered everywhere else and customers will compare the features and costs. That is the key reason why business owners are suggested to define their deliverables (tangible or intangible products or services resulted from a development process and are intended to deliver to the customers). It is believed that not only the product itself affects the business success but also the price, access and transaction or interaction. (Spencer 2013, 98.)

As the product or service is the core value, their providers need to concentrate on how it performs and what real value it brings to the customers. Respectively, price is also a vital deliverable that should be concerned about. If the price is too high, it easily turns customers off and when it is too low, it will be underestimated. Thus, a company or organization has to figure out an appropriate pricing mechanism, in which the way a product is priced is described and analyzed. The following deliverables, access, is about the required actions customers need to make when they want to try the service. There are always some obstacles to prevent customers from using the product or service or make the process more difficult, which every company has to consider thoroughly. (Spencer 2013, 37.)

Sometimes, limited access can bring benefits to the providers in a short time, such as limited offerings. Last but not least, transaction or interaction should be a part of a company's deliverables. Entrepreneurs are encouraged to their transactions and try to turn them into a strategic interaction. It means that the business owner should not only take a basic payment but communicate with his/her customers to make them feel being paid attention. By forming a closer relationship with customers, service providers can increase customers' loyalty, which makes them come back in the future. (Spencer 2013, 99.)

After making a brief survey to know what customers in the Metropolitan Area prefer, two authors have come up with some key values they want to deliver. As the millennials nowadays are concerned more about food nutrition, it is essential for The Banh Mii House to provide high-nutritious food. All the ingredients used will be freshly bought from local suppliers to establish customers' reliability, especially, those ingredients such as paté, mayonnaise and banh mi will be house-made. On the other hand, due to the survey results shown in Figure 21 previously, 86.7% participants believe that food visuality is important. That means, in particular, not only the food quality but also its visuality is considerably concerned, thus, the owners will make sure every item on the menu is nicely decorated.

As service is also one of the core deliverables, The Banh Mii House is attempting to develop a friendly and professional customer service. All the staff are expected to be well-qualified, knowledgeable, helpful as well as flexible in many situations. Despite having counter service mostly, the owners will always try to give customers a great experience whenever they visit. Lastly, item's price is also a main focus, for which two authors will do further research in the future to come up with a reasonable price range.

6 Conclusion

The concept of a new restaurant named "The Banh Mii House" has been completed as planned. The Banh Mii House is a Vietnamese restaurant which mainly features banh mi - a Vietnamese iconic street food. While being popular throughout the world, banh mi is still a new-comer in food culture in the Metropolitan area. Therefore, The Banh Mii House would aim to customers who are willing to try out new cuisine with friends and family after working or studying hours, or looking for a place to eat lunch with colleagues daily or occasionally. At The Banh Mii House, classified as a fast casual dining restaurant, customers would be served with nutritious and high quality food without long waiting time which is suitable for a quick lunch grab with colleagues or a relaxing dinner time with family members.

In order to get more insights into the market, research and development is a crucial step to be applied. Non-participant observation and online questionnaire research methods were carried out during the research phase, in both Finland and Vietnam. By doing that, the authors could get practical knowledge of how a banh mi restaurant can be operated, and what are the main aspects customers look forward to when choosing a restaurant. Furthermore, with the ideation session taken by the authors and other participants, more objective opinions are collected so that the restaurant's concept becomes more feasible. Combining two powerful methods - Service design and Business model canvas - allows the authors to have different sources to construct the concept from the ground up and gain knowledge on how to appraise potential customers.

By using knowledge of history of banh mi, the authors create a menu for The Banh Mii House which includes various item but also remains the authenticity of the food. Together with the customers' insights of the Metropolitan citizens and practical knowledge gained from observing successful operations in Vietnam, the two authors have come to the final concept of The Banh Mii House. As the hospitality industry becomes more competitive day by day, in order to succeed and grow further, restaurants have to prove themselves that they stand out from the crowd. Without knowing how to define the right customers segment, where to attract them, how to satisfy their needs and especially, convince them to come back and become loyal customers, the restaurant would not be successful.

In conclusion, all the set goals were achieved, a concept for a Vietnamese restaurant was formed up with targeted customers, attractive menu, and values that the restaurant can offer to compete with other competitors. A detailed customer journey map was also created to visualize a part of the daily operation of The Banh Mii House. However, to launch this concept, there would be more steps to be carried out, such as making competitors research, finding a suitable location, building marketing strategy, financing the project, connecting to ingredients distributors.

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