Improving company performance with customers satisfaction survey for travel company Duara Travels

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Degree programme
Degree Programme in Business Management

Report/thesis title	Number of pages and appendix pages
Improving company performance with customers satisfaction survey for travel company Duara Travels	53 + 22

This thesis presents the result of the customer satisfaction survey and market segmentation analysis for the Finnish start-up company Duara Travels.

The survey consists of two parts: theoretical framework, where different service quality models and approaches had been studied and assessed, and the empirical part where the survey results were presented, evaluated, and the suggestions for the improvement have been provided.

The SERVQUAL gap analysis model had been chosen as an appropriate tool for the current customer satisfaction survey. The objectives were selected in accordance with the SERVQUAL model requirements.

During the customer satisfaction survey preparation phase, the "Value proposition, Empathy, and Customer journey map" workshop was organized by Business Modelling Coach and Sales and Marketing strategist for the Duara Travels team in order to finalize the survey questionnaire.

The survey was conducted during autumn 2018, and winter-spring 2019 in collaboration with the Duara Travels team, and the results were analysed during spring 2019.
The results of the survey were analysed with the help of Webropol analytical tools and MS-Excel software.

In order to enhance the benefits of customer satisfaction survey results, it was decided to carry out the market segmentation analysis to define Duara's target market and prepare the ideal customer profile, which is also presented in the report.
Overall, the customer satisfaction survey can be considered as a successful, and according to Duara Travels, it was a beneficial experience and valuable feedback from the customers.

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1 Introduction

This thesis presents the research outcomes of a survey on customer satisfaction for the Finnish travel company Duara Travels. Duara Travels was also a contractor for the work. The company was chosen because of the author's interest in sustainable tourism, and she was genuinely fascinated with Duara Travels' business model and ideology. The company was operating in developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Central America, bringing tourism to the remote areas far from traditional touristic destinations. Thereby tourists had an opportunity not just to visit a particular village but to be a part of the daily life of the village community exploring the local culture.

The research outcomes had received positive feedback from Duara's team, and suggestions for improvement had been partly implemented during summer-autumn 2019.

Unfortunately, Duara Travels decided to stop their operations from January 2020 due to a lack of adequate marketing resources to gain a competitive edge and visibility among the big tour operators. Although the company had been continually developing, because of the low number of bookings, Duara was struggling to become a profitable company. Nevertheless, Duara Travels' team had admitted the success in building the village network. Also, they decided to keep the information about English speaking contact persons from the villages on the Duara Travels' website in case if travellers would like to contact them and arrange their trip on their own. (Duara Travels 2020)

1.1 Research problem, research questions and the objectives of the work

The well-designed customer satisfaction survey will reveal valuable outcomes about the company's communication and service shortcomings, fixing which can improve communication and service efficiency, leading to a direct positive impact on a company's profitability.

The topic for the thesis was proposed by Annika Järvelin, the co-founder of the company. The customers' satisfaction survey was a relevant topic for Duara Travels. The company had been operating for three years on the market, and even though the customers' feedback was continuously collected by using the feedback forms, a more significant satisfaction survey had been needed.

The research problem for this study was formulated as: "Factors influencing low sales volume."

The research questions for the survey are:

1. Have the Duara travels product met with customers' expectations– post-purchase evaluation?

2. What were the customers' main purchase-decision factors for buying Duara Travels trip package?

3. How can customer satisfaction survey results be used in improving the company's sales?

The research questions (RQ) were investigated and presented in the current survey in the following sections (table 1):

Table 1. Investigation and presentation of the research questions in the survey

RQ	Frame	Section	Apex
1.	2; 4; 5	2.2.; 2.3.; 2.4.; 2.5.; 4.3.1.; 4.3.2.; 5.2.	1
2.	3; 4; 5	3.1.; 3.2.; 3.3.; 3.4; 4.4.; 5.2.	1, 2
3.	2; 4; 5.	2.4.; 4.3.; 4.4.; 5.1.; 5.2.	1, 2

2 Customer satisfaction

2.1 Customer satisfaction – a definition

Customers' satisfaction survey has an essential role in a company's performance evaluation, continues improvement, and developing a successful customer experience strategy. It indicates the company's ability to understand its customers' needs and expectations, which can be turned into quantitative, measurable parameters to analyze the quality of services provided (Hill 1999, 3).

The level of customer satisfaction has a strong link with the customer's overall experience and retention rate, which have a direct impact on a company's total revenue and return on investments (ROI) index. According to Jan Ropponen and Sami Lampinen, the authors of the "Revenue Growth Platform," "a 5% increase in customer retention rates can increase the profits from 25% to 95%". (Ropponen & Lampinen 2018, 114)

Moreover, based on the "Strategies, tactics, and trends for Customer Experience" survey done by marketing technology and digital marketing agency Ascend2 in September 2019, 238 (79%) of 301 marketing professionals respondents put the customer retention/satisfaction as a primary objective for a customer experience strategy, 184 (61%) respondents considered customer retention/satisfaction as the most effective customer experience metric (Ascend2 2020).

The interconnection between the primary objectives and critical challenges of the customer experience strategy in order to improve the overall company's performance is shown in figure 1 below.
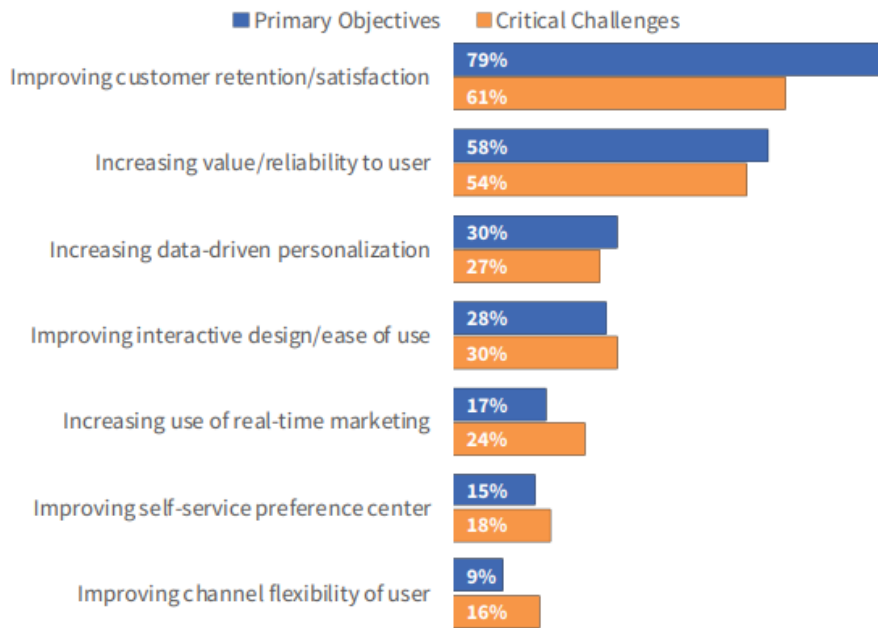
Figure 1. Customer experience strategy's primary objectives vs critical challenges (Ascend2 2020)

The main factors, which have a strong influence on the customers' satisfaction rate are customers' previous experiences of the company products/services, reputation of the brand, social responsibility of the brand, quality of the service, the price, the convenience of the service, the company's proficiency in handling customers' complaints (Bergman 2010, 329)

2.2 Service quality and customer satisfaction

For a better understanding of the way quality is judged by customers, it is important to study service quality models relevant to the tourism and leisure industry.

Most of the quality management theories and concepts presented and developed by W. A. Shewahart (Statistical Process Control model), W.E. Deming, J.M. Juran (Fitness for use model), A.V. Feigenbaum (Total quality management model) and T. Peters (Perception of Excellence model) were not applicable for the service industry as they were initially created for manufacture industries (Williams et al. 2003, 38).

The main problem with quality management for the service industries is starting with term "service" as it contains both – tangible and intangible components, which sometimes cannot be measured using classic quality management tools developed by the above-mentioned researches who were practitioners in the manufacturing industry.

The development of the applicable models of quality management for the service industries started from the 1980s and promptly developed into two separate schools of service quality management – Nordic or Scandinavian and North American.

The differences between the two schools are rooted in the comprehension of marketing: the four Ps (people, place, position, and promotion) in the United States versus integrated marketing approach based on customer relationship development in Scandinavia. (Williams et al. 2003, 48)

The main theories and applicable models of the Scandinavian school were developed by C. Grönroos and E.Gummesson (Grönroos-Gummesson integrated model of service quality). The lead researchers of the North American School were Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (SERVIQUAL model).

2.2.1 Grönroos-Gummesson integrated model

The model Grönroos-Gummesson is the integrated model of Grönroos's two quality dimension model and Gummesson's 4Q model.

The Grönroos model considers the customers' expectations and their perceptions of service provided by using both the technical (tangible – "what") and functional (intangible – "how") qualities. According to Grönroos, intangible quality, such as customers' interactions with the staff or even with fellow customers, strongly affects customers' service perception and judgment. An excellent example of how tangible and intangible factors affect the customer's subjective judgment of the service quality when the customer can evaluate the quality of service as "good", still, at the same time, he/she does not feel happy or satisfied. The theoretical base of Gummesson's 4Q model was borrowed from the manufacturing sector, but it was adapted to the service sector by applying the customer-oriented approach.

According to Gummesson, quality is affected by all the players who are involved in the process of creating and delivering goods or services. Hence the quality has to be evaluated from different prospects:

- Design quality – ability to meet customers' needs with the product/service (interaction component)

- Production quality – present the quality of the manufacturing process (non-interaction component)

- Delivery quality – own delivery or by a subcontractor – standardize the process for persistently meeting customers' expectations (interaction component)

- Rational quality – the skills of the front-line staff involved in the service delivery process (interaction component). (Williams et al. 2003, 51)

As it is shown in figure 2, Gummesson's quality approach supplements Grönroos's model by merging interaction/non-interaction with tangible/intangible parts of the service delivery process. It covers all the steps of service delivery and allows measuring the quality of service on each stage by using both qualitative and quantitative methods.
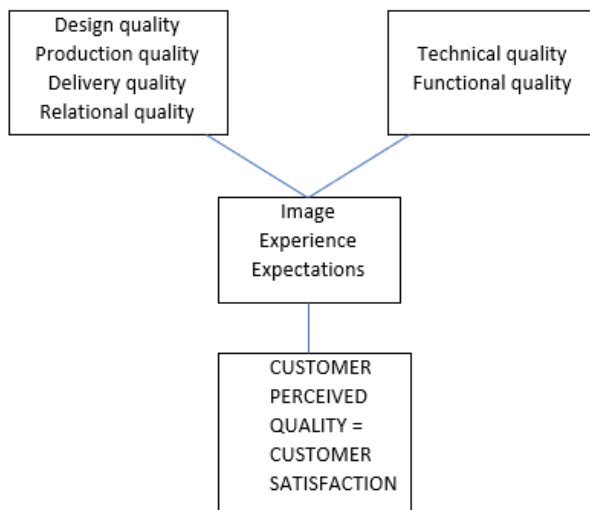
Figure 2. The Grönroos-Gummesson integrated quality model, Gummesson & Grönroos (1987, in Williams et al. 2003, 53)

The Scandinavian school's comprehension of service quality as personalized service for the customer is a foundation for customer experience and user experience models actively used by marketers nowadays.

2.2.2 SERVQUAL gap analysis model

SERVQUAL gap analysis model was developed in the mid-1980s by Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry - the main representatives of the North American school of quality. According to Zeithaml et al., the service quality can be explained as a difference between customer expectations and their perceptions as the only customers can judge the quality of service they received. (Bergman et al. 2010, 328)

It gives the following formula, which is considered as the basis of the SERVQUAL model:

Customer perception = > Customer expectations

Here the customer perception of the service based on the actual service provided while the customer expectations are originated from past-experiences, friends' opinions, service reviews, etc (Williams et al. 2003, 178).

Zeithaml et al. defined the five quality determinants or service dimensions essential for customers and tried to assess the wights of the dimensions empirically. Numerous studies proved that reliability is the most critical dimension among all five, while the tangibles are assessed as the least important as it is presented in table 2 below. (Bergman et al. 2010, 329)

Table 2. The five compacted dimensions of the service quality

Dimension	Weight	Definition
1. Reliability	30%	Doing what we have promised
2. Responsiveness	25%	Willingness to help and provide prompt service
3. Assurance	20%	Conveying trust and confidence
4. Empathy	16%	Ability to see through the customer's eyes
5. Tangibles	10%	Equipment, physical facilities, etc.

Since numerous studies have proved the efficiency and reliability of the SERVQUAL model as an applicable tool for measuring the company's service quality and customer satisfaction in the tourist and leisure industry, this model was chosen for evaluating the service quality and the customer satisfaction level of DUARA Travels.

2.3 Implementation of the SERVQUAL gap analysis model

The SERVQUAL gap analysis model has been used to define the five service gaps in the company's internal and external performance, as it is shown in figure 3 below.
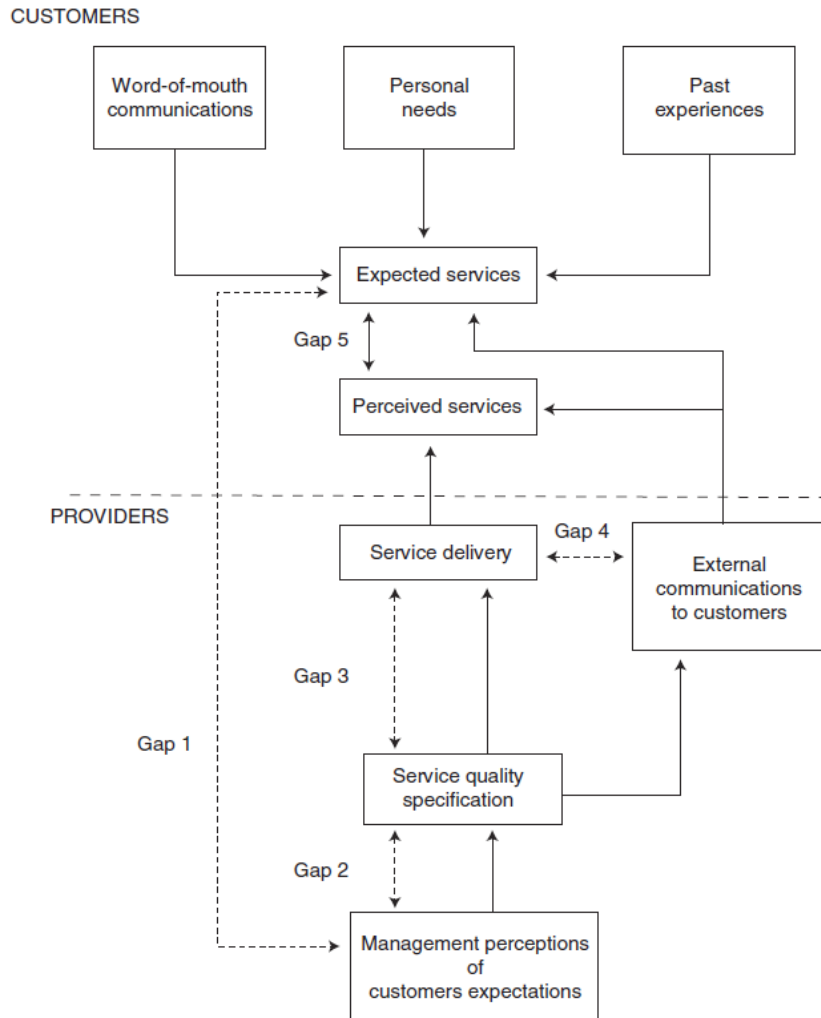
Figure 3. SERVQUAL gap analysis model, Zeithaml (1990, in Williams et al. 2003, 179)

The definition and the causes of each five prominent gaps are presented in figure 4 below:

Gap 1	Gap 2	Gap 3	Gap 4	Gap 5
The Promotional Gap	The Understanding Gap	The Procedural Gap	The Behavioural Gap	The Perception Gap
What is said about the service differs from the standards actually delivered	Managers' perceptions of customers' expectations are inaccurate	Customers' expectations are not translated into appropriate operating procedures/system	The service that is delivered is different from the specification of the service	the level of service perceived by customers differ from the service actually provided

The Service Quality Gap
The difference between customers' expectations of a service and their perception of the actual service delivered by a company

Figure 4. Service gaps (Hill 2006, 6)

The gaps can be defined by carrying out market research, customer satisfaction surveys, employee satisfaction surveys, etc.

The customer satisfaction survey is one of the most effective methods to determine the service gaps in the company's performance by collecting and evaluating customers' feedback through questionnaires, interviews, focus group studies about these service features, which previously identified as critical for buyers (Kozielski et al. 2018, 36).

2.4 The customer satisfaction survey objectives

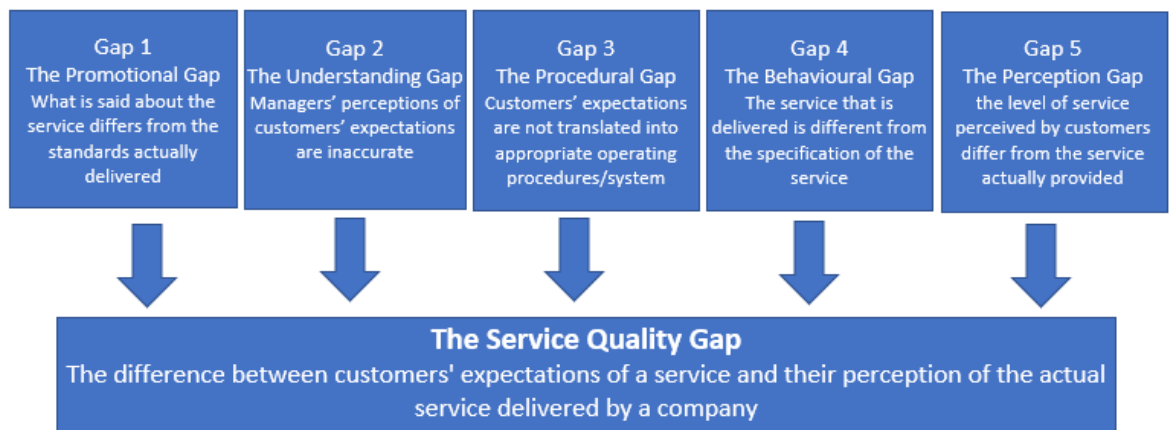Before starting the survey, it is important to clarify the goals or objectives to be acquired with the survey results. The right objectives will provide the indicators that help to evaluate the level of consumer satisfaction at every touchpoint during his/her interaction with the company. The list of objectives does not have to be long, but it is useful to include these indicators that have a straight impact on the others in the line or complement each other. The most critical indicators which are used in the current survey to measure customer satisfaction rate are:

1. Customer satisfaction score (CSAT) is the metric that comes as an outcome from the direct question about the customer satisfaction level of the service provided, based on the predefined scale from 1 to 5 or 1 to 10 (Retently 2020). According to the basic formula of SERVQUAL gap analysis model described in section 4.1.4., the customers are satisfied if their judgments or perceptions of the service are equalled or exceeded their expectations (Williams et al. 2003, 60):
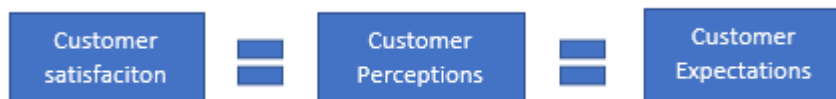
   In the current survey, CSAT was calculated as a percentage of the total number of respondents and shown the level of customers' expectation of the service they have received.

2. Customer satisfaction index (CSI) helps to evaluate the customer satisfaction rate and quality of the service they received using the set of inter-related queries (Kozielski et al. 2018, 36).

   It this survey CSI will be calculated as a collective index evaluating the quality of service provided by the Duara Travels local contact person and host families.

3. The estimated customer retention rate – this metric will be calculated in the current survey as a percentage of loyal customers who are willing to re-purchase the service, and it is fully based on the questionnaire's number of responses.

The other important objectives to be considered during customer satisfaction survey can be:

4. Customers' requirements - customer satisfaction helps to determine the customers' requirements for the company's products or services from the customers' point of view, which the company might not be fully aware of or never consider as important. This objective interconnects with priorities for improvement as it reveals the company's service quality gaps, which have a disruptive effect on the customers' expectations. (Hill 2003, 81)

   Additionally, to collect customers' requirements through the survey also helps to personalize and improve the content of the company's on- and offline marketing as well as hold better communication with the customers on social media.

5. Priorities for improvements (PFI) can be identified comparing customers' requirements and satisfaction level of the service provided using gap analysis. Why is this metric important? It helps to define the size of the gap and allows "quick-wins" by improving or closing the most critical gaps. It also helps to strengthen the company's overall strategy by focusing on the areas which are essential for the customers as well but requires more time and resources. (Hill 2003, 87)

The summarized list of the objectives chosen for the current customer satisfaction survey is presented in table 3 below.

Table 3. Customer satisfaction objectives (Hill 2003, 7)

1.	Customer satisfaction score (satisfaction rating)
2.	Customer satisfaction index (CSI)
3.	Estimated customer retention rate
4.	Customers' requirements (importance rating)
5.	PFI (priorities for improvement)

2.5 Implementation stages of the customer satisfaction survey

Depending on the scope and size of the organization, the customer satisfaction survey includes typically the following stages:

1. Preparation stage
2. Preliminary studies
3. Designing phase
4. Continuous studies phase

The reliable customer satisfaction survey requires the thoroughgoing preparation phase to avoid last-minute, low-quality questionnaires based on misleading objectives, which can lead to a waste of time and resources. (Kozielski et al. 2018, 38)

Therefore, the preparation phase needs to be well-planned, which includes meeting with the stakeholders, brainstorming meetings, customer experience analysis to define the factors that have the biggest affection on the customer purchase-decision and post-purchase satisfaction rate. The data from the previously conducted market studies is a piece of beneficial information for the survey.

During the preparation phase for the current survey for Duara Travels, there were organized several brainstorming meetings with Annika Järvelin, Duara Travels co-founder, and a "Value Proposition, Empathy and User Journey Map" workshop with all Duara Travels personnel together with Sales and Marketing strategist. Additionally, two previously done marketing communications reports were studied and kept in mind while developing the survey questionnaire.

The questionnaire draft was prepared in collaboration with Annika Järvelin in September 2018, and later, in October 2018, it was evaluated and modified during the "Value Proposition, Empathy and User Journey Map" workshop.

The main purpose of the workshop was to brainstorm Duara's potential customers' intents, concerns, and desires at the time they are planning their holiday and searching the internet for information.

The information was collected with the help of Strategyzer AG's "The Value Proposition Canvas" and The Customer Empathy Map tools. The Stategyzer canvas consists of several posters/maps to identify customers' jobs/pain/gain. The Customer Empathy map is a tool that helps to understand customers' needs and feelings. Both tools are used to define the right keywords and content gaps that had to be detected with the help of a customer satisfaction survey' questionnaire.

The data collected during the workshop and throughout the customer satisfaction survey should help to improve Duara's website content and SEO strategy, increasing the organic traffic to the website and, subsequently, the sales volume.

The workshop started with analysing customer jobs – the tasks which customer has to perform before making a purchase decision. Then there was added information about customers' pains and gain – the list of concerns customers experience while performing the tasks and the list of benefits that customers would want to know or be happy to have. (Strategyzer AG 2020)

The Key focus Areas defined for Duara customers' jobs, gains, and pain are presented in figure 5 below.
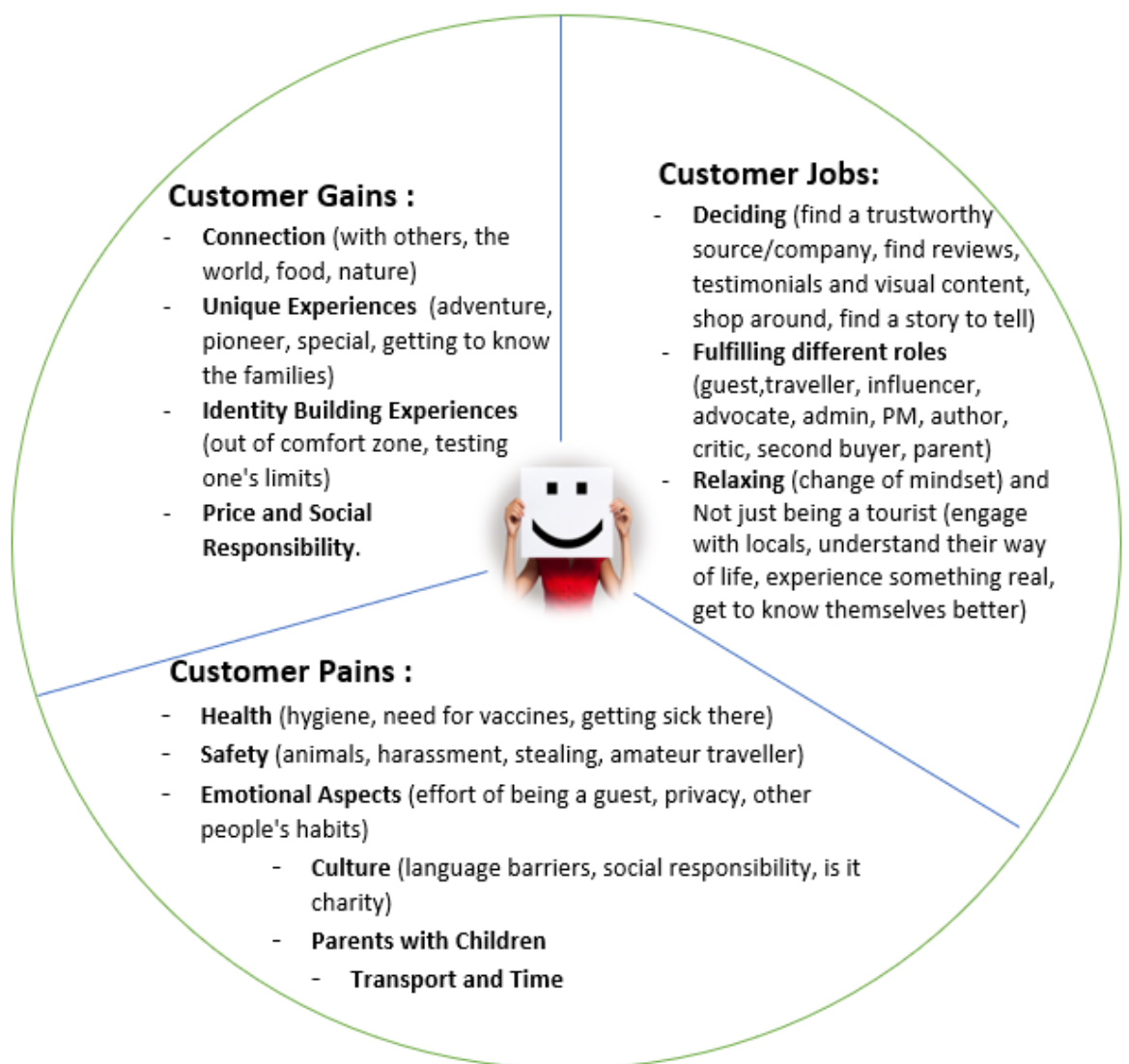

Figure 5. Customer profile analysis: Key Focus Areas for Jobs, Gains, and Pains, (Strategyzer AG 2020)

The next step was designing the Customer Empathy Map (figure 6) – a tool that enables the service provider to put him/herself at the customers' place to understand the mental processes and actions that are going on behind the customers' decision making. The Customer Empathy Map allows the company to adapt the marketing content to the customers' true needs and wants and to speak with them using their language (Conseptboard 2020).

The map includes four components:

1.	What does the customer think and feel – the starting point of the purchasing process. Here the customers' primary emotions and feelings were identified.

2.	What does the customer hear – the critical point here was to understand how and where customers search for the information (channels and influencers). Here is the opportunity to increase the number of touchpoints on the customers' digital journey and bring more visitors to the company's website, increasing the amount of paying customers (LIFE marketing 2020).

3.	What does the customer see – the visual content that affects customers' purchase decision. The visual content is a crucial component of a travel company's marketing. It has to embrace the right message to the customers, be attractable, informative, and reliable.

4.	What does the customer say and do – the main focus was to identify the keywords used by customers on the search engine together with the search intents while they are planning their holiday. It was agreed that here there was an understanding gap that has to be investigated with customer satisfaction survey questions to define the exact words and quotes for optimizing the Duara's website SEO bringing it up to the first ten on the Google search.
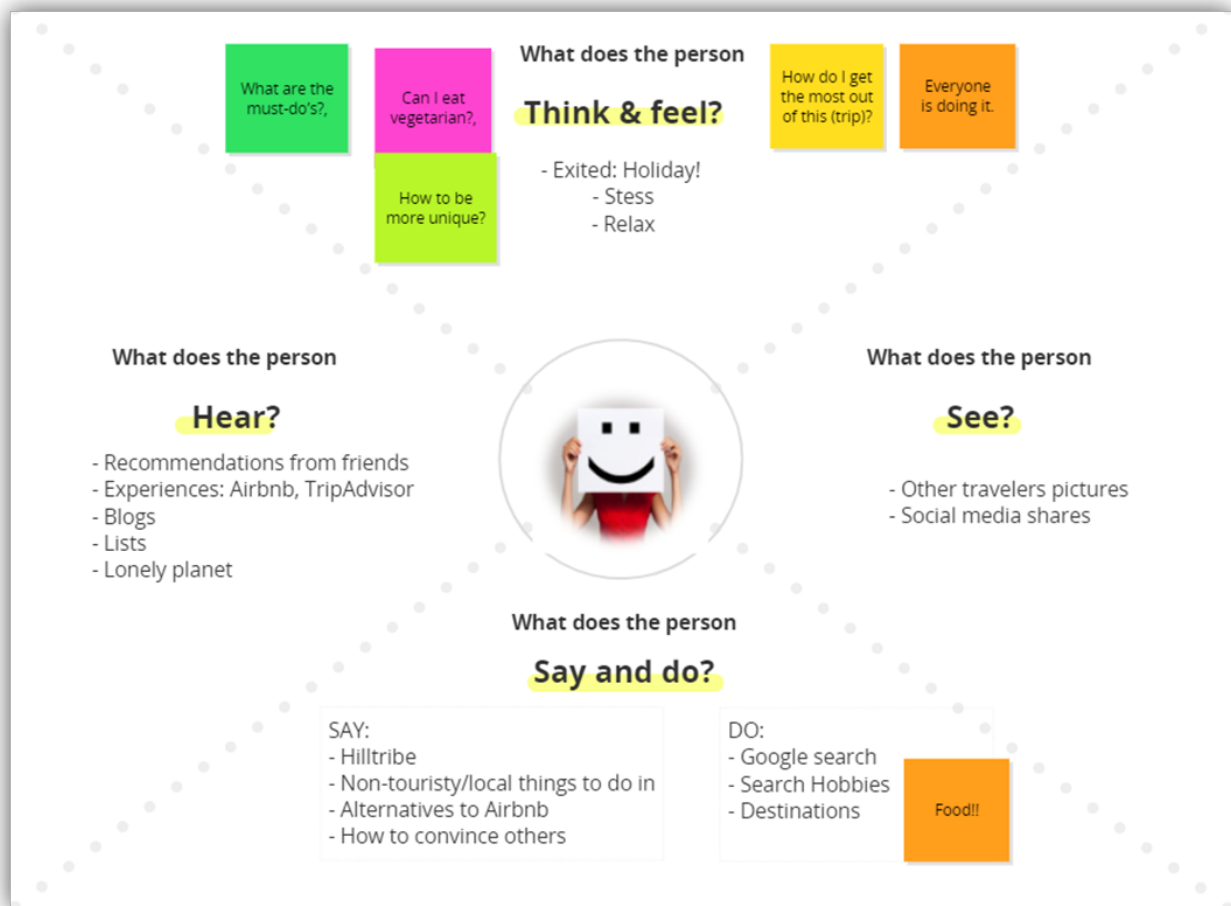
Figure 6. Duara' s Customer Empathy Map (Created with a free template from Conseptboard 2020)

The last activity of the workshop was designing a Customer Journey map combining all the collected information into one table, and determining the list of action points. The customer journey map accumulates all the steps of the buyer's decision process from the first idea to the actual purchase of the service, which will be studied in more detail in the next chapter.

The Duara's Customer Journey map is presented in figure 7 below.

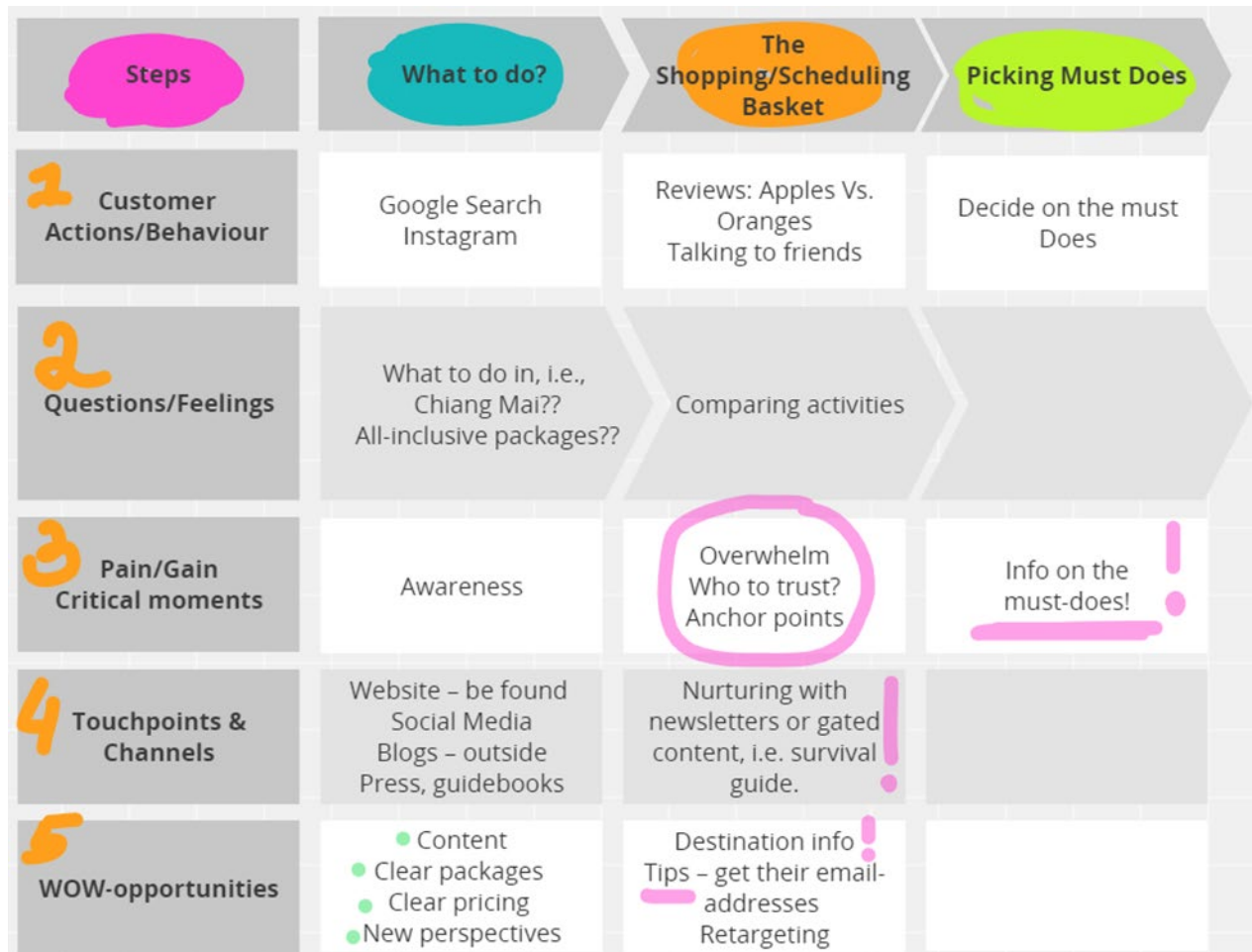| Steps	What to do?	The Shopping/Scheduling Basket	Picking Must Does
1 Customer Actions/Behaviour	Google Search Instagram	Reviews: Apples Vs. Oranges Talking to friends	Decide on the must Does
2 Questions/Feelings	What to do in, i.e., Chiang Mai?? All-inclusive packages??	Comparing activities	
3 Pain/Gain Critical moments	Awareness	Overwhelm Who to trust? Anchor points	Info on the must-does!
4 Touchpoints & Channels	Website – be found Social Media Blogs – outside Press, guidebooks	Nurturing with newsletters or gated content, i.e. survival guide.	
5 WOW-opportunities	• Content • Clear packages • Clear pricing •New perspectives	Destination info Tips – get their email-addresses Retargeting	

Figure 7. Duara' s Customer Journey Map (Created with a free template from Conseptboard, 2020)

The next phases of the customer satisfaction survey – the preliminary and design phases – started promptly after the workshop. During this time, all the previously collected materials and comments were studied, and the questions were modified correspondingly. As a result, the questionnaire was finalized using Webropol web survey form, and the link was sent to all Duara' customers separately, which can be considered as the continuous phase of the customer satisfaction survey. In order to receive more responses, the link had been sent two times – in autumn 2018 and once again in spring 2019 to the customers who purchased Duara trips after November 2018.

To make the results of the customer satisfaction survey more applicable, it was decided to conduct the market segmentation analysis for the Duara Travels using Duara's customer database.

3 Market segmentation analysis in the tourism industry

3.1 Target marketing analysis

The target marketing helps the company instead of selling its product/service to everyone, to select target segments, and to develop the service following the customers' specific characteristics, which increase the product/service values and makes a marketing campaign more effective (Solomon et al. 2015, 219).

There are three steps in the target marketing process shown in figure 8 below.
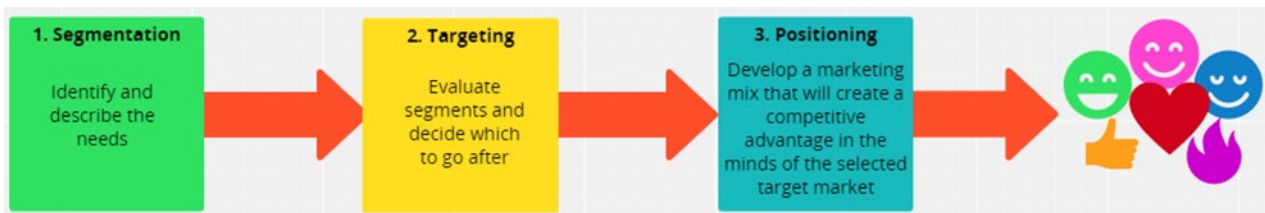

Figure 8. Target marketing process. (Solomon et al. 2015, 219)

The segmentation is the part of the target marketing, and it has been defined by Horner (2016,139) as:

> The process of dividing a total market into groups of people with relatively similar product needs for designing a market mix that precisely matches the needs of the individuals in a segment (Horner et al. 2016, 139).

3.2 Types of market segmentation

According to the classical segmentation criteria, there are five ways of market segmentation used in the tourism and leisure industry (figure 9):
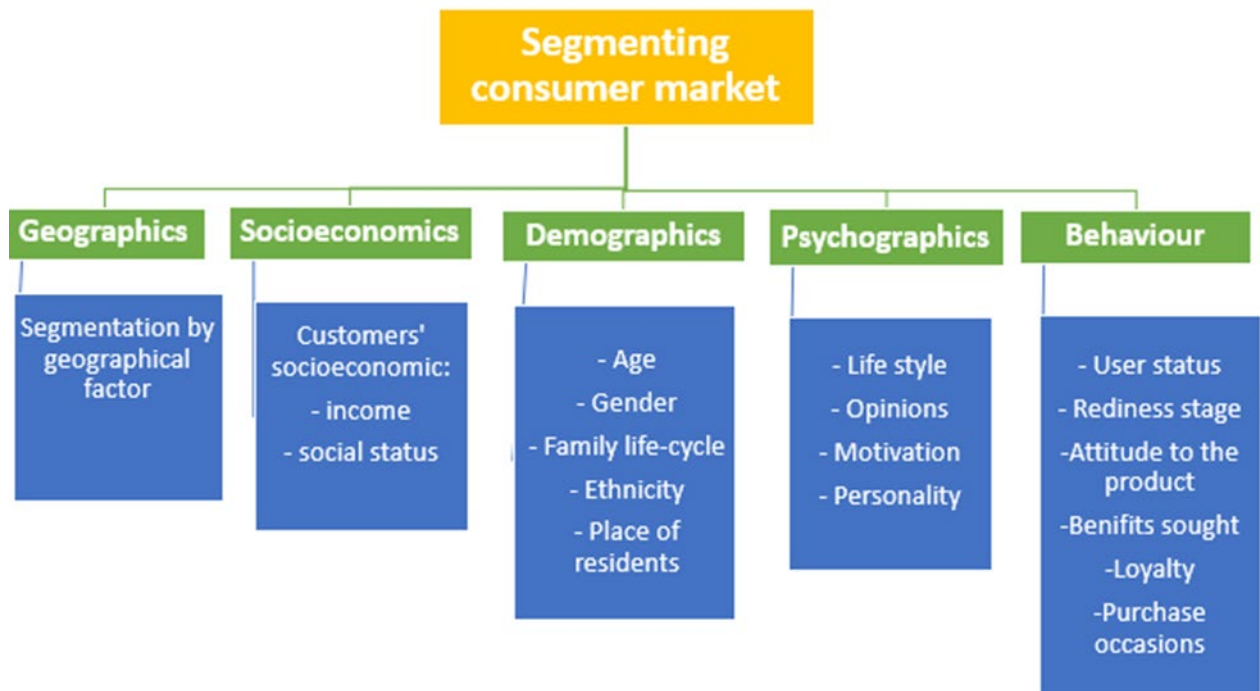

Figure 9. Market Segmentation (Solomon et al. 2015, 220; Horner et al. 2016, 140-143)

1. Geographical segmentation is broadly used in tourism and based on the assumption that people from the same geographical location have similar needs and consumer behaviour. The typical example of geographical segmentation is a beach holiday marketing for the customers who live in countries with a cold climate.

2. Socioeconomic segmentation is segmentation by customers' socioeconomic status, such as income and social class. The socioeconomic status of the consumer is an important factor that has to be considered in the company's marketing strategy, especially in the tourism industry. Backpackers and luxury resort visitors have entirely different needs and concerns about service quality, price, and convenience. Accurate socioeconomic segmentation can boost the company's profit.

3. Demographic segmentation is the segmentation by demographic factors, such as age, gender, family life-cycle, ethnicity, place of residence, etc. This is the most popular type of segmentation used in the tourism industry, which proved its effectiveness over the years.

   Demographic segmentation in tourism can be observed using an example of the customer's family life cycle, assuming that at different stages of life tourist has different preferences and looking for different activities

which have to be taken into consideration by tour operators while developing trip packages and marketing them. (Horner et al. 2016, 141)

The age segmentation can also be considered according to which generation customer belongs: Generation Z (1997-2012), Millennials (1981-1996), Generation X (1961-1981), or Baby Boomers (1946-1961). For even more efficient and precise targeting, it can be combined with the previously mentioned family life-cycle segmentation. (Solomon et al. 2015, 224)

4.   Gender is another popular way to segment customers in the tourism industry. In recent years the number of women travellers, especially those who are traveling solo, increased significantly, and it became an important segment for all the companies related to the tourism industry that can't be ignored. According to solo travellers' demographic statistics, women's share in solo tourism is 75% comparing to men's 25%, and most of the women travellers belong to generations Baby Boomers or Generation X. (Solotraveler 2020)

It is an interesting fact that 80% of decisions about traveling are made by women, and the estimated travel costs spent by women per year are more than 125 billion dollars (Forbes 2014).

5.   Behaviouristic segmentation is based on the consumers' relationship with the product or service – how consumers use the product, feel about it, the frequency of buying, the loyalty level, etc. An example of behaviouristic segmentation is the loyalty programs of hotel chains or airlines offered to their customers.

6.   Psychographic segmentation is a big trend in nowadays marketing together with neuromarketing. Psychographic segmentation studies consumers' sociological and psychological characteristics such as lifestyle, opinions, motivation, personality – everything that influences the consumers' purchase behaviour and consumer decision-making process.

3.3   The consumer decision-making process in the tourism industry

The purpose of marketing - to satisfy consumers' wants and needs - brings a big challenge for marketers, UX-professionals, designers, and economists. According to Solomon (2015,176), the definition of consumer behaviour is:

The process individuals or groups go through to select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods and services, ideas, experiences to satisfy their needs and desires (Solomon et al. 2015, 176).

Therefore, the consumers' purchase decision depends on different variables, and it is a complex and on-going process.

Why are people making a particular choice over another, is it an irrational decision or there is some rationale behind that choice?

The decision-making process can be presented by a science-based framework introduced by psychologist Daniel Kahneman, a Nobel Prize winner in Economics. The framework combines psychological and economic approaches into the model shown in figure 10 below.
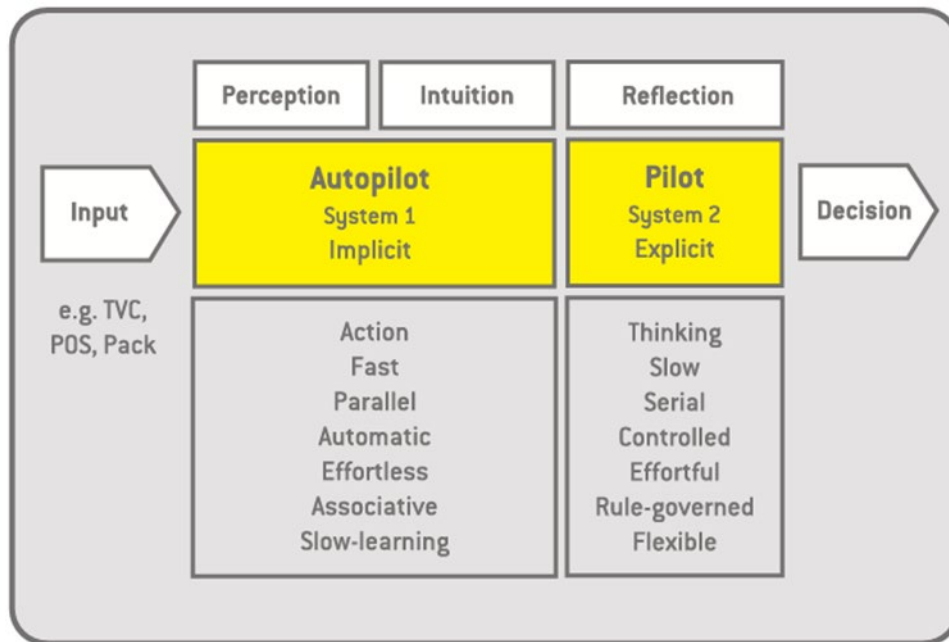

Figure 10. Kahneman's framework which determines humans' decision-making behaviour (Barden 2013, 8)

According to Kahneman's framework, there are two systems that people are using while they are making the decision – System 1 or autopilot and System 2 – Pilot. Autopilot is in charge of fast decisions that people are making without deep thinking or automatically based on associations, past-experiences, and triggers. Pilot is responsible for slow decisions with more severe consequences and therefore requires a better analysis of the situation and full concentration. (Kehneman 2011, 126)

In marketing researches, Kahneman's System 1 and System 2 are measured in the amount of effort customer has to applied in order to make a purchase decision. Thus, the decision-making process is divided into two groups (Solomon et al. 2015, 177):

1. Habitual decision making
2. Extended problem solving

The first groups consist of the daily-consumed products, which requires consumers' minimum efforts to come to the final decision about the purchase, like, for example, food from the local supermarket.

The purchases from the second group are usually required more investment hence more consumers' efforts and time for making a final decision. These products belong to luxury product-category, and they are not consumed on a daily basis.

The tourism products belong to the service group of products, and it is complex and multi-layered. When the customer buys tourism service, he/she is purchasing an overall experience, and as it was mentioned in section 2.2., it includes both tangible and intangible elements, at a high price, which cannot be even tested before the purchase. Therefore, tourism services can be considered as luxury products, and the purchase decision requires a significant amount of time and effort from the consumer.

The main characteristics of tourism products and services are presented in figure 11 below.

Figure 11. Characteristics of tourism products and services (Horner et al. 2016, 108)

Because of tourism products and services' special features, the purchase decision demands from the consumer several behavioural patterns which are:

1. High involvement in the purchase decision and high level of commitment – buying the activity, the consumer is going to be the participant of the process and has to rely on tourism provider;

2. High level of insecurity licked to intangibility and high level of information search – this requires a lot of customer's effort at the preparation phase, which means reading reviews, watching videos on YouTube, asking friends and family members, searching for the blogs and tips.

3. Considerable emotional significance –tourism products are linked to the holiday or the special life events of the customer. Therefore, there is a big emotional component in it as the customers' expectations are usually high.

4. Long-term decisions – the customers normally planned their travels a long way in advance, and at the time of their trip, there is always the risk that the individual's life situation or politico-economic situation suddenly changes. This acceptance of the risk has an impact on the purchase decision. (Horner et al. 2016, 109-112; Cohen et al. 2014, 883)

Taking into consideration all mentioned above, the major decisions which consumer has to make while purchasing the tourism product are shown in figure 12 below.

Destination: country, region,resort

Way of travel: schedule or charter air, rail, ferry, bus

Duration of the trip

Season

Package or individual traveling

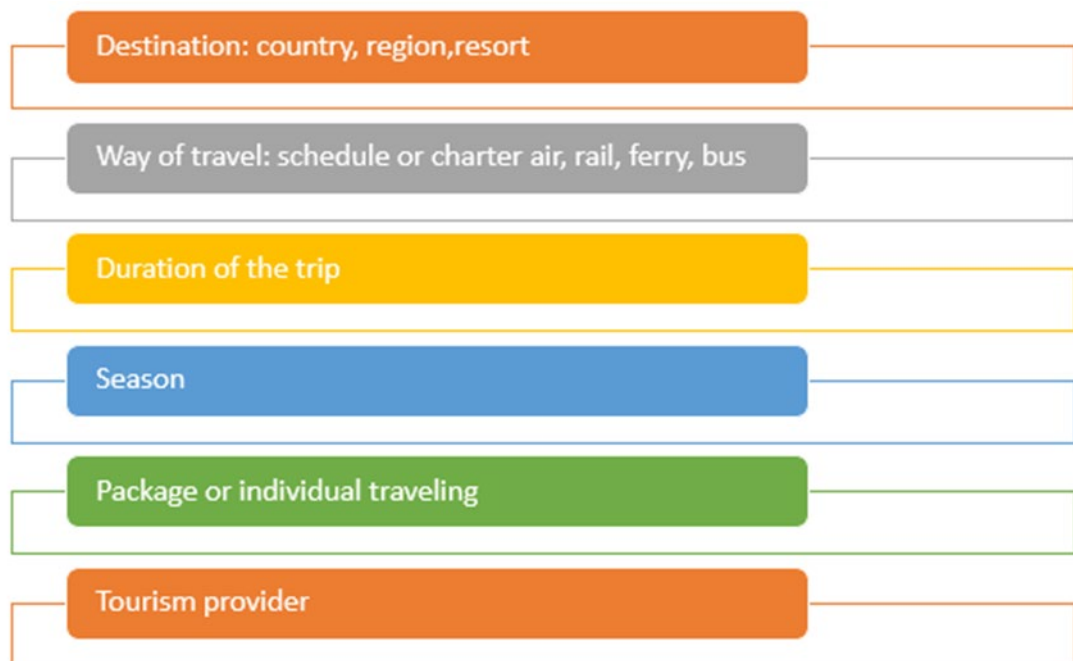Tourism provider

Figure 12. Consumers' decisions during the planning phase of their holiday (Horner et al. 2016, 113)

3.4 Market targeting analysis

Based on the information about market segmentation and customer decision-making process, the next step is the market targeting analysis, which consists of data evaluation, developing the ideal customer profile, and choosing the targeting strategy.

Market segments can be evaluated by:

1. Analysing the segment homogeneity – investigating if the consumers have similar requirements within the same segment, different from the consumers' needs in other segments.

2. Defining the possibility of applying quantitative parameters for measuring size and purchasing power of the segment

3. Defining the communication channels for marketing

After identifying and verifying the collected data, the next step will be to generate a profile for the ideal customer – a target segment profile – who includes all the characteristics typical for this segment representative.

Based on the company's size and resources, it can choose the targeting strategy to focus on a specific customer group or particular products.

4 Research results

4.1 Duara Travels: company profile

Duara Travels was the Finnish based travel start-up company that specialized in providing and developing sustainable tourism in the remote rural areas in Asia, Africa, and Central America. The length of the trip packages varied from one to fourteen nights, and the price for the three-nights trip costs between 120-160 euros. The trip package included the meeting at the airport by local English-speaking contact person, who also helped with transportation to the village, separate room in the host family's house, shared facilities, home-cooked food, and activities provided by the host families and the village community. (Duara 2019)

Although the company had an attractive business concept (figure 13) and the prices of travel packages were relatively lower than the similar offers of the competitors, the sales volume remained low, and the company's financial statements showed losses.

Figure 13. Duara Travels's payment division (Duara Travels 2019)

The main goal of the current survey was to determine the service gaps that caused continual low sales figures for Duara Travels and to provide the suggestion for the improvement. The survey process consisted of a preparation phase, customer satisfaction web survey, and market segmentation analysis.

4.2 Research framework, methodologies, methods of gathering and analysing data

The research consists of two parts. The first part presents the theoretical framework, where the research objectives and terminology were defined. The second part is the empirical part where the research outcomes were presented, analysed and suggestions for improvement provided. The research work has been held during autumn 2018 and spring 2019. The quantitative research method had been used to analyse the survey outcomes. The secondary data can be divided into two categories internal and external (Kenett et al. 2011, 73).

The secondary data for the current research was collected from three sources:

1. The market segmentation analysis which was conducted during spring 2019

2. "Value proposition, Empathy, and Customer journey map" workshop organized by Business Modelling Coach, and Sales and Marketing Strategist for Duara Travels team

3. Literature, Internet analytical portals, travel portals

The questionnaire for the customer satisfaction survey had been finalized after the "Value proposition, Empathy, and Customer journey map" workshop. During the workshop, the draft of the customers' journey map was developed.

The satisfaction survey was conducted with the help of a Webropol online questionnaire tool. The questionnaire consisted of 21 questions, and it would take approximately five minutes for the respondents to answer all the questions

For questionnaire designing, different types of questions have been used to ensure the validity of the data. The questions' interval measurement was from 1 to 5 points, and they consisted of selection questions, matrix questions, open-end questions, and rating scales. The generated link to the online questionnaire form was sent to 55 Duara Travels customers who travelled to Duara villages during the years 2017-2019. The data were collected during November 2018 and winter 2019.

The survey results were analysed by Webropol analytical tools and with the help of MS-Excel software.

4.3 Analysis of the results of the satisfaction survey

4.3.1 Customer satisfaction score and customer satisfaction index

The total number of the respondents who participated in the survey was 18, which make the survey response rate 33% (of the total number of 55 customers who have received the link to the questionnaire).

According to the results, 33% (6 of 18 respondents) of the Duara travel's customers agreed that the trip to Duara village had met their expectations, and 39 % (7 of 18 respondents) thought that the trip had exceeded their expectation. 22 % (4 customers) believed that the trip had partly met their expectations, and there were no negative answers (figure 14).
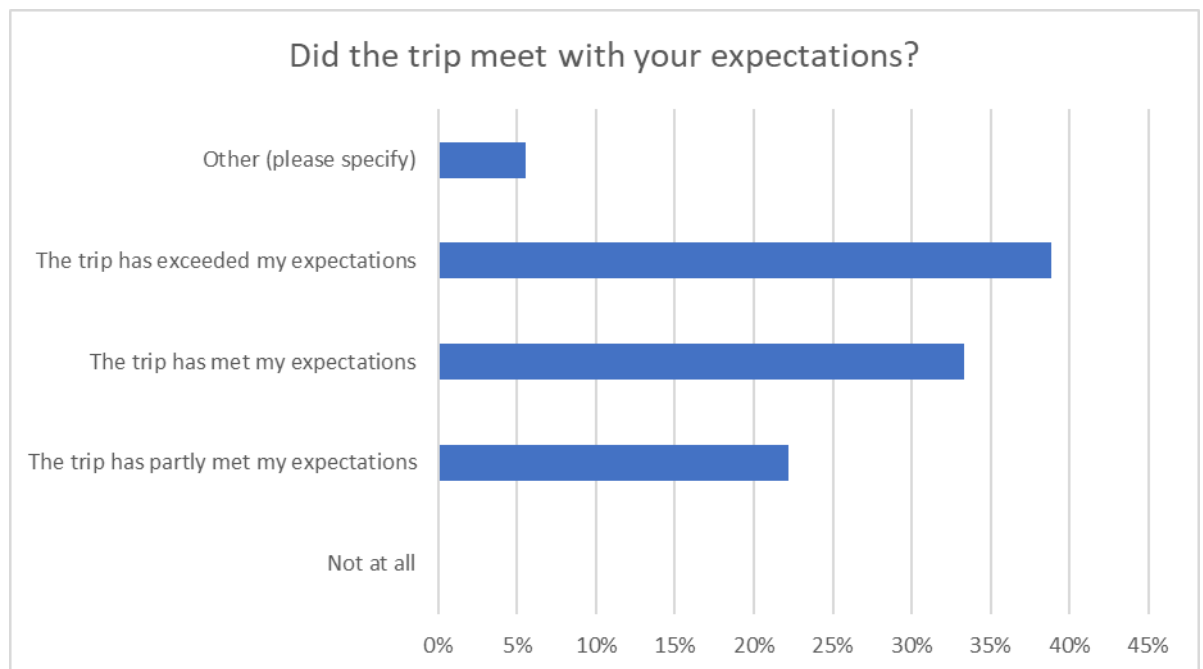
Figure 14. Duara travels' customers' expectation rate (18 respondents)

This shows that the Duara travels' total customer satisfaction rate is approximately 72 % or relatively high.

The customer satisfaction level with the service provided in by the local contacts and host families are presented in figures 15 and figure 16 correspondingly:
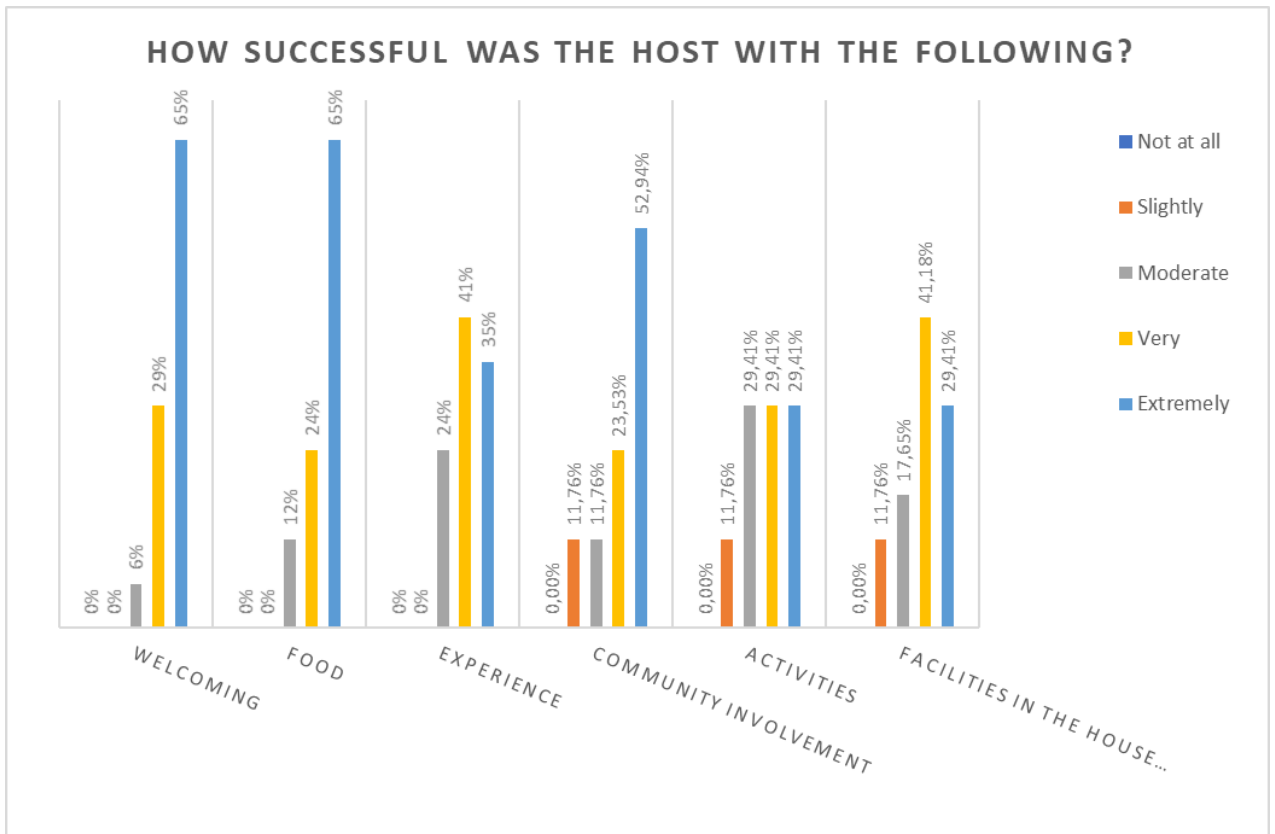

Figure 15. Duara customers' level of satisfaction with the service provided by the host family (17 respondents)
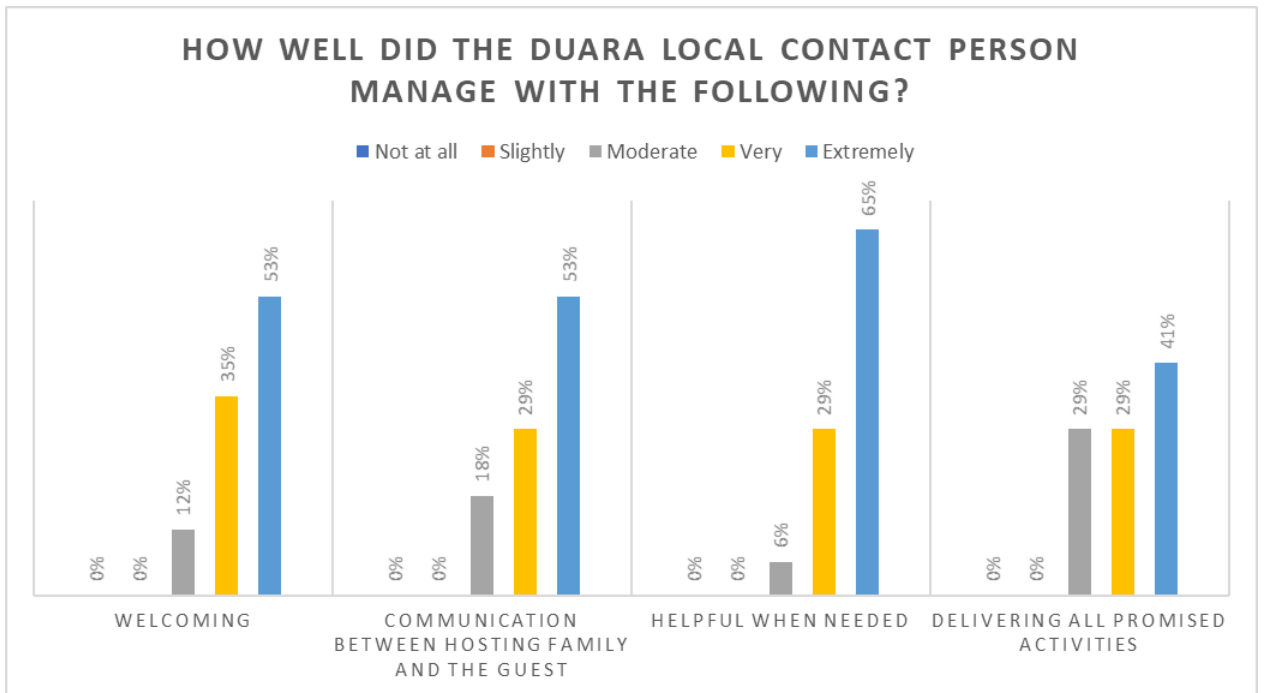
Figure 16. Duara customers' level of satisfaction with the service provided by the local contact person (17 respondents)

As it shows in figure 15, the level of the customer satisfaction of different services offered by the host families varies from the 29, 41 % to 65 %. The total percentage of customers who were extremely satisfied with each of the services provided is 46,08 % or approximately half of the respondents. According to 31,37 % of respondents, they were very satisfied with the services. This means that the total percentage of satisfied customers equals 77,45 %, which also indicates a high satisfaction rate. The customers' comments show that they had a truly unique experience:

- o "We loved getting to know our family and being exposed to their daily life. They were such amazing people, and we would have never have known so much about the culture if we had not stayed with them. It really changed our whole trip and made so many more experiences afterward more meaningful."

- o "I enjoyed living and sharing the life of a big family of three generations together with many happy animals running freely. It was a very emotional trip to realize that people are happy without having almost no material things and the children were well kept and valuated."

- o "Meeting the family, the extended family, and the village people. They were really accommodating and friendly. While the language barrier was really quite difficult, this was eased by the people's enthusiasm for me being there."

- o "Walking through the rice paddy, watching my kids play with the local kids."

- "Live the reality of families and the local community. even better if we somehow become "part of the family."

- "The family was very nice, the contact person was so fun to hang out with, and the food was incredible!"

- "Walks around the village and neighbours, being with a local family."

- "People of the village and local landscapes"

- "Wayan's cooking and everything else, it was just fantastic. Especially doing the water purification ceremony at the water temple, visiting the rice terraces, and going to the coffee plantation. All around an amazing experience!"

The total amount of slightly satisfied and moderately satisfied customers is 22,55%. Most of the negative responses were related to the activities, facilities in the house, and the village community involvement. Here one of the service gaps – procedural gap - can be acknowledged, which also indicated in the respondents' comments to the question:

- "Long hours stuck at the homestay after tea. I was on my own."

- "Activities may be seasonal, and I was not aware on the website."

- "I think maybe having a few suggested things to do in each village if you find yourself with down time. Whether they are free or cheap, close enough to walk etc. This would have been handy for on the day off."

- "Only activity a day, the rest of the day was spent lingering around the house."

- "How to spend our time during the day. There wasn't much to do, and there wasn't really much guidance on what to do with our time."

Providing a clear list of activities can be a quick win for the company improving the overall customer experience. It can also be useful to inform the customers about the possibilities of free time in advance and include information about the neighbouring villages they can visit on their own.

The percentage of customers who agreed that they felt extremely satisfied is 53 % or more than half of the respondents. 31 % of the customers said that they were very satisfied with the service provided by the local contact person. That means that the satisfaction rate is 84 %, which indicates a high satisfaction rate of the respondents. 16% of the respondents said that they were moderately satisfied with the service. There were no negative answers regarding the service delivered by the local contact person.

4.3.2 Estimated customer retention rate

The estimated retention rate is based on the amount of the respondents who were willing to travel again with Duara Travels, as it is shown in figure 17.
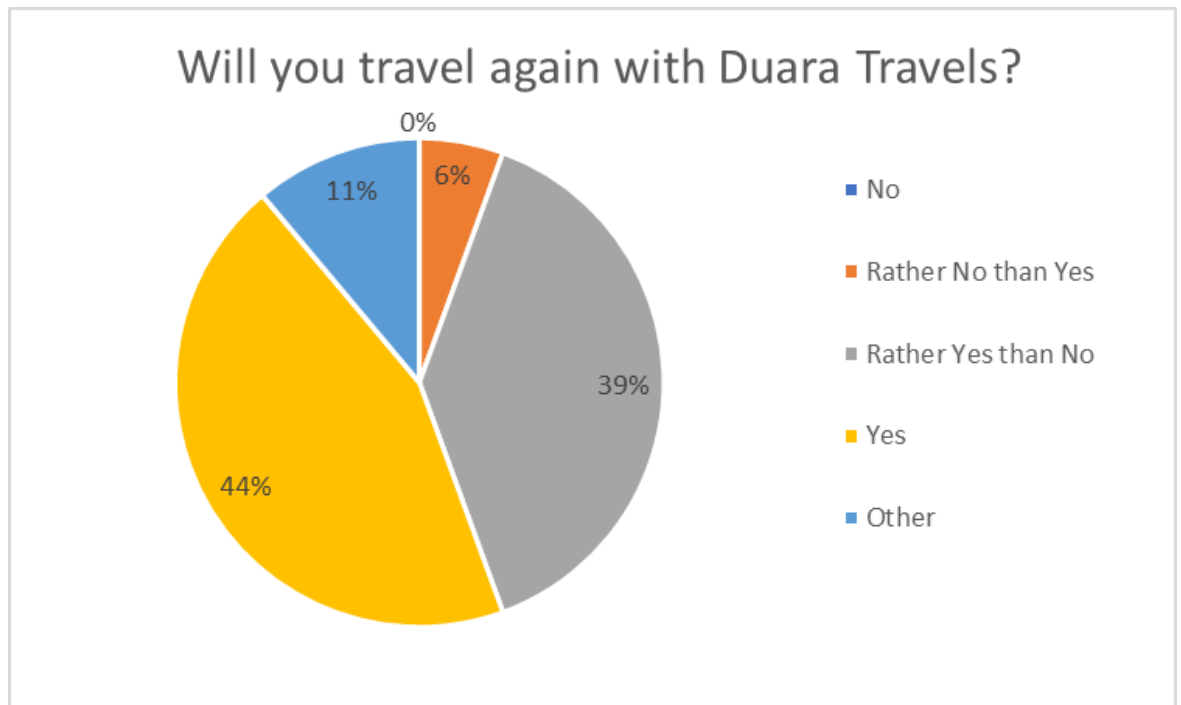
Figure 17. Duara Travels' customers who will travel again with Duara (18 respondents)

According to the information presented above, the total percentage of customers who were considering traveling with Duara again is 81 %, which indicates a high retention rate. The customers' loyalty rate can also influence the percentage of returning customers. The respondents' loyalty rate is 78 %, which based on the amount of the respondents who were willing to recommend Duara Travels to others as it is shown in figure 18.

Figure 18. Customers' willingness to recommend Duara to others (18 respondents)

4.3.3 Customers' requirements

The customers' requirements were grouped as follows:

1. concerns before the trip to help the customer with the decision-making process

2. complains during/after the trip for service and overall customer experience improvement

The customers' concerns before the trip purchasing were related to the additional information to Duara's website (figure 19).
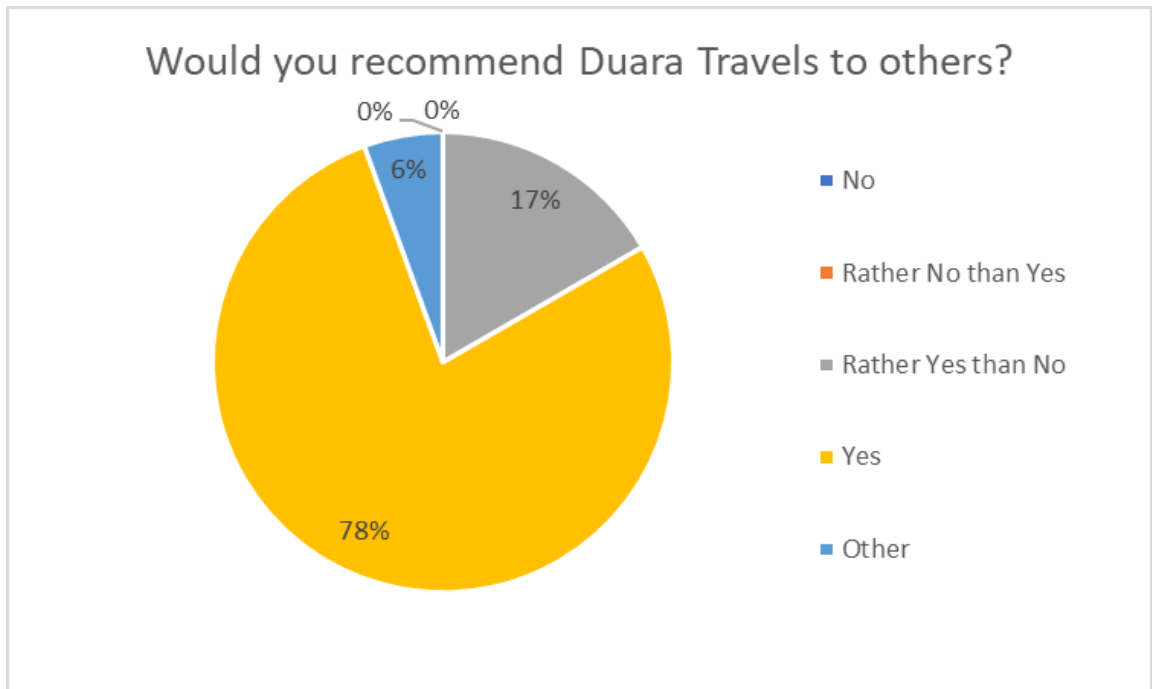
What concerns did you have before deciding to book your trip with Duara village?
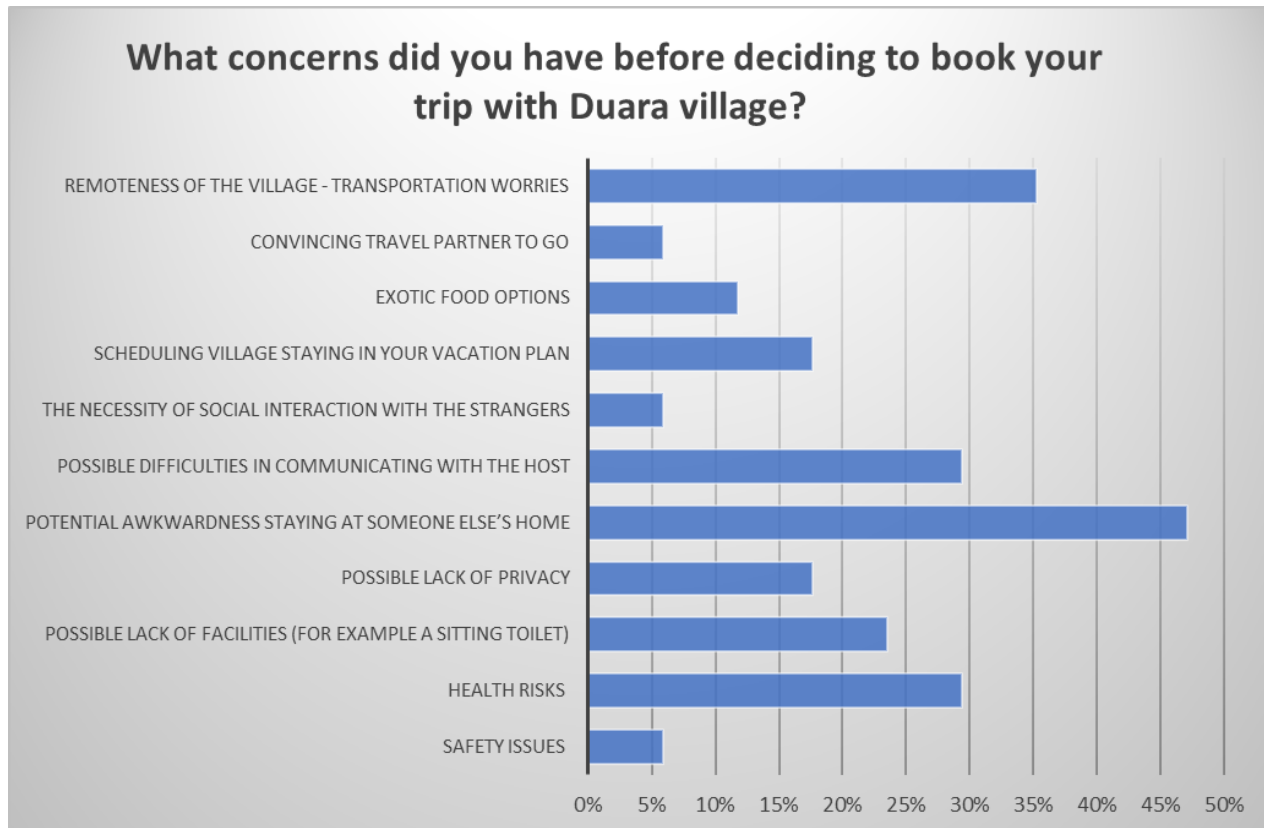
Figure 19. Customers' concerns before the purchase decision (17 respondents)

There is a moderate understanding gap that could be improved by adding the required content to Duara's webpage. Most of the concerns were related to the uncomfortable feeling about staying in the strangers' house (47%), remoteness and transportation worries (35%), health issues (29%), communication problems (29%) and concerns about lack of facilities in the house (24%).

The fears of being uncomfortable, communication difficulties with the host as well as worries about facilities, could be sorted out with the introduction of the host families on the website. It can be done with short videos, interviews, or storytelling, but it could gain the customers' trust and reduce the number of unpleasant worries.

The concerns about health risks can be reduced by adding to each destination the redirecting links to health guides with all necessary information about vaccination, quality of healthcare in the region, the addresses of hospitals, clinics, embassies, etc.

The transportation and remoteness of the villages is a stressful factor for the customers, especially if they are traveling with small children. Placing the villages on the Google map

and additional information about the transportation capacity of the area could reduce the amount of stress significantly.

The customers' requirements reflect on the answers to the question about helping customers with decision making:

- "Having the video of a previous couple staying made it look more real."

- "Make sure the host can provide a list of activities and places to visit, have some basic structure to the stay."

- "I think the messaging was really good - clean and open about exactly what to expect. I think the only thing we may have wanted to know was how each day usually ran. We left all of our time for spending with our family and experiencing their daily life, but ended up with down time and no way to get out and fill it, due to not knowing our surroundings well or having transport."

- "Spread more stories from previous visitors (which you are already doing), because I think the stories of others are the only real way to get people to overcome their doubts beforehand."

- "Provide ways the money has actually supported the villages and families. Progress photos would be nice to see."

The comment about the proof of the use of the resources for the village community could be a unique factor that would distinguish Duara from other travel companies. The resources could be collected for village community projects like school renovation or local road construction. This could also be the reason for increasing prices of the trip packages – a tangible, sustainable product which people usually ready to support.

The customers' willingness to pay 30% more for the trip they had purchased was also investigated in the survey (figure 20):
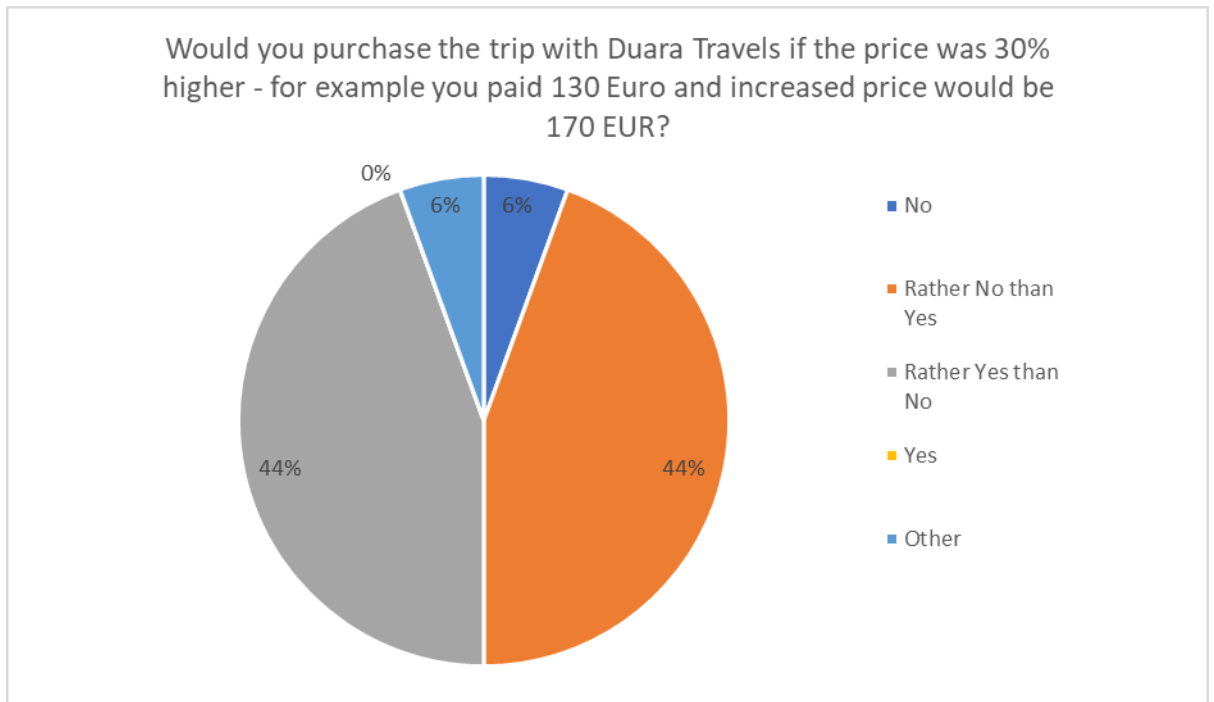
Figure 20. Customers' readiness to pay 30% more for the Duara trip (18 respondents)

As it shows, the percentage of the customers (50%) who were not willing to pay an extra 30% is more than those who were (44%). This proofs the statement above about the need for the tangible verification of the price rise.

4.3.4   Priorities for improvement

Based on the survey results, the priorities for improvement were defined as:

1.   A clear list of activities for the company's website

2.   Short videos, interviews, and additional stories about the previous travellers' staying

3.   Placing the villages to the Google map and additional information about the transportation capacity of the area

4.   A village community project to support

Taking into consideration all the suggestions and customer satisfaction survey results, the Customer Empathy map was modified with a link to the customers' identified concerns and gains (figure 21 and annex 3):

Figure 21. Duara's modified Customer Empathy Map (Created with a free template from Conseptboard 2020)

4.4   Market segmentation analysis

The main purpose of market segmentation for Duara Travels was to identify the ideal customer's profile analysing customer database collected during 2017-2019 and ad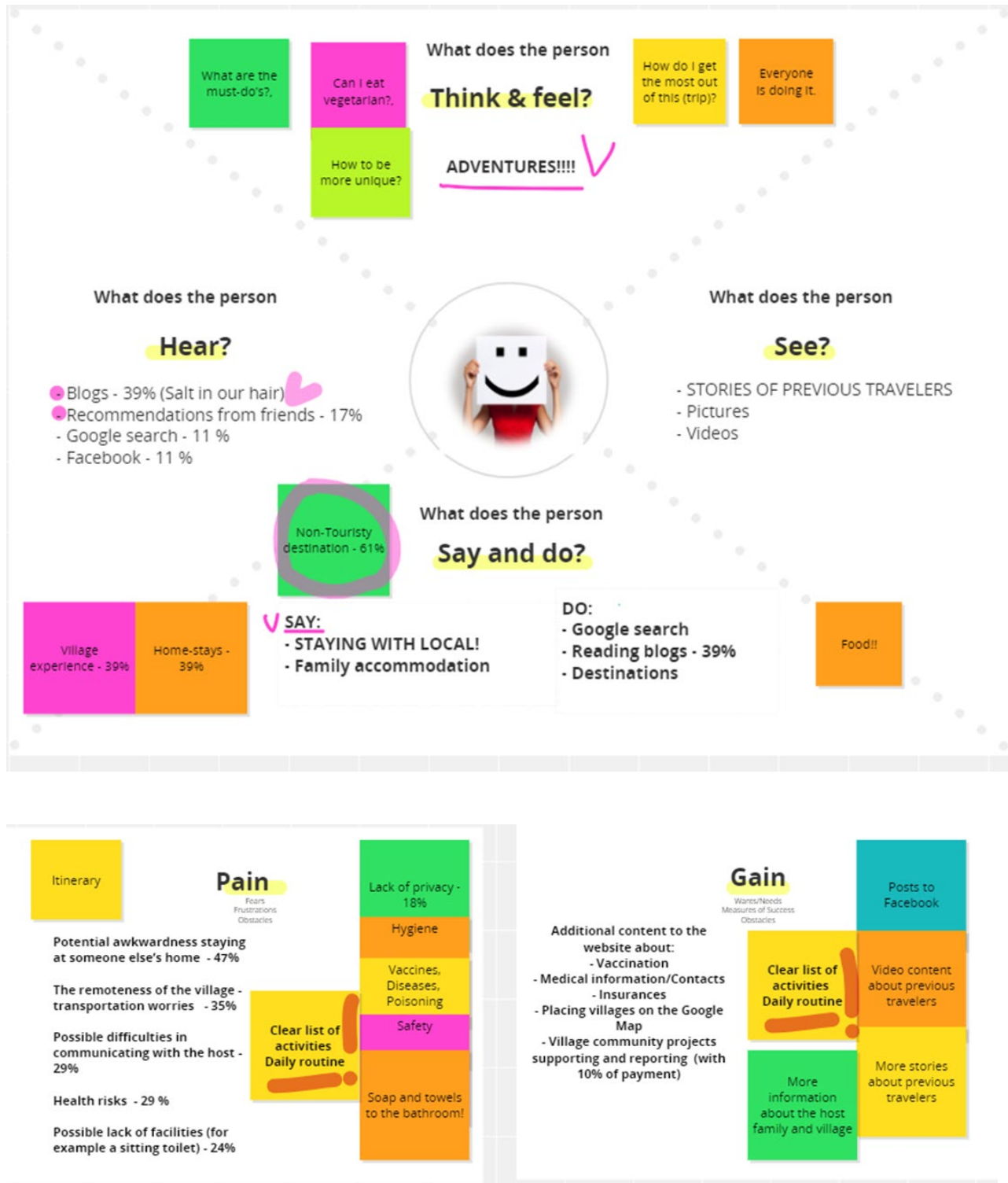ding the customer satisfaction survey results. The customer profile information would help to understand the company's target market and improve communication strategy. The segmentation had been done using geographical and demographical criteria of segmentation.

All the calculations for the analyses had been done with the help of MS-Excel software and were based on the customer database figures provided by Duara Travels as the input data.

Duara Travels used MS-Excel spreadsheets as a database for the CRM. For the analysis, all the duplicated data were removed as well as all the possible causes for errors such as bookings which had been cancelled and refunded that affected the input data variations as well.

Once all the obvious causes for error were erased, all the customers in the database were divided according to their interpersonal status: couples, solo travellers, families with children, and group travellers. Unfortunately, some customers' marketing information was missing; therefore, the range of data sets differed within the same spreadsheet (for example, in Contact info-form - some customers had not filled all the required fields, and information was partly missing).

The customers were analysed withing their group/spreadsheet using the average numbers method by calculation the average weights of the total amount in range, which presented in the diagrams in the percentage mode. Because of the input data variations in the spreadsheet, the analyses were based on the actual number of customers in a range set.

Finally, taking into consideration the absence of duplicated data, all the outcomes from the separate spreadsheets were summarized in one consolidated report, analysed as a total, and presented with cumulative percentages in the diagrams. Still, the data variations, missing information, and possible mistakes in the calculation could cause a potential threat to the research validity and deviation of the real situation and research outcomes.

4.4.1 Geographical segmentation

After analysing the data of customers' country of origin (total of 174), it was identified that most of the Duara customers – 36% came from Finland instead of an early hypothesis of them being from France (8%), USA (8%) or UK (11%). The information about the country of origin of Duara's customers presented in figure 22 below.
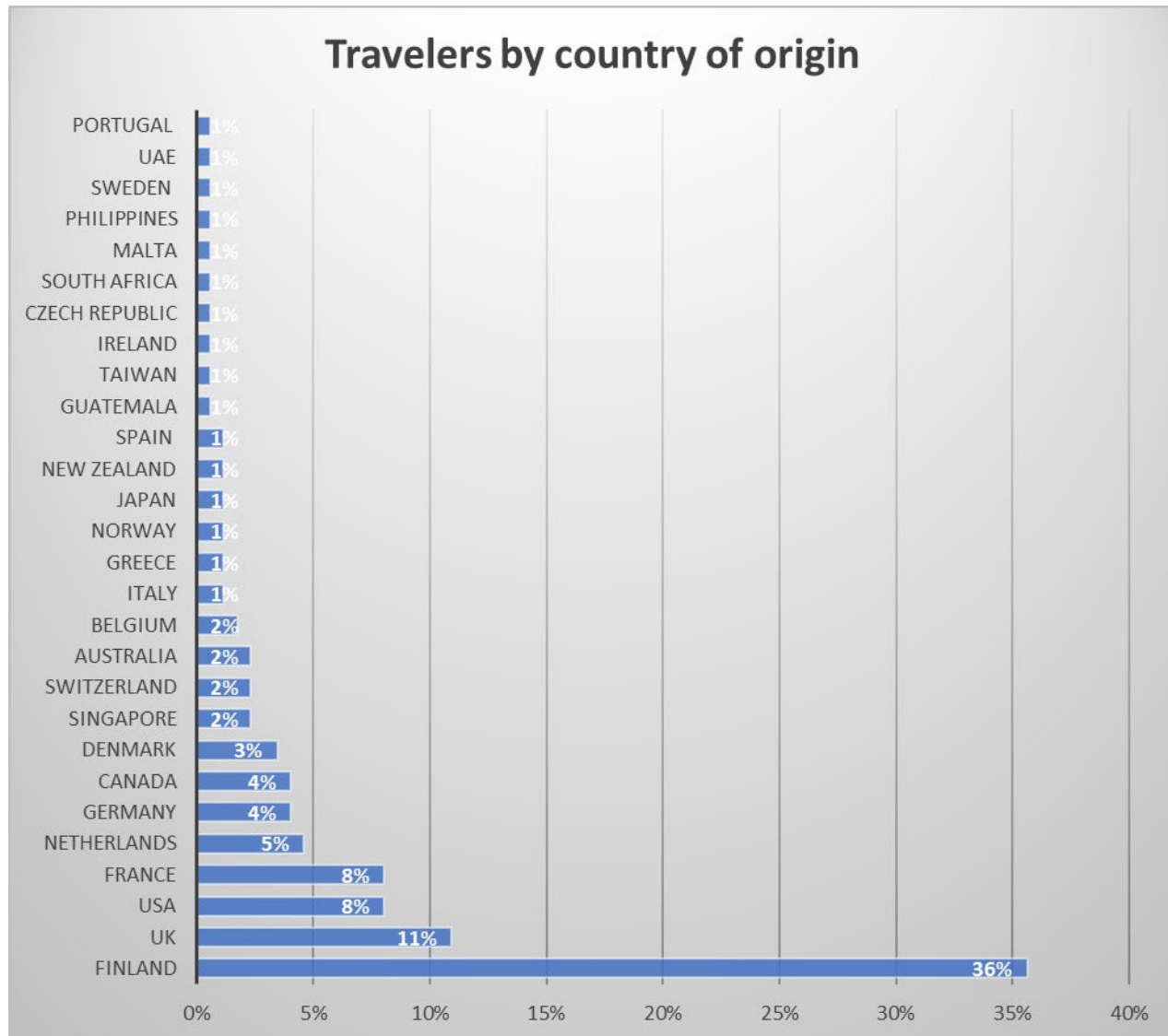
Figure 22. Number of Duara's customers per country of origin (total of 174)

Three most popular destinations among Duara's customers were Indonesia (Gadungan and Sebatu), - 42 % of the customers have travelled there; Tanzania (Kizimkazi and Lembeni) – 27 % of the customers bought trips to travel there; Shi Lanka (Neluwa and Hasalaka) – 16 % of the customers chosen this destination for their holiday (figure 23).
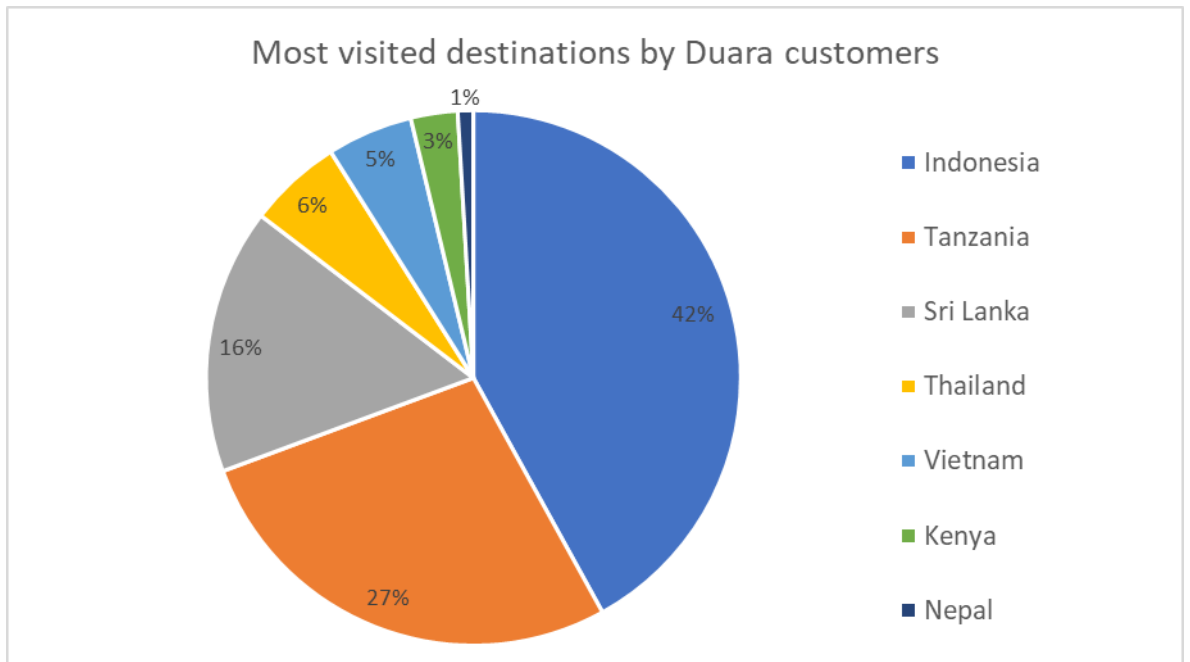
Figure 22. Most visited destinations by Duara's customers (total of 212)

Based on 214 of the total amounts of bookings during years 2017-2019, the customers were mostly willing to spend three-nights in the Duara's village during their traveling. 63% of the purchased trips were three-nights trips as it stays in figure 23 below.
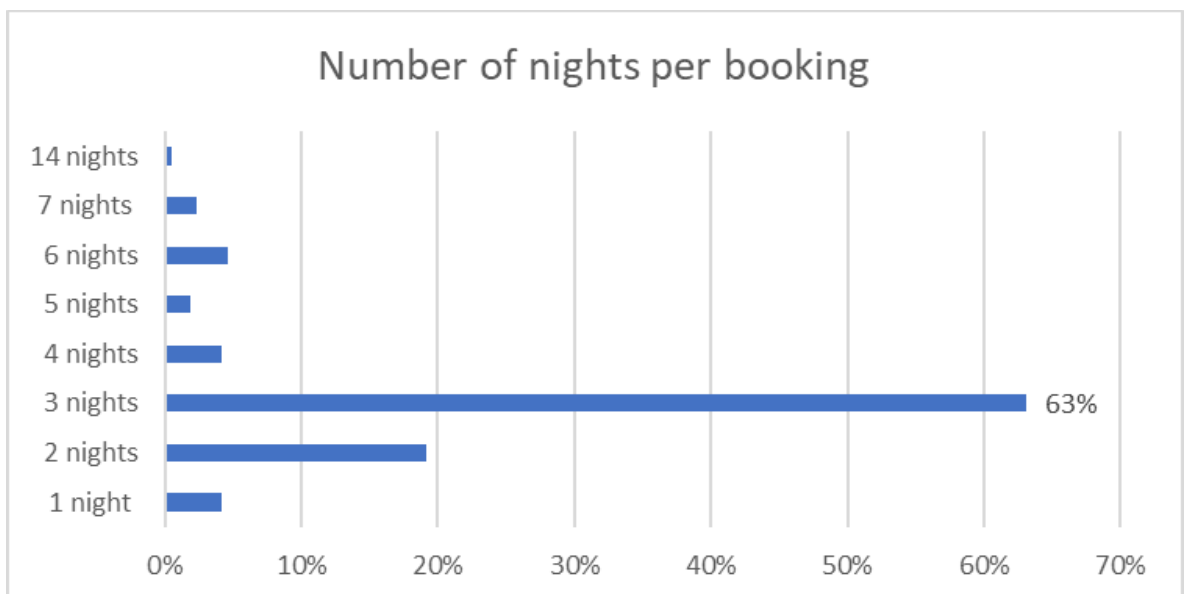
Figure 23 The number of nights per booking by Duara customers during 2017-2019 (total of 214)

4.4.2   Demographical segmentation

As it is shown in figure 24, the couples or those who travelled with the one friend (45% of the total number of customers) are the main target group for Duara. The next important group of travellers is solo travellers (35%). 79 % of solo travellers (total of 66) were female travellers (figure 25). The analysis revealed that only 12% of the travellers were families with children, and 8 % of customers travelled with the group.
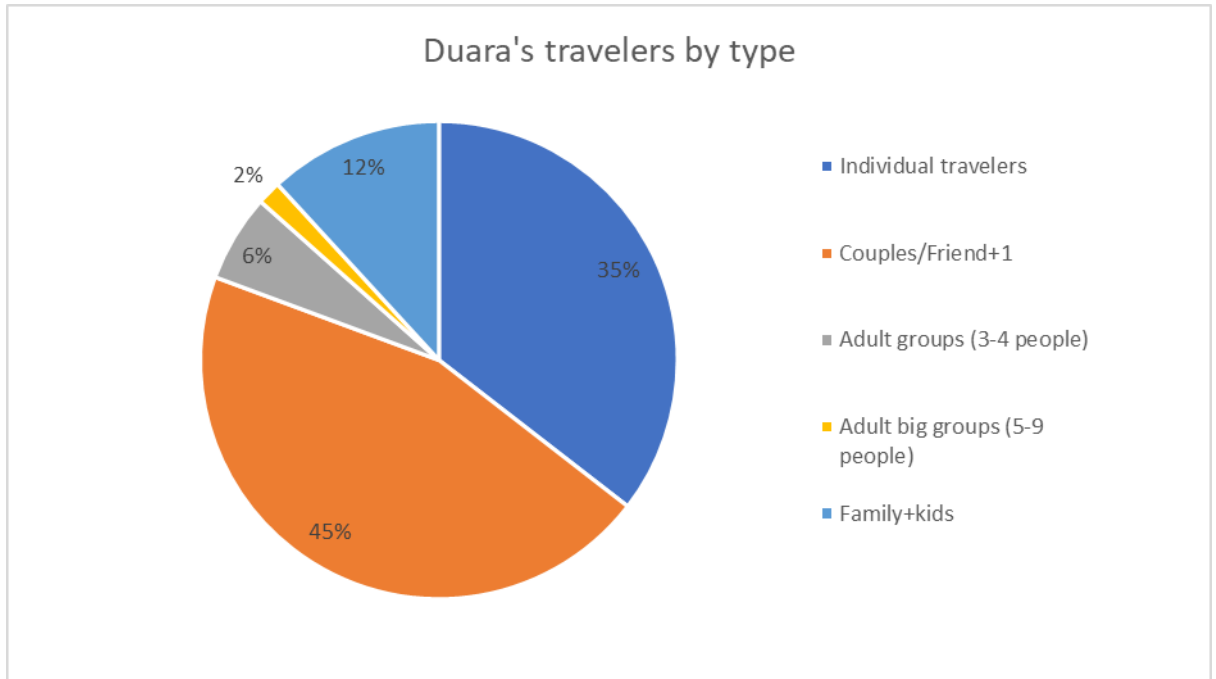
Figure 24. Duara's travellers by type (total of 186)
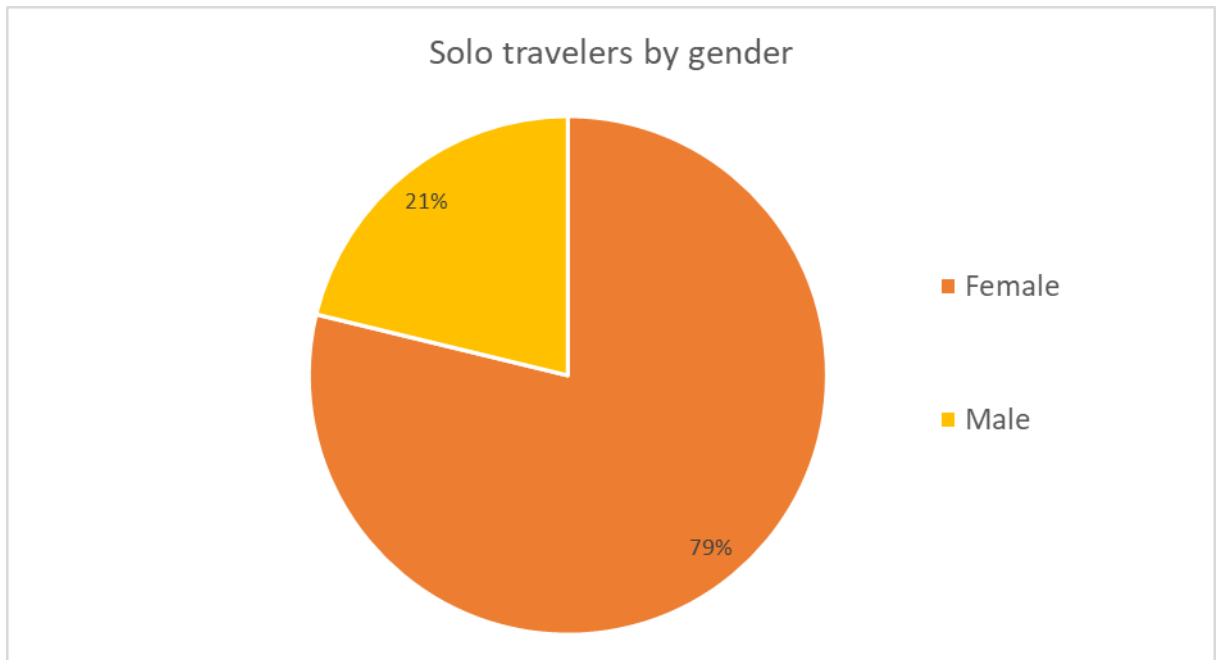
Figure 1.21. Duara's solo travellers by gender (total of 66)

The majority of Duara customers (77 %) are representatives of the Millennials age group, as it is shown in figure 26.
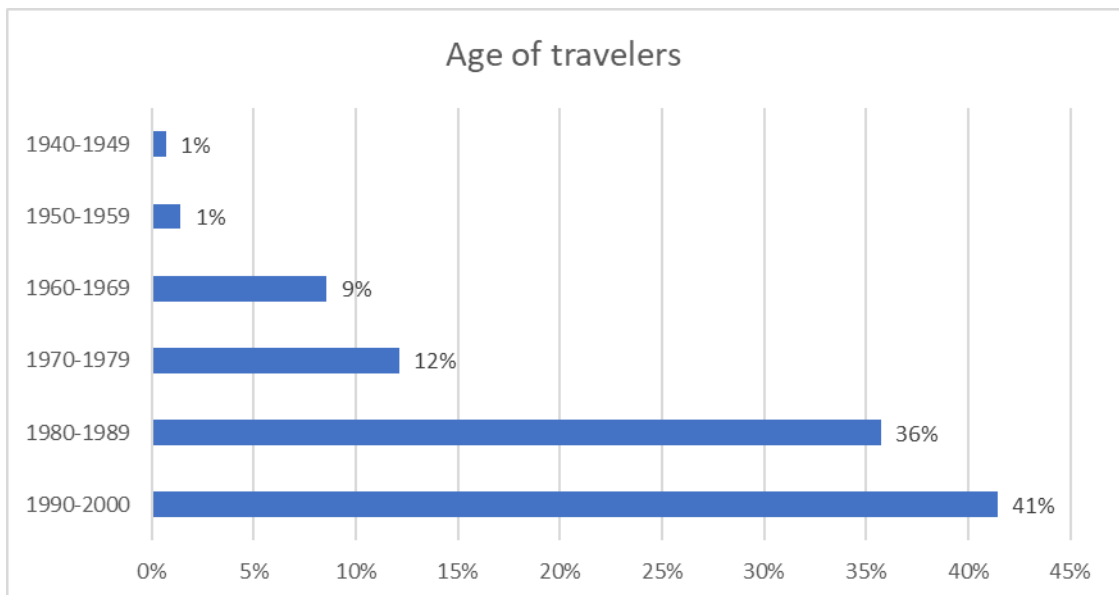
Figure 26. Duara's travellers by age group (total of 140)

Evaluating the age of travellers by their travel type indicates that 46% of the couple/two friends travellers belong to the Millennials age group as well (figure 27).
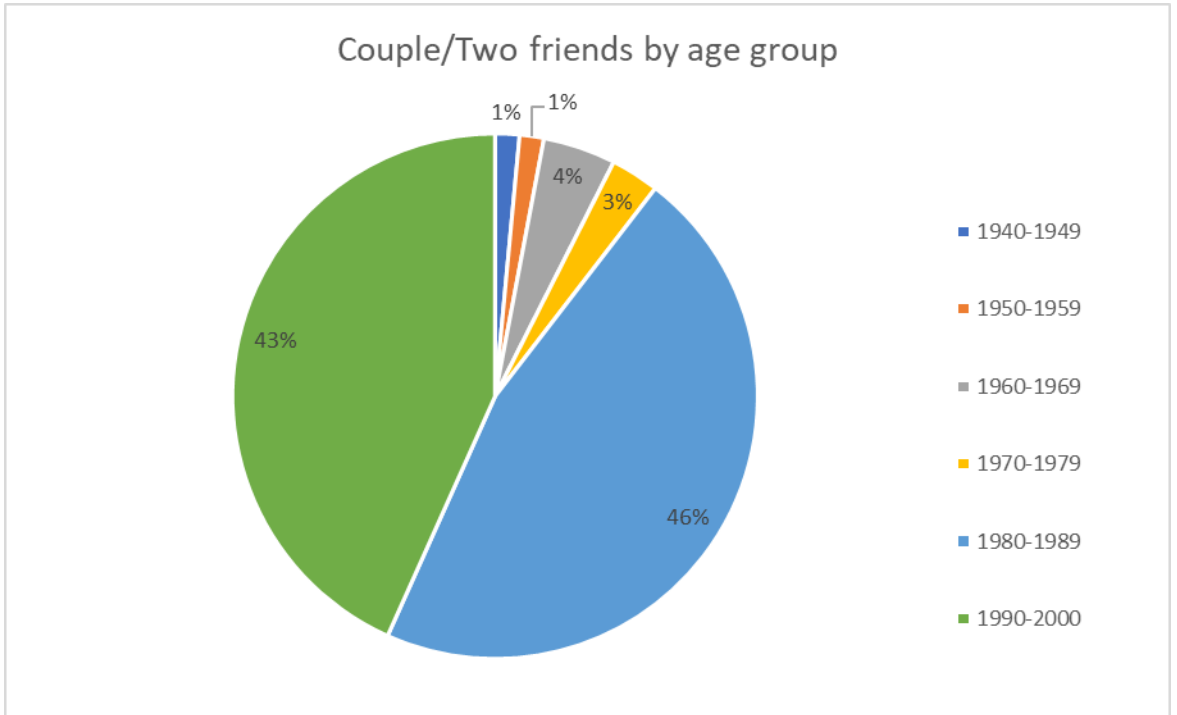
Figure 27. Couples/Two friends by age group (total of 67)

The same results appeared with Duara's solo travellers - 76 % belonged to the Millennials age group (figure 28).
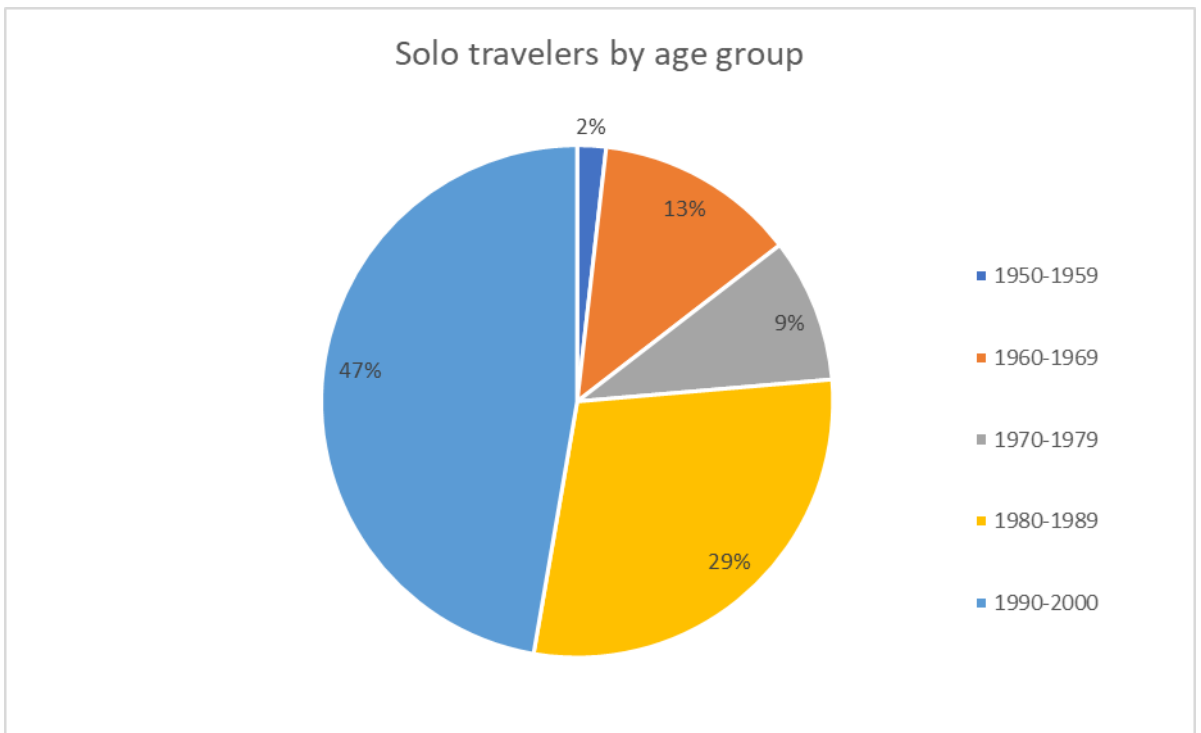
Figure 28. Solo travellers by age group (total of 55)

The majority of representatives of "Couples/Two friends" found out about Duara travels through Google search engine, recommendations of friends, and blogs, as it is shown in figure 29 below.
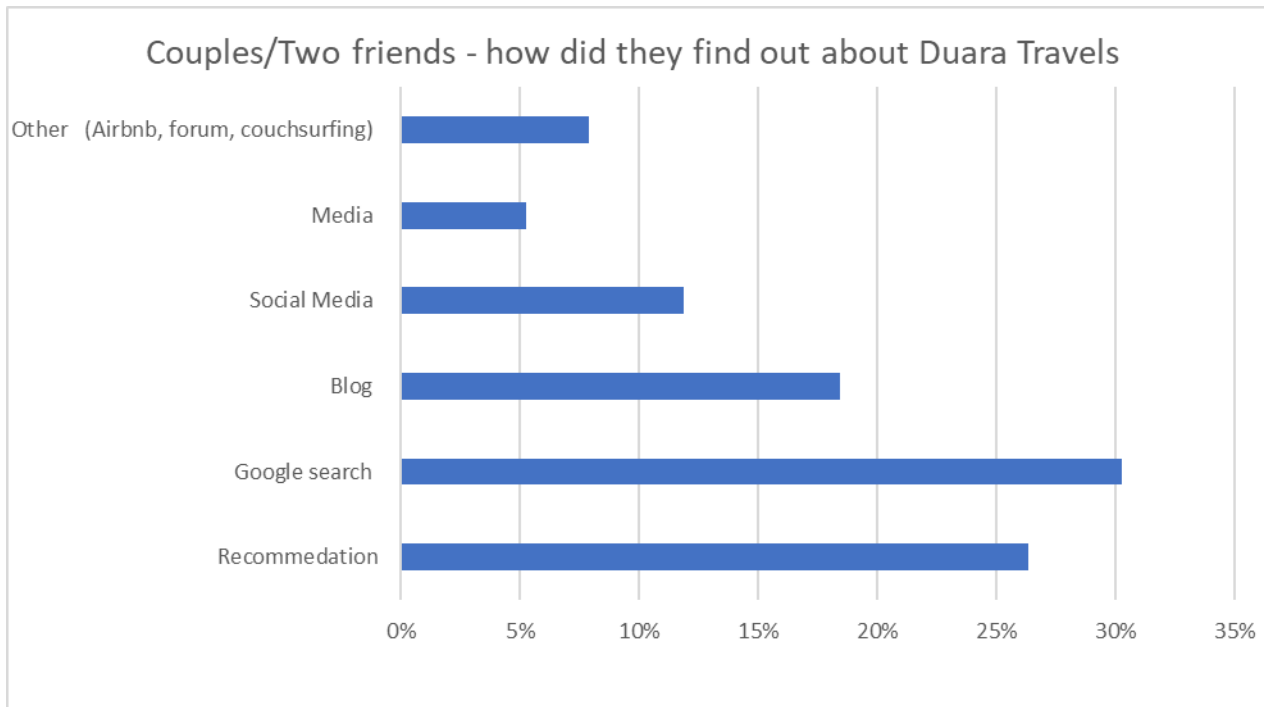
Figure 29. How did the "Couples" travellers find out about Duara Travels (total of 76)

The majority of customers from the "solo-travellers" group found out about Duara travels from the blogs (40%), google search (21%), and recommendations (19%) (figure 30).
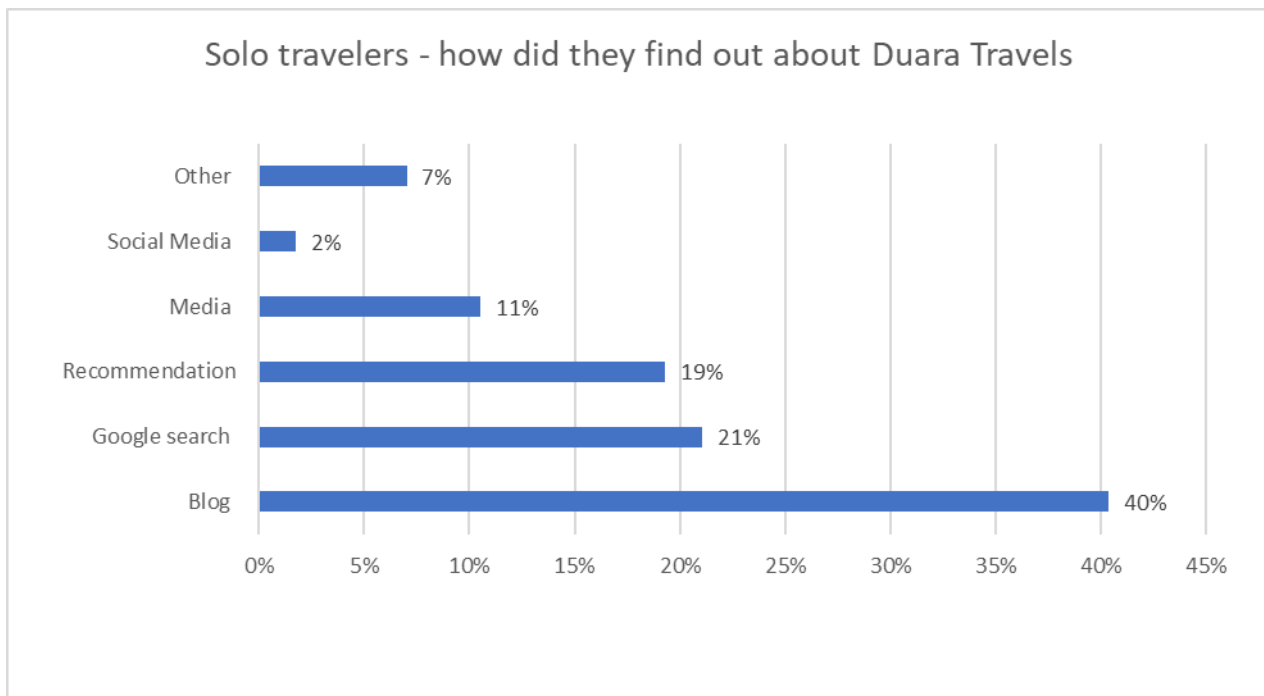
Figure 30. How did the "Solo" travellers find out about Duara Travels (total of 57)

4.4.3 Duara Travels Customer Profile

According to the segmentation analysis and the result of the customer satisfaction survey, the two major target groups for Duara travels are couples/two friends and female solo travellers.

Both representatives of these groups are in their mid-thirties, in the middle of their careers, and have resources for travelling being responsible travellers looking for unique experiences beyond the traditional tourists' paths. They are also originally coming from Finland (figure 31 and 32 correspondingly).
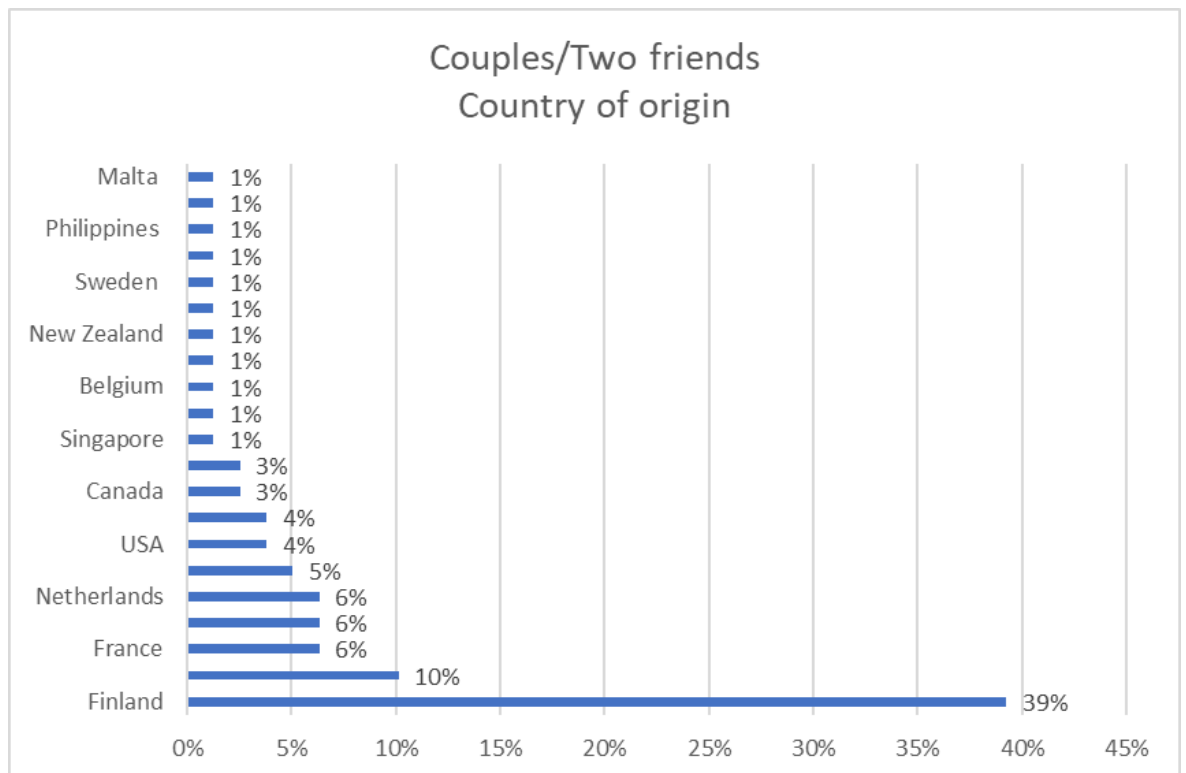
Figure 31. Couples/Two friends' country of origin (total of 79)
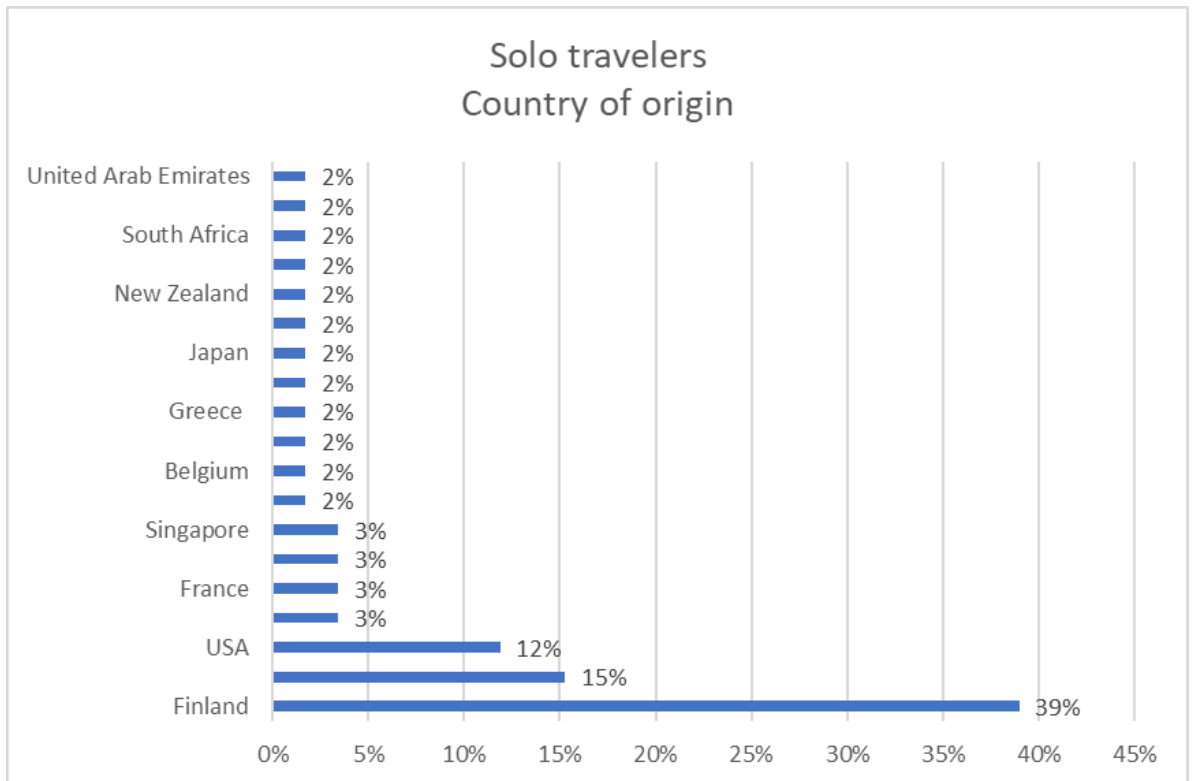
Figure 32. Solo travellers' country of origin (total of 59)

Although two groups have a lot in common – both groups belong to the Millennials, both choose for the travel destination Indonesia and Tanzania, using the same search channels – their needs, concerns, and requirement are different. Therefore, a separate marketing strategy has to be developed and applied in order to reach both of the segments.

Both segments have good potential for growth, but the female solo traveling is a global trend in the tourism industry, and the number of travellers grows each year tremendously. According to the statistics presented on Solotravelworld.com, the number of google searches for "solo women travel" increased by 230% in 2019 (Solotravelworld 2020).

Based on the survey about the main reasons why women prefer to travel solo, the majority of respondents emphasize the freedom, being independent of the others, to get out of their comfort zone to gain confidence. Also, it was proved that women are more adventures than men travellers and usually feeling comfortable being alone. (Solotravelworld 2020)

Although the solo travellers are open-mind and looking for adventures to gain more confidence and to meet new people, they can be less secure and demand more information before traveling to a remote village on their own. For them, it is necessary to add more media content to reduce the amount of possible stress before the trip.

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There are two customer profiles developed for each target group representatives (figures 33-34 correspondingly and also in appendix 4).

Pekka ja Maja Lahtinen

We are active, social, love traveling, seeing new places, try new food.

Age: 35-38 | Married/Single

Children

Languages: Finnish, English, Swedish, Spanish

Income: 90 000 €/ year

City: Helsinki

Education: University Degree

analytical — creative
antisocial — social
unbalanced — balanced
narrow-minded — open-minded
chaotic — well-organized

Interests
Sport, traveling, photography, design

Needs
Stories, videos of the previous travelers
3-6 month planning time before the trip

Expectations
To be safe
To live like a local
To eat good food
Activities

Goals:
To have an amazing experience

Fears
Health risks
Remoteness of the village

Important Trends:
Minimalism
Eco-tourism
Sustainable travel

Preferred Channels
Google search
Recommendations of friends
Blogs
Facebook
Instagram

Brands
Sustainable brands with the high level of social responsibility

Additional Information
Destination to go
Indonesia
Tanzania
Shi Lanka

Figure 33. Duara's customer profile for "Couples/two friends" target group (Created with a free template from Conseptboard 2020)
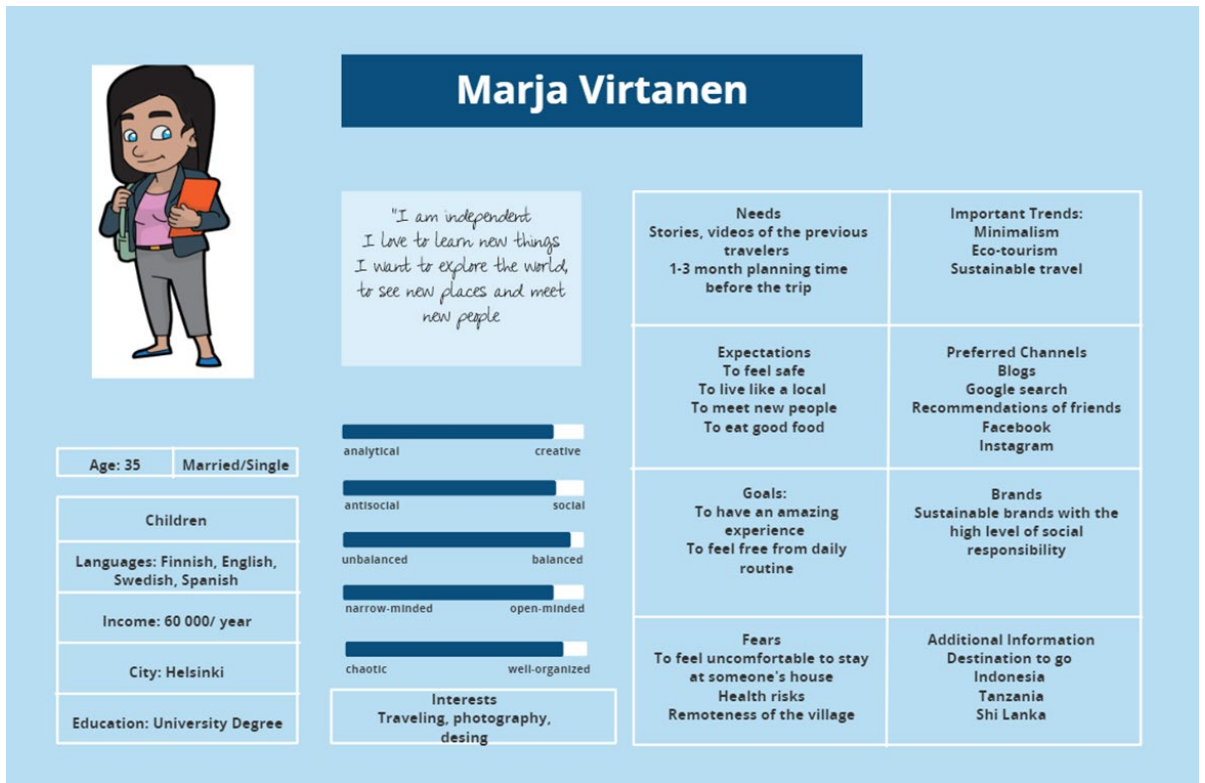
Figure 34. Duara's customer profile for "Solo traveller" target group (Created with a free template from Conseptboard 2020)

5   Discussion

5.1   Reliability evaluation

The current research had been conducted during autumn 2018 and winter-spring 2019. The research had been done in collaboration with the Duara Travels team, and the results were already implemented.

During the survey, different service quality models and approaches had been studied and evaluated. The SERVQUAL gap analysis model had been chosen as an appropriate tool for a current customer satisfaction survey. The survey objectives were selected in accordance with the SERVQUAL model requirements.

It was studied in section 2.2. and 3.3., that customer satisfaction with service can be affected by many determinants, and it is hard to be measured, especially in the tourism industry. Therefore, even with the respondents' rate (33 %) as could be considered as moderate, the customer satisfaction survey cannot hundred percent reliable because of the human factor involved. (William et al. 2003, 60)

Another important factor was the time-factor as the survey had been done for some of the customers long after the trip, and their perceptions of the service might had already changed over time.

The reliability of the customer satisfaction survey can be increased if it will be conducted systematically and implemented survey results will be continuously monitored and improved indicators registered (Kozielski et al. 2018; 38).

Nevertheless, for the start-up company, as Duara Travels was with small client-database, the customer satisfaction survey was a beneficial experience and valuable feedback from the customers. Also, it was proved that the survey results were in correlation with the previously conducted marketing surveys for Duara travels as well as with the tourism industry trends.

5.2   Conclusions

The main purpose of the current survey was to investigate the level of customer satisfaction and provide travel company Duara Travels with a list of recommendations on improving the company's performance.

The satisfaction survey was answered by 18 respondents who were 32-33 % of a total of 55 customers who received the email with the questionnaire's link.

There were three research questions formulated at the beginning of the survey:

1. Have the Duara Travels product met the customer's expectations – post-purchase evaluation?

Even taking into consideration a 5% standard margin error, which lowers the reliability of the survey, the results were indicated a high level of customer satisfaction of Duara's services (SurveyMonkey 2020).

This can be evaluated with the customer satisfaction score, which was calculated as 72% and based on the formula presented in 2.4.:

Customer satisfaction = Customer Perception = Customer Expectations

Based on the survey results, the first investigating question can be answered that the services provided by Duara Travels met and even exceeded customers' expectations.

This can also be proved with the customer satisfaction index, the indicator of how satisfied were the customers with each service provided by the host and local contact person.

The satisfaction index for the service's customer received in the host family, which included welcoming, food, experiences, facilities in the house, community involvement, and activities was 77,45%, which can be considered as high.

The index for the services provided by the local contact person such as welcoming, communication between hosting family and the guest, assistance during the trip, delivering all promised activities, was 84 %, which also very high.

2. What were the customers' main purchase-decision factors in buying Duara Travels trip package?

According to the survey results, the main factors which influenced Duara customers' purchase-decision were as follows (also presented in figure 35).

- The desire for adventures (61% of the respondents) – people were ready to take a risk, but at the same time, most of the respondents did research before they booked the trip:

  o "I researched duaratravel to see if there are any scams and read reviews from other travellers. I took vaccines before going to Bali."

  o "I did some research online and found out that the risk was low."

- o "Did some research about other peoples' experience."

- Stories of previous travellers – this was one of the most convincing marketing tools for companies like Duara. The stories help customers to overcome the doubts because they assured that the other people travelled there and enjoyed it. The survey showed the demand for more stories or videos to the website:

    - o "Having the video of a previous couple staying made it look more real"

    - o "Spread more stories from previous visitors (which you are already doing), because I think the stories of others are the only real way to get people to overcome their doubt beforehand."

- Winning customers trust in the company's offers with the content on the Duara's webpage:

    - o "Reading about the village and other travellers' experiences convinced us that it is going to be worth it."

    - o "To me, Duara seemed reliable and did not have doubts concerning my trip."

Factors influenced Duara customers' purchase-decision

Factor	Percentage
Other (please specify)	6%
Desire for adventures	61%
Price	22%
Trust to the company through website	33%
Videos	6%
Pictures	39%
A recommendation from a friend	6%
Stories of previous travelers	56%
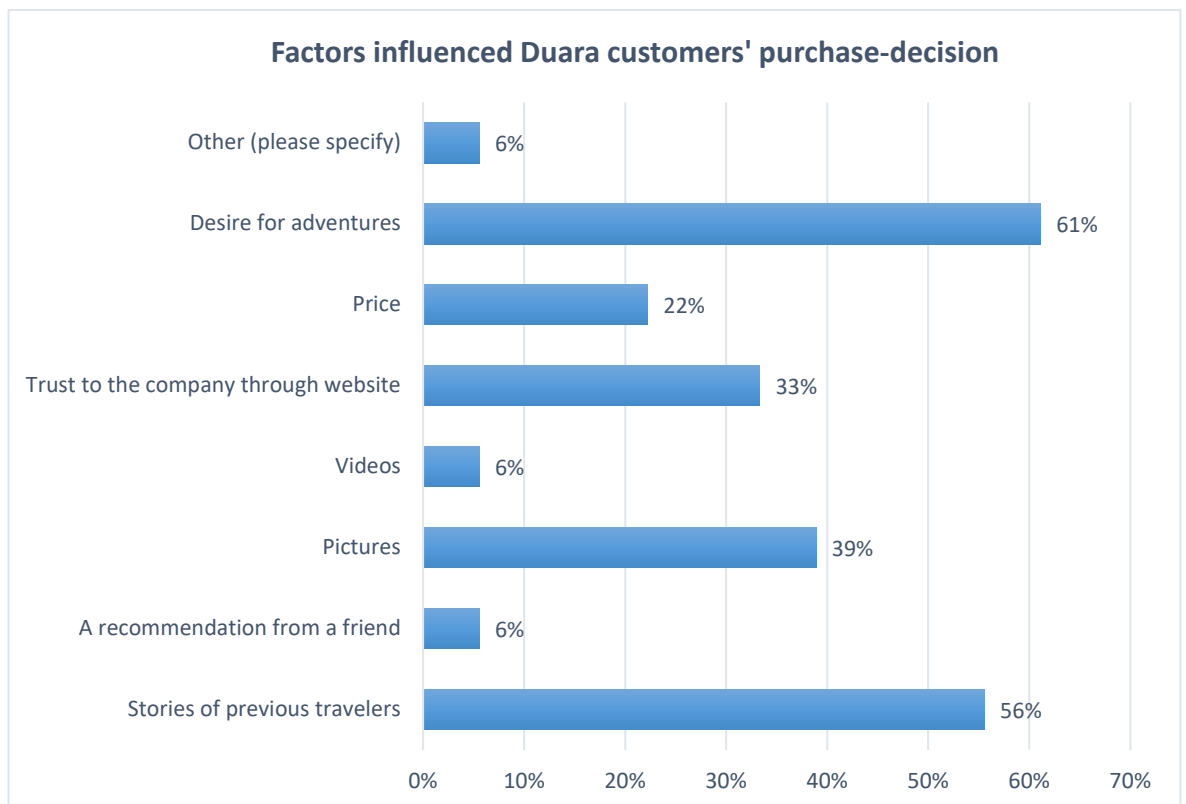
Figure 35. The main factors influenced customers' purchase decisions (18 respondents)

3. How can customer satisfaction survey results be used in improving the company's sales?

There were moderate understanding and procedural service gaps defined with the survey results, which could improve the overall customers' experience and would have a possible positive impact on a company's sales.

Both gaps were linked to a lack of information, which, according to the survey results, customers would like to know beforehand. This was already investigated and presented as priorities for improvement in section 4.3.4. of the current survey:

1. A clear list of activities for the company's website

2. Short videos, interviews, and additional stories about the previous travellers' staying

3. Placing the villages to the Google map and additional information about the transportation capacity of the area

4. A village community project to support

The market segmentation analysis could also be helpful in closing service gaps with more precise target marketing as the main target groups for Duara Travels were defined.

The suggestions for improvement which Duara Travels had implemented included clarification of the activities during staying in the villages, additional stories from previous travellers, medical guidelines for tourists. Unfortunately, for the small start-ups as Duara Travels was, the budget for marketing is usually limited, and, after struggling to compete with the big travels agencies, Duara Travels made a decision to stop their operations from January 2020.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey Basic report

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Basic report

Customer Satisfaction Survey for Duara Travels

Total number of respondents: 18

1. How did you find out about Duara Travels?

Number of respondents: 18 , selected answers: 18

	n	Percent
Blog (s) (which blog, please specify)	7	38.89%
Facebook (if possible, please specify group, ad or user)	2	11.11%
Instagram (if possible, please specify hashtag or influencer)	0	0%
YouTube	0	0%
Other online sources (please specify)	2	11.11%
From previous travelers	0	0%
From friends	3	16.67%
Other (please specify)	4	22.22%

Average
4.11

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Blog (s) (which blog, please specify)	Unsure - travel blog found through Google.
Blog (s) (which blog, please specify)	salt in our hair
Blog (s) (which blog, please specify)	Can't remember
Blog (s) (which blog, please specify)	Salt in our Hair
Other online sources (please specify)	google
Other online sources (please specify)	Google search
Other (please specify)	From research
Other (please specify)	from a TV-interview of the owner last winter
Other (please specify)	A sticker in Unicafe's bathroom
Other (please specify)	Microsoft Flux

2. If you found Duara Travels through a Google or other internet search engines - what words or phrases did you use?

Number of respondents: 5

Responses
N/A
Living/Staying with locals
I don't remember
family accommodation
I do not remember....

3. How often do you go on holiday to Asia or Africa?

Number of respondents: 18

	n	Percent
Less than ones a year	10	55.56%
Once a year	4	22.22%
2-4 times a year	2	11.11%
5+	2	11.11%

Average
1.78

4. How early do you plan your holiday accommodations?

Number of respondents: 18

	n	Percent
Last minute	1	5.56%
4 – 2 weeks	3	16.67%
1-3 months before	8	44.44%
3-6 months before	4	22.22%
7-12 months before	2	11.11%
More than a year before	0	0%

Average
3.17

5. How did you end up travelling to a Duara village?

Number of respondents: 18 , selected answers: 34

	n	Percent
I was looking specifically for Duara Travels	6	33.33%
I was looking for the village experience travel but did not look specifically for Duara Travels	7	38.89%
I was searching for eco-tourism options	2	11.11%
I was looking for non-touristy destinations	11	61.11%
I was looking for volunteering options	1	5.56%
I was looking for home-stays	7	38.89%
I was looking for, other	0	0%

Average
3.44

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text

6. What concerns did you have before deciding to book your trip with Duara village?

Number of respondents: 17 , selected answers: 42

	n	Percent
Safety issues (please specify)	1	5.88%
Health risks (please specify)	5	29.41%

	n	Percent
Possible lack of facilities (for example a sitting toilet)	4	23.53%
Possible lack of privacy	3	17.65%
Potential awkwardness staying at someone else's home	8	47.06%
Possible difficulties in communicating with the host	5	29.41%
The necessity of social interaction with the strangers	1	5.88%
Scheduling village staying in your vacation plan	3	17.65%
Exotic food options	2	11.76%
Convincing travel partner to go	1	5.88%
Remoteness of the village - transportation worries	6	35.29%
Other, please specify	3	17.65%

Average
6.33

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Safety issues (please specify)	If the family is legit, how safe it is to stay with the family, if the website is legit
Health risks (please specify)	vaccines needed, food
Health risks (please specify)	Possible disease and sickness
Health risks (please specify)	getting sick due to poor hygiene
Health risks (please specify)	Food poisoning
Health risks (please specify)	Zika
Other, please specify	Itinerary
Other, please specify	That the money and resources weren't actually reaching the families and villages I was visiting, and they were being duped out of all the benefits Duara said my money would go towards.
Other, please specify	Nothing especially

7. How did you overcome the doubts?

Number of respondents: 15

Responses
talking to the host, clarifying those topics
Researched the surrounding area
We went in very open minded and had our Duara stay at the start of our trip with lots of other things planned following. This was something to get out of the norm and we booked a shorter stay rather than a week long one so that it was the right amount.
I researched duaratravel to see if there are any scams and read reviews from other travellers. I took vaccines before going to Bali.
Did some research about other peoples' experience
I was so curious about this kind of traveling that decided to book this trip
I utilised buses and trains and tuktuks to get to the village. I used non-verbal games and drawings to play and communicate with them. I also brought with me a Sinhala-English language book which helped a bit.
Just going
not thinking about it
Everything went fine once we had adjusted our expectations to what we knew was coming.
I did some research online and found out that the risk was low.
We had to take the risk.
It wasnt akward at all but I think its normal to be worried about it a little. Food was perfect but Im allways worried about those moments that might come when explaining why I don't eat meat.
When getting there it turned out to a great experience all around, none of my worries were actually a problem during our stay
Reading about the village and other travelers' experiences convinced us that it is going to be worth it

8. Is there something Duara should do to make the decision making easier?

Number of respondents: 10

Responses
having the video of a previous couple staying made it look more real
Make sure the host can provide a list of activities and places to visit, have some basic structure to the stay.
I think the messaging was really good - clean and open about exactly what to expect. I think the only thing we may have wanted to know was how each day usually ran. We left all of our time for spending with our family and experiencing their daily life, but ended up with down time and no way to get out and fill it, due to not knowing our surroundings well or having transport.
Provide ways the money has actually supported the villages and families. Progress photos would be nice to see.
To me, Duara seemed reliable and did not have doubts concerning my trip.
not really, just keeping in touch when its need it
Spread more stories from previous visitors (which you are already doing), because I think the stories of others are the only real way to get people to overcome their doubts beforehand.
There was nothing Duara could have done.
I do not think so. Some photographs might help but then it will defeat the nature of the travel options you guys offer.
-

9. What convinced you to book the trip with Duara Travels? Please, choose 1-3 options.

Number of respondents: 18 , selected answers: 41

	n	Percent
Stories of previous travelers	10	55.56%
A recommendation from a friend	1	5.56%
Pictures	7	38.89%
Videos	1	5.56%
Trust to the company through website	6	33.33%
Price	4	22.22%
Desire for adventures	11	61.11%
Other (please specify)	1	5.56%

Average
4.29

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Other (please specify)	Good amount of infomation about the stay and what it includea

10. What important information was missing on the Duara Travels website and you would like to add?

Number of respondents: 8

Responses
activities may be seasonal and I was not aware we couldn't do the coconut oil
Details on what would be happening
I thought everything was there to make sure you were prepared for your stay. Really liked the information that could be printed off to take with you.
none
Progress photos of the villages/families that are benefiting from the homestay money.
The location of the house on Google or gps
Details on what exactly the host will do for the visitors, vs what we should do on our own. It was unclear how we would spend our time when in the village.
Nothing

11. How easy was to book your trip from the Duara Travels website (on a scale of 1-5)?

Number of respondents: 18

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Very difficult	0	0	1	4	13	Very easy	18	4.67
	0%	0%	5.56%	22.22%	72.22%			
Total	0	0	1	4	13		18	4.67

12. Did the trip meet with your expectations?

Number of respondents: 18

	n	Percent
Not at all	0	0%
The trip has partly met my expectations	4	22.22%
The trip has met my expectations	6	33.33%
The trip has exceeded my expectations	7	38.89%
Other (please specify)	1	5.56%

Average
3.28

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Other (please specify)	We had health issues (not related with Duara) and had to leave after first night

13. Would you purchase the trip with Duara Travels if the price was 30% higher - for example you paid 130 Euro and increased price would be 170 EUR?

Number of respondents: 18

	n	Percent
No	1	5.56%
Rather No than Yes	8	44.44%
Rather Yes than No	8	44.44%
Yes	0	0%
Other	1	5.56%

Average
2.56

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Other	Only if the extra cost was for something positive - either for the family and village (and obviously being used on them - provide evidence) or me as the visitor.

14. How well did the Duara local contact person manage with the following?

Number of respondents: 17

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderate	Very	Extremely	Total	Average
Welcoming	0	0	2	6	9	17	4.41
	0%	0%	11.77%	35.29%	52.94%		
Communication between hosting family and the guest	0	0	3	5	9	17	4.35
	0%	0%	17.65%	29.41%	52.94%		
Helpful when needed	0	0	1	5	11	17	4.59
	0%	0%	5.88%	29.41%	64.71%		
Delivering all promised activities	0	0	5	5	7	17	4.12
	0%	0%	29.41%	29.41%	41.18%		
Please add yours	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%		
Total	0	0	11	21	37	69	4.38

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Please add yours	Very friendly and fun!

15. How successful was the host with the following?

Number of respondents: 18

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderate	Very	Extremely	Total	Average
Welcoming	0	0	1	5	11	17	4.59
	0%	0%	5.88%	29.41%	64.71%		
Food	0	0	2	4	11	17	4.53
	0%	0%	11.76%	23.53%	64.71%		
Experience	0	0	4	7	6	17	4.12
	0%	0%	23.53%	41.18%	35.29%		
Community involvement	0	2	2	4	9	17	4.18
	0%	11.77%	11.76%	23.53%	52.94%		
Activities	0	2	5	5	5	17	3.76
	0%	11.77%	29.41%	29.41%	29.41%		
Facilities in the house (cleanliness etc.)	0	2	3	7	5	17	3.88
	0%	11.76%	17.65%	41.18%	29.41%		
Please add yours	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%		
Total	0	6	17	32	48	103	4.18

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Please add yours	the contact person was my host

16. What did you enjoy the most during your trip?

Number of respondents: 15

Responses
being with a local family
Water temple, Mt Agung, Bali introduction talk.
We loved getting to know our family and being exposed to their daily life. They were such amazing people and we would have never have known so much about the culture if we had not stayed with them. It really changed our whole trip and made so many more experiences afterwards more meaningful.
spending time with the locals
I enjoyed living and sharing the life of a big family of three generations together with many happy animals running freely. It was very emotional trip to realize that people are happy without having almost no material things and the children were well kept and valuated.
Meeting the family, the extended family and the village people. They were really accommodating and friendly. While the language barrier was really quite difficult, this was eased by the people's enthusiasm for me being there.
Meeting the local people
Walking through the rice paddy, watching my kids play with the local kids
live the reality of families and the local community. even better if we somehow become "part of the family"
Watching the host family interact and do their daily chores.
The family was very nice, the contact person was so fun to hang out with, and the food was incredible!
Walks around the village and neighbours
People of the village and local landscapes
Wayan's cooking and everything else, it was just fantastic. Especially doing the water purification ceremony at the water temple, visiting the rice terraces and going to the coffee plantation. All around an amazing experience!
Seeing the village life, food was amazing

17. What experience did you dislike or needs improvement during your trip?

Number of respondents: 13

Responses
activities may be seasonal and I was not aware on the website.
Long hours stuck at the homestay after tea. I was on my own.
I think maybe having a few suggested things to do in each village if you find yourself with down time. Whether they are free or cheap, close enough to walk etc. This would have been handy for on the day of.
only activity a day, the rest of the day was spent lingering around the house
The toilet was primitive and for a person like me (almost 80 years old) it was difficult to get up from the "standing toilet". I would prefer a sitting system ecological system.
A bit more information on the family and the village I was visiting would have been nice. I really had no idea where it was (didn't pop up on Google maps or Google) or anything about the village or the family I was staying with, besides they owned a shop and had two kids.
How to spend our time during the day. There wasn't much to do and there wan't really much guidance on what to do with our time
just clarify a bit better the extra money in some activities we do while we are there
I didn't dislike it, but I think the host family could have been more proud of their house and what they got. They were very worried if we had everything we needed, even though we were completely fine.
Nothing
Bathroom facilities as in towels and soap!
There was some confusion when arriving at the village, don't know how to improve it though.
Info about Ethical elephant camps, now we were a bit misinformed about the camp we visited and the visit was not the most pleasant one

18. Will you travel again with Duara Travels?

Number of respondents: 18

	n	Percent
No	0	0%
Rather No than Yes	1	5.56%
Rather Yes than No	7	38.89%
Yes	8	44.44%
Other	2	11.11%

Average
3.61

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Other	Yes, if I were younger
Other	maybe

19. Would you recommend Duara Travels to others?

Number of respondents: 18

	n	Percent
No	0	0%
Rather No than Yes	0	0%
Rather Yes than No	3	16.67%
Yes	14	77.78%
Other	1	5.55%

Average
3.89

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Other	maybe

20. Which social media site (s) would you use to share your travel experience with Duara Travels?

Number of respondents: 18 , selected answers: 38

	n	Percent
Facebook	10	55.56%
Instagram	8	44.44%
YouTube	0	0%
TripAdvisor	4	22.22%
My own blog	3	16.67%
Duara Travels' blog	2	11.11%
Twitter	0	0%
Flickr	0	0%
LinkedIn	0	0%
Word of mouth	10	55.56%
Not interested	0	0%
Other	1	5.56%

Average
4.76

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text
Other	Whatsapp

21. You know we are a sustainable travel start-up, how would you like to help in spreading the word?

Number of respondents: 17 , selected answers: 33

	n	Percent
Invite friends to Duara Travels Facebook page	2	11.76%
Invite friends to Duara Travels Instagram account	2	11.76%
Share one of Duara Travels's posts on Facebook	4	23.53%
Tell your friends/colleagues about us	16	94.12%
Have the power to give 20 % discount to a friend?	9	52.94%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

Average
3.85

Answers given into free text field

Option names	Text

Appendix 2. Duara Travels Workshop Summary

Duara Travels Workshop Summary

Introduction

From my point of view as the facilitator, these were the general takeaways of the ideas brought forward during the Value Proposition, Empathy and User Journey Map Workshops. I hope they are useful as a starting point to create a strategic action plan for content and SEO.

Elba Horta
Sales and Marketing Strategist
elbahorta.com

Value Proposition Canvas

Customer Jobs

Key Focus Areas- Deciding (find a trustworthy source/company, find reviews, testimonials and visual content, shop around, find a story to tell), Fulfilling different roles (guest, traveller, influencer, advocate, admin, PM, author, critic, second buyer, parent), Relaxing (change of mindset) and Not just being a tourist (engage with locals, understand their way of life, experience something real, get to know themselves better).

RULES: - GUEST
- TRAVELLER
- INFLUENCER
- ADVOCATE
- ADMINISTRATOR (PROJECT MANAGEMENT)
- AUTHOR
- CRITIC
- 2ND BUYER
- PARENT

GET TO KNOW THOMSEVES BETTER

MINDSET OUT OF DAILY LIFE

RELAX

DECIDE WHAT TO DO
└> TO NARROW DOWN
└> SOURCE (HOMESTAY, JOURNALISTIC STYLE, GEO)
└> FIND REVIEWS, TESTIMONIALS, VISUALS

SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS...
└> CONVINCE

· TO FIND IT

CUSTOMER JOBS

· TO EXPERIENCE SOMETHING REAL/NEW

· TO MEET locals
/UNDERSTAND local WAY OF life

· NOT TO BA A TOURIST

· FIND A STORY TO TELL/SHARE

Customer Gains

Key Focus Areas- Connection (with others, the world, food, nature) , Unique Experiences (adventure, pioneer, special, getting to know the families), Identity Building Experiences (out of comfort zone, testing one's limits), Price and Social Responsibility.
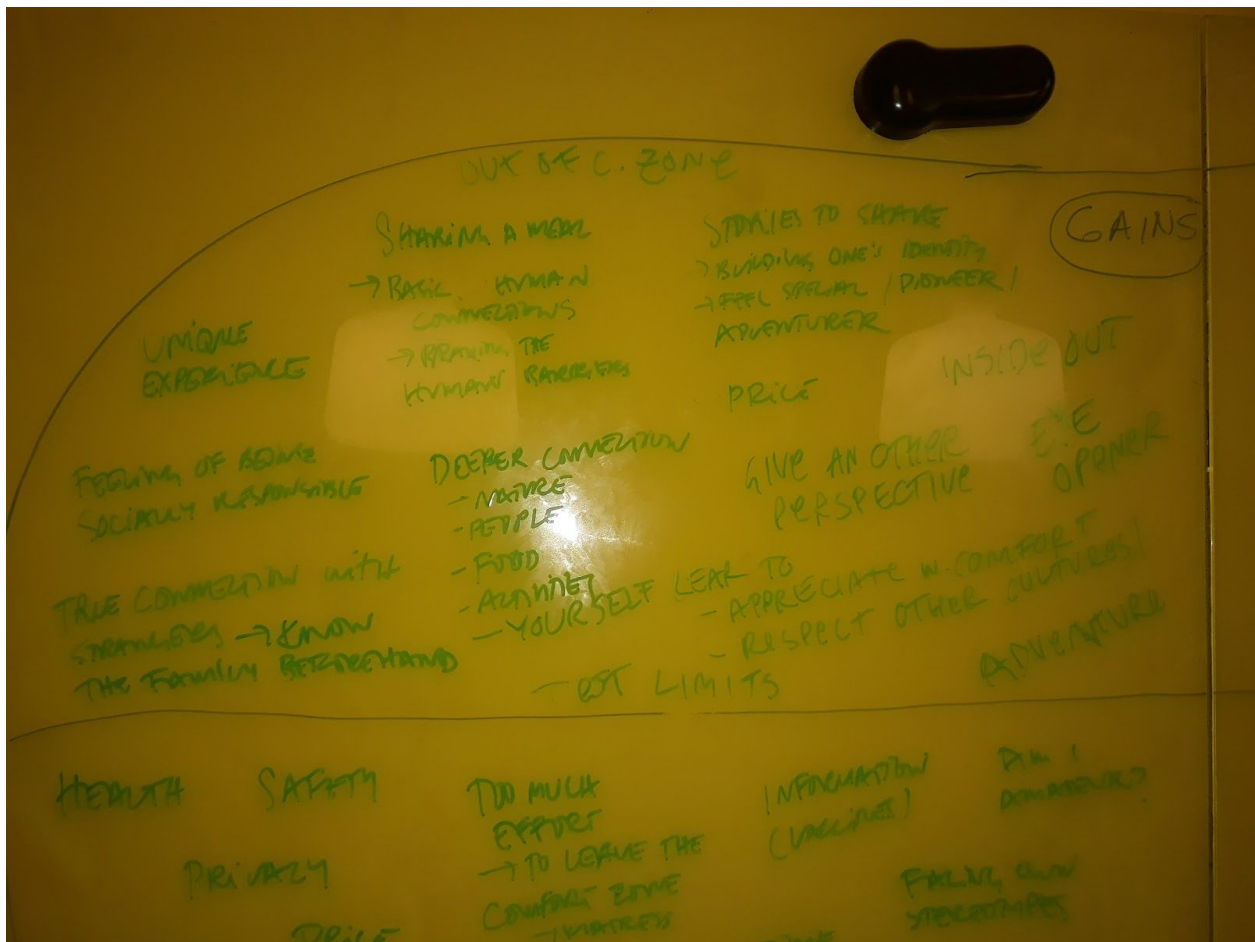
Customer Pains

Key Focus Areas- Health (hygiene, need for vaccines, getting sick there), Safety (animals, harassment, stealing, amateur traveller), Emotional Aspects (effort of being a guest, privacy, other people's habits), Culture (language barriers, social responsibility, is it charity), Parents with Children, Transport and Time.
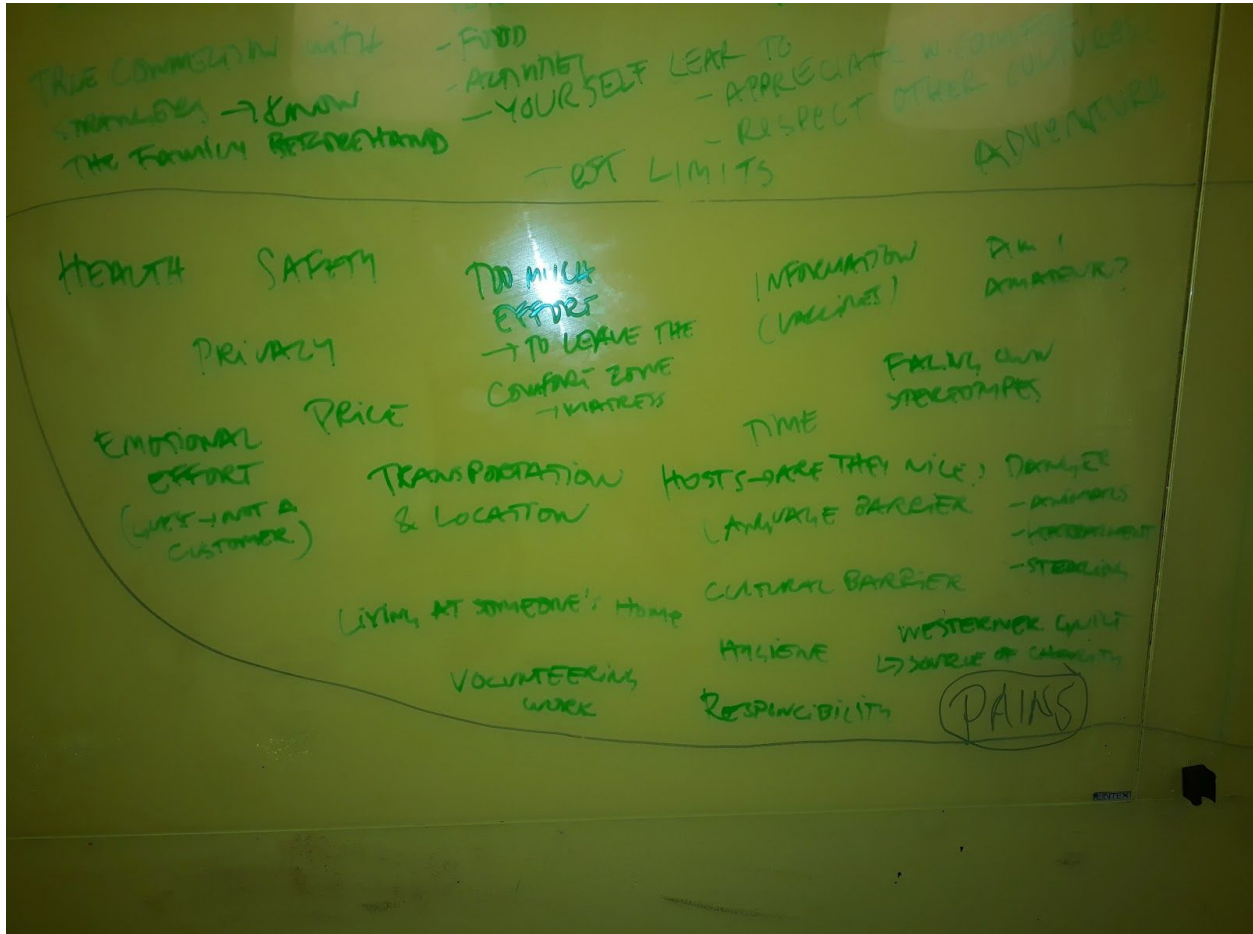
Empathy Customer Map

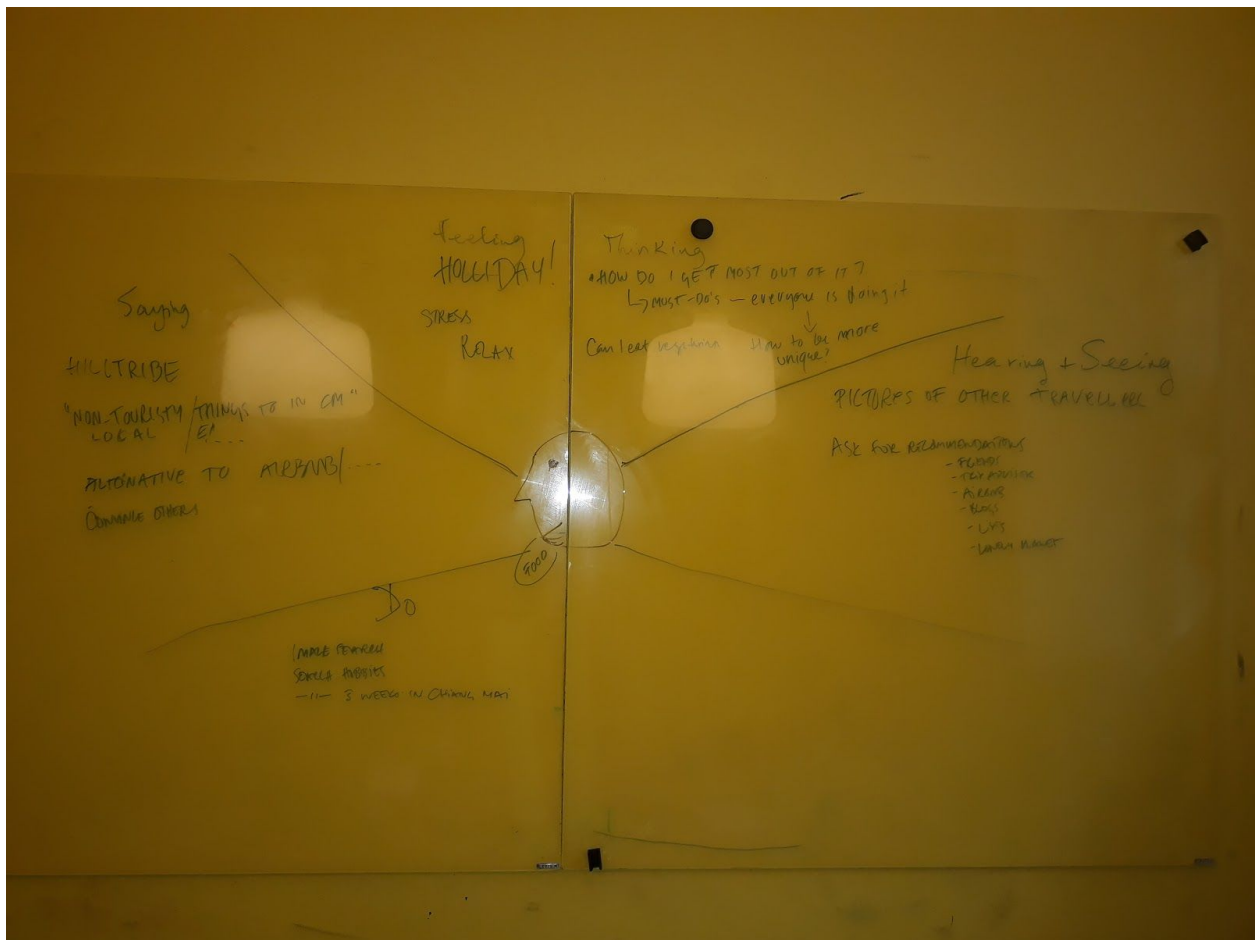You identified the following feelings: Excitement, Stress and Relaxation

You identified the following that your potential customer:

Thinks- Holiday!, How do I get the most out of this (trip)? What are the must-do's?, Everyone is doing it. Can I eat vegetarian?, How to be more unique?

Says- Non-touristy or local things to do in ..., what are alternatives to AirBnB? Hilltribe, How to convince others? Food?

Hears - Recommendations from friends, Trip Advisor, AirBnB (experiences), blogs, lists, Lonely Planet

Sees- Other travellers pictures and social media shares

Does- Search, for Hobbies , for 3 weeks in Chiang Mai

User Journey Map

You identified the following steps in your user's journey scope, after having booked flights to buying from Duara:

1.What to do?

2.The Shopping/Scheduling Basket

3.Picking Must Do's

4.Comparing Apples to Apples

5.Booking

Summary of gaps and opportunities found:

- opportunity for using the Survival Guide and Destination Tips as nurturing content (should be gated to get potential customer's email) to accelerate the movement through the journey

-opportunity for clear and very easy to do booking packages that cut the sales cycle time

-opportunity for using Retargeting

-should use outside bloggers

-should have better SEO for website to be found

There were other opportunities identified in the lunch and Iina has the notes on those :)

Appendix 3. Duara Travels Customer Empathy Map based on the survey results

What does the person Think & feel?

- What are the must-do's?,
- Can I eat vegetarian?,
- How to be more unique?
- How do I get the most out of this (trip)?
- Everyone is doing it.

ADVENTURES!!!!

What does the person Hear?

- Blogs - 39% (Salt in our hair)
- Recommendations from friends - 17%
- Google search - 11 %
- Facebook - 11 %

What does the person See?

- STORIES OF PREVIOUS TRAVELERS
- Pictures
- Videos

What does the person Say and do?

Non-Touristy destination - 61%

Village experience - 39%

Home-stays - 39%

SAY:
- STAYING WITH LOCAL!
- Family accommodation

DO:
- Google search
- Reading blogs - 39%
- Destinations

Food!!

Pain
Fears
Frustrations
Obstacles

Itinerary

Potential awkwardness staying at someone else's home - 47%

The remoteness of the village - transportation worries - 35%

Possible difficulties in communicating with the host - 29%

Health risks - 29 %

Possible lack of facilities (for example a sitting toilet) - 24%

Clear list of activities Daily routine

- Lack of privacy - 18%
- Hygiene
- Vaccines, Diseases, Poisoning
- Safety
- Soap and towels to the bathroom!

Gain
Wants/Needs
Measures of Success
Obstacles

Additional content to the website about:
- Vaccination
- Medical information/Contacts
- Insurances
- Placing villages on the Google Map
- Village community projects supporting and reporting (with 10% of payment)

Clear list of activities Daily routine

More information about the host family and village

Posts to Facebook

Video content about previous travelers

More stories about previous travelers

Appendix 4. Duara Travels customer profiles based on the survey results

Duara's customer profile for "Couples/two friends" target group (Created with a free template from Conseptboard 2020)

Pekka ja Maja Lahtinen

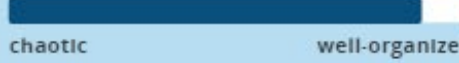We are active, social, love traveling seeing new places, try new food

Age: 35-38 | Married/Single

Children

Languages: Finnish, English, Swedish, Spanish

Income: 90 000 €/ year

City: Helsinki

Education: University Degree

analytical ——————— creative

antisocial ——————— social

unbalanced ——————— balanced

narrow-minded ——————— open-minded

chaotic ——————— well-organized

Interests
Sport, traveling, photography, design

Needs
Stories, videos of the previous travelers
3-6 month planning time before the trip

Expectations
To be safe
To live like a local
To eat good food
Activities

Goals:
To have an amazing experience

Fears
Health risks
Remoteness of the village

Important Trends:
Minimalism
Eco-tourism
Sustainable travel

Preferred Channels
Google search
Recommendations of friends
Blogs
Facebook
Instagram

Brands
Sustainable brands with the high level of social responsibility

Additional Information
Destination to go
Indonesia
Tanzania
Shi Lanka

Marja Virtanen

"I am independent
I love to learn new things
I want to explore the world,
to see new places and meet
new people

Age: 35 | **Married/Single**

Children

Languages: Finnish, English, Swedish, Spanish

Income: 60 000/ year

City: Helsinki

Education: University Degree

analytical — creative

antisocial — social

unbalanced — balanced

narrow-minded — open-minded

chaotic — well-organized
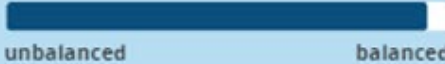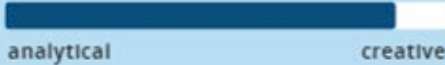
Interests
Traveling, photography, desing

Needs
Stories, videos of the previous travelers
1-3 month planning time before the trip

Expectations
To feel safe
To live like a local
To meet new people
To eat good food

Goals:
To have an amazing experience
To feel free from daily routine

Fears
To feel uncomfortable to stay at someone's house
Health risks
Remoteness of the village

Important Trends:
Minimalism
Eco-tourism
Sustainable travel

Preferred Channels
Blogs
Google search
Recommendations of friends
Facebook
Instagram

Brands
Sustainable brands with the high level of social responsibility

Additional Information
Destination to go
Indonesia
Tanzania
Shi Lanka