DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM SERVICES FOR THE RUSSIAN CUSTOMERS IN TAMPERE REGION

Tampere – St. Petersburg Connection Project

Anna-Maija Palva-aho

Minna Kaikkonen

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Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences

ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
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The current thesis provides content to the project called Tampere - St. Petersburg connection (TASC). TASC is part of the wider project called Development centre of wellbeing in tourism conducted by the Research and Development (R&D) department of Tampere University of Applied Sciences. The aim of TASC- project is to create a cooperation network between business life and (R&D) operators in the Tampere Region in order to find out how the needs of Russian tourists could be satisfied and new demand created.

Russian residents travelling to Finland have significant impact on the country's tourism field and the number of Russians travelling to Tampere Region is increasing every year. The Tampere Region has the potential to be one of the tourism destinations in Finland for Russians, but more development should be encouraged towards the Russian market. One of the problems is that demand and supply do not meet when considering the Russian markets. The current research was made to find out what services could be offered for Russians travelling in the Tampere Region.

The authors conducted a questionnaire for the Russian tourists in the Tampere region to find out their primary and secondary travel motives. Interviews with the professionals support the data from the questionnaire. The collected data is processed with Tixel software and analysed with the product development process and Experience Pyramid.

The results show that the main reasons for the Russians to come to Tampere are nature, culture, shopping and visiting friends or families. The services the Russians use most are accommodation, restaurants and shops, which shows that services based on nature and culture do not meet the demand. In addition to shopping trips, Russians wish to be offered more services which introduce the nature and culture of the area. Based on the results, the authors present ideas for developing services for the Russians customers in the Tampere region.

Key words: Product development process, Russians, experience, Tampere region

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1 INTRODUCTION

The main themes of the current research are product development process, experience tourism and Russian tourists in Tampere region. Previously mentioned themes are presented in the following chapters of the current thesis. The research is done for the use of ongoing project called Tampere – St. Petersburg connection (TASC) established by Ville Koiviola, former student of Degree Programme in Tourism from Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK). The project is introduced more detailed in the next chapter.

Current research introduce what kind of services Tampere region should offer in order to create as pleasurable experiences as possible for the Russian tourists. The research provides part of the practical content for the ongoing project and thereupon gives own contribution for the further development of the project.

The aim of the research is to study primary- and secondary travel motives of the Russian residents traveling to Tampere region, and by that introduce what kind of services the Russians could be offered. Essential part of the research was to conduct questionnaire among the Russians in Tampere region and study the opinions of the local service providers and other professionals, who are specialized or interested on the Russian market.

Chapter two is about planning the research.

2 RESEARCH PLAN

Chapter explains how the thesis was carried out and what were the goals and purpose of the thesis. The chapter also describes what was the focus of the research, and which were the concepts and theories applied. In addition it reveals what kind of data was collected and methods used in order to get as vast information as possible.

2.1 Focus of the research

Authors decided to research what kind of services Tampere could offer for Russian residents traveling to the region. The research is part of project called Tampere – St. Petersburg connection (TASC) established by Ville Koiviola, former student of Degree Programme in Tourism from Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK). The aim of the TASC-project is to create cooperation network between the business life and Research and Development (R&D) Department of TAMK, and establish services to meet the demand of Russian middle class customers traveling from St. Petersburg area to Tampere region. TASC is part of The Development Centre of Wellbeing Tourism -project, which is executed by R&D Department of TAMK. The aim of The Development Centre of Wellbeing tourism is to create a new department in TAMK to manage and develop nature, wellbeing and health tourism in Tampere region by creating well -designed tools, models and environments with the cooperators. (Kulju & Rogozhina 2010, 4; Koiviola 2010, 4.)

The current research is connected to Zhanna Rogozhina's and Jaana Kulju's Bachelor's thesis Network Operational Content and Ville Koiviola's Bachelor's thesis Operational model for strategic cooperation network. These two Bachelor's theses constitute the frame of the TASC -project and the current thesis introduces useful information for further development of the project.

The aim of the research is to introduce statistical information about the primary- and secondary travel motives of the Russian residents traveling to Tampere region and represent possible ideas for developing services that could offer unforgettable experiences for the Russians in Tampere region.

The objective of the research is to give TASC- project information what kind of services could be offered for the Russian residents traveling to Tampere region and what kind of experiential elements the services could consists of. The results of the research can be used for further development of the TASC- project for example when planning what are the concrete elements of the services offered for the Russians. It is evident that the topic will need more research done, since it gives only general outlook for the case. Following researches could study the services in Tampere region and develop concrete products for the Russians. The results of the research introduce services which could be developed further.

Following figures 1 (p. 8) and 2 (p. 9) explains why especially the Russian visitors should be taken into account when offering services for tourists in Tampere region.

The significance of the Russian tourists is shown also in Tampere region. As we can see from the Figure 1 (p. 8), number of Russian visitors in Tampere region has grown rapidly every year. Between the years 1995-2010 the number of nights spent in Tampere Region by Russians has increased 55%. In year 1995 15 428 Russians visited in Tampere region and in 2010 the number was 33 244. (Kolari 2011.)

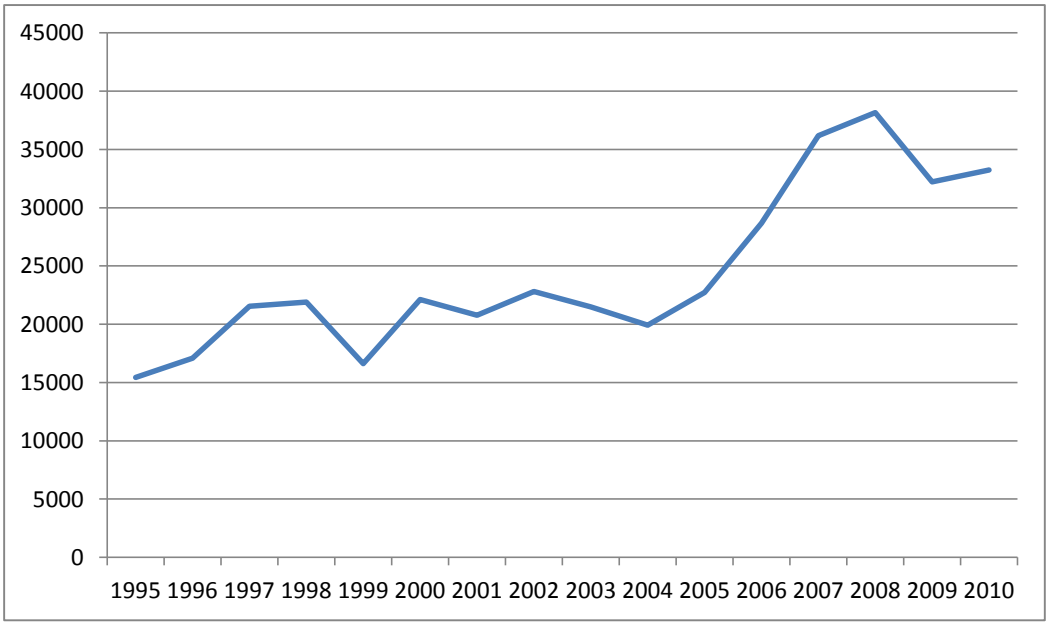


FIGURE 1. Number of overnights spent by Russian tourists in Tampere region between the years 1995-2010 (Kolari 2011)

Also the number of nights spent by foreign visitor show how the number of Russian visitors stands out from the numbers of visitors from other countries. In year 2010 total number of registered nights (943 100) spent in Tampere increased 7% from the previous year. Though the number of nights (167 400) spend by foreign visitors decreased 1, 3%, number of nights (17 400) spend by Russian visitors increased 11% from the last year. (Tampereen matkailun tunnuslukuja Joulukuu 2010, 1.) These statistics does not tell the duration of the stays, only the amount of the nights all together.

Russian people are not only a significant tourist segment because of the amount of the visits. They also spend more money in Finland than other nationalities. In year 2010 Russians spent 680 million Euros in total. Each tourist from Russia spent 215 Euros on goods and 73 Euros on services. Russians made approximately 2, 36 million trips to Finland through the frontier stations of South -Eastern Finland in 2010. On this account Russian tourists have a significant impact on the economics of Finland. (Aamulehti 2011.)

Large number of tourists traveling to Tampere region is from Russia, but there are not enough tourism products especially for this segment. Based on the data gathered and authors' own observation there is a lot of potential to produce services for Russian tourists in Tampere region, but the potential should be productized and marketed in a new way to meet the needs of Russian market.

Russian tourists do not have enough information about Tampere, which affects on their decision making when choosing the right destination in Finland (Manka 2010).

Figure 2 show that only 7 % of the respondents will stay overnight in Tampere. The most popular city for Russian residents to stay is Helsinki (65%). Second popular city is Imatra (18%) and third Lappeenranta (15%). 13% of the respondents will stay in Turku and 7% in Kotka and Tampere. (Manka 2010.) The reason for this could be that the demand and supply does not meet. Russians do not know what Tampere has to offer.

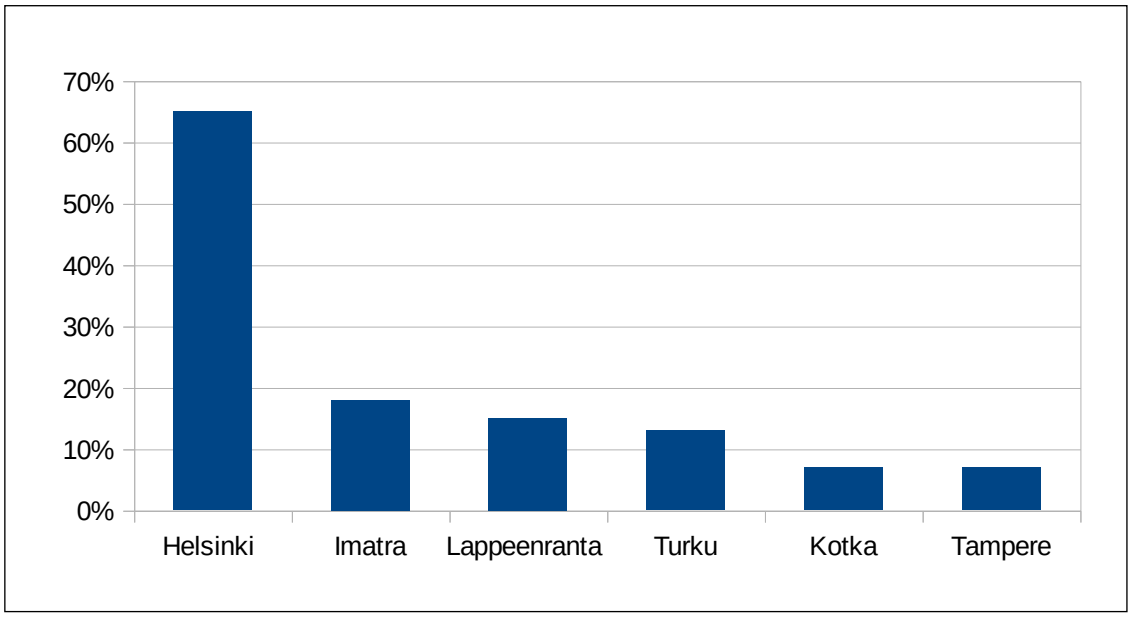


FIGURE 2. City where the Russian residents will stay night in Finland (Manka 2010)

2.2 Concepts and theories

The main concepts of the current thesis are experience, product development and tourism product. The concepts are explained more detailed below.

Word “experience” describes positive feeling which is caused by a strong incident. Usually experience means surpassing oneself by performing and experiencing something, which may not be dared in everyday life. At its best experience can lead to personal development or change. Experience cannot be ordered, booked or picked up. Experience is different from the other products since it is unforgettable, bonded with the occasion and unique. It consists from different incidents, followed by each other as a process. (Boxberg & Komppula, 2002. 27, 28; Tarssanen, 2009. 6.)

Idea for product development or new product is usually based on inspiration from customers or ideas that had come from entrepreneur. In tourism business the product development has to be continual; the company must to follow the trends and be able to respond to challenges. Development of new product proceeds as a process which starts with seeking for new ideas and end ups with marketing and selling the new product. Product development should be based on research information about customers’ and markets’ needs. Customers’ role is important in product development process. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 92-93.)

The tourism product is immaterial and it cannot be stored but in the service can be attached with material parts, for example food. Producing the service is different than producing something material, since the service is always produced and used at the same time. There are many factors that have influence on the service and the quality; the customer, producer and other customers. The service is experienced in different ways. For example someone likes to travel in a group full of noisy people and the other wants from the trip silence and peace. But those are the factors the service provider may not

always be able to change or predict. Because the service is immaterial, it cannot be returned if it fails. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 10-11.)

The main theories used in the thesis; Experience Pyramid (Elämyskolmio) theory by R&D services of Lapland center of Expertise for experience industry (LEO) and product development process model, by Komppula and Boxberg (2002, 99) which also includes SWOT-analysis. In the current thesis Experience Pyramid describes what kind of experiential elements the services offered for the Russians could include. Product development process model is the frame for creating those memorable experiences. From the product development process, the authors are focusing on the part of the service concept development.

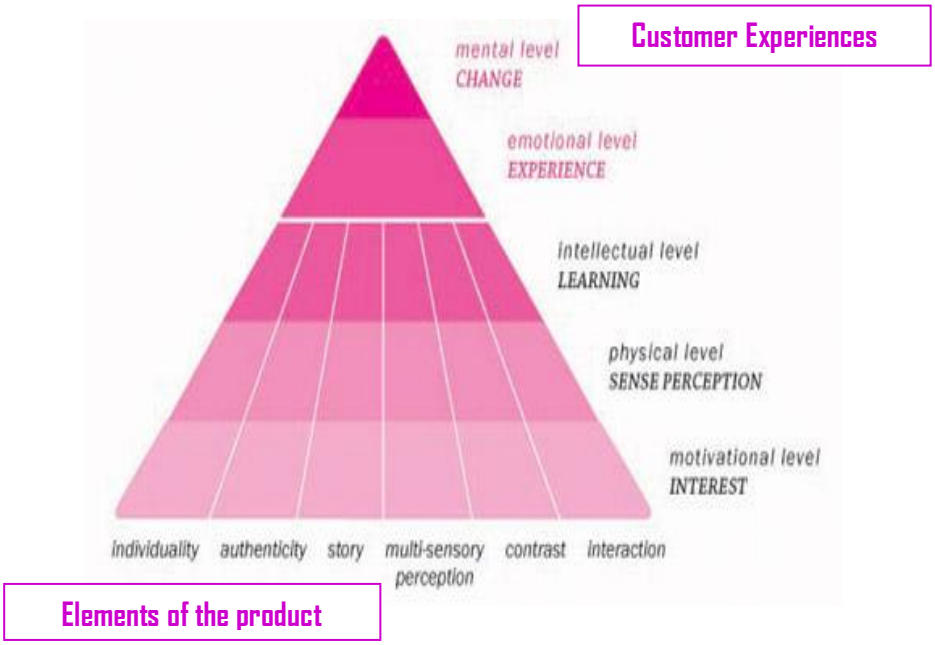
Developing the service concept is essential part of product developing process. Komppula and Boxberg (2002) have created a model for tourism product development process, which is based on the model designed by Zeithmal and Bitner (2000, s.200). Service concept is the core of the tourism product. It is based on customer needs and what is the value that is expected to experience. Development of the service concept focuses on meeting the requirements of the customers' expectations. The four phases of developing the service concept are; finding out customers' values, finding out customers' needs and involvement, making the resource analysis and creating the content of the idea. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 98-99.) Product development process is introduced on chapter 3.

Authors are using the theory of developing the service concept, since it represents the main elements how the current thesis is constructed. By following the structure of the service concept the authors finds out the needs and values of the Russian customers with primary- and secondary travel motives. Then there are resource analysis done, which is in this case the SWOT –analysis about Tampere and Russian tourism market. With the SWOT-analysis it is clearer to define the resources of the destination which is in this research Tampere region. The SWOT- analysis is a tool which is used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. By using the SWOT

matrix contrasts the results of the internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external analysis (opportunities and threats) to define strategic fields of action. (Pahl. N & Richter. A, 2007 1.) Theory of the SWOT-analysis is explained in the chapter 3. The core idea is the final part, where all the information gathered about the segment is turned into a core idea. This part presents which services could be offered for the Russians in Tampere region and what are the experiential elements of the services.

It is good to note that authors are not creating a single product. The thesis introduces what services the Russian could be offered.

Experience Pyramid is one of the theories used in the thesis. According to Tarssanen (2009, 11-12) Experience Pyramid is a theoretical model for tourism product development. It is a tool, which can be used for analyzing, understanding and developing experience –based elements of a product. There are two approaches in the Experience Pyramid: customer experience and elements of the product. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 30-31; Perttula 2004.)



PICTURE 1. Experience Pyramid (Tarssanen 2009, 11)

According to Kulmala (2007, 38) the aim of the Experience Pyramid is to analyze dimensions and different regulations of the complex experience in understandable way. The actual pyramid illustrates development of experience, and what happens to a person in every level of the experience. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006, 10.) The model of Experience Pyramid is introduced in chapter 3.

Experience Pyramid is used when creating the core idea of the service concept. The information about the segment's values and needs gathered from the interviews, already existing data and questionnaires together with the resource analysis is turned into experiential elements which Tampere could offer for the Russians.

2.3 Research questions

Research questions of the current thesis are: What experiential elements tourism product for the Russians could consist of? What services could be provided for the Russian tourists in Tampere region? To find answers to these two questions, it is essential to study and make research based on following questions: What are the primary and secondary travel motives of Russians traveling to Tampere region? What are the pushing and pulling factors of Tampere towards Russian market?

The experience product for Russians is the content of the core idea in the thesis. The answer for the question: "What are the primary- and secondary travel motives of Russians traveling to Tampere region?" is gathered from the questionnaires and interviews. SWOT- analysis introduces the answers for the question "What are the pushing and pulling factors of Tampere towards Russian market?"

2.4 Data and methods

The research is empiric and assumes that the thesis could give valuable information for the TASC- project and therefore give its own contribution for developing services for Russian tourists in Tampere region. The data for the research is gathered by questionnaires and interviews.
The research done in the thesis has both qualitative and quantitative features. Quantitative research consists more on linear attributes, measurements and statistics, when qualitative research relies on human experiences and perception (Stake 2010, 11). In the current research the quantitative features are statistics which presents the results of the questionnaires and the statistics from secondary data. Qualitative features are the interviews and authors' own observation.

To find out primary- and secondary travel motives of the Russians' traveling to Tampere region, the authors executed questionnaire survey (Attachment 1). Questionnaire involves asking direct preset questions from the large number of participants. The normal type of questionnaire has series of printed questions and its purpose is to get reliable and valid data on the subject that is researched. (Finn, Elliott- White & Walton 2000, 87.) The questionnaires for the research were handed out in December 2010 for the Russian customers of Sokos Hotel Ilves and Holiday Club Tampere Spa, bus company Tilausmatkat Oy and and August 2011 for the tax-free customers of department store Sokos and customers of Dream Hostel. Chapter 4 tells specific information about planning and executing the questionnaire.

There were several interviews and negotiations made concerning about the research. Interviews are structured conversations, which have schedule of questions and are administered by an interviewer (Finn, Elliott- White & Walton 2000, 91). To get the most comprehensive data as possible, authors selected interviewees from different business sectors, for example hotel business, traveling information services and consultant services. Interviewees were mostly chosen because of their specialization towards Russian market and culture, long history of working with Russian tourists, or high interest on developing their ser-

vices towards Russian market. Hence the research got diverse and interesting viewpoints how the professionals on the field of tourism see the Russian outbound traveling to Finland, how the Russian customers are taken into account and how the services could be developed towards Russian market. Persons who were interviewed have know-how from the field of tourism and Russian customers. Following persons were interviewed for the thesis: Irmeli Puolanne, General Manager of Sokos hotel Ilves, Sokos hotel Tammer, Sokos hotel Villa and Holiday Club Tampere Spa, Nataliya Kohvakko, Managing director, Infokone Oy, Jarmo Polvi, Information Officer, Tredea Oy, Pekka Räsänen, Managing director, Suomen Hopealinja Oy and Ismo Kolari, Project Manager, Kansainvälisesti kalavesillä, ProAgria Pirkanmaa

Data from the interviews and negotiations are collected by making notes. Authors did not make same specific questions for the interviews but the questions that were asked goes hand-in-hand with the questionnaires. The main idea of the interviews was to have a professional point of view about the Russian tourists traveling to Tampere. The notes gathered from the interviews and negotiations together with the analysis of the questionnaire assemble the metadata for the research.

Secondary data is gathered from literature. Authors also took part in two seminars that were related to the subject of the research. The seminars were: Suuntaudu Venäjään – seminar held in University of Tampere 17.3.2011 by Popeda Ry, Venäjä business- seminar in Technopolis Yliopistonrinne 27.10.2010 by Pirkanmaan yrittäjät Ry.

2.5 Research process

Chapter 3 explains theory of product development process- model by Komppula and Boxberg (2002) concentrating on the service concept development. Also theory of customers' needs and motives is introduced with primary- and secondary travel motives. Theory of Experience Pyramid is also presented in

this chapter. The final part presents background information about Russians as a customer.

Chapter 4 presents the part of planning and conducting the questionnaire and results of the questionnaire statistically.

Chapter 5 introduces developing the service concept for Russians in Tampere region. This part includes the SWOT- analysis about Tampere region and Russian tourism market, the core idea, which presents what services, could be offered for the Russians in Tampere region and what kind of experiential elements those services can include.

Chapter 6 concludes the research by gathering the essential information of the research and gives ideas for further development.

Chapter 7 summarizes the whole process.

3 PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, EXPERIENCE PYRAMID AND RUSSIAN CUSTOMERS

The chapter introduces the main theories, which are used in the thesis and the background information of the research. Theories are product development process concentrating on service concept development, Experience Pyramid (LEO) and information Russian as a customer.

3.1 Developing tourism product

Product development begins from an idea and the best idea usually comes from the customers. That is when the customer has made the biggest part of the product development because the creation part is usually the time-consuming process. If the product idea comes from the service provider, it may not meet the needs of a customer and useless work will be done. (Borg 2002,133.)

Tourism product is composed of several different kinds of elements which are individual processes for the service provider.(Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 75). The whole process is continual and will not ever be totally ready which is why it is important to follow the trends to stay in the market (Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutti 2010). There are two main ideas in producing services that is important to remember when planning product development; customers' needs and business idea of the company or entrepreneur. (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 76-77).

Komppula & Boxberg (2002) has developed a process model for product development of the tourism product (Picture 1, p. 19). Usually product development in tourism company is developing the own ideas of the entrepreneur and the ideas have not been combined with the product's service concept, service process or service system (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 92). By using the tourism company's' product development process model, a product

that is based on customers' value can be created (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 99).

The current thesis is concentrated on development of the service concept, which is highlighted in the picture 1 (p.19). In chapter 4 the model of the service concept gives the frame for developing the service concept for the Russian tourists in Tampere region.

CONTINUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE SYSTEM

- **Developing the personnel**
- **Investment in the place, machinery and equipment**
- **Developing the image and cooperative network**

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE CONCEPT

- **Creating the content of the product = Customers' values**
- **Assessment of the needs and involvement of the customers**
- **Resource Analysis**
- **The core idea (Conceptualization of the functions)**

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE PROCESS

- **Developing and designing the service modules**
- **Creating the blueprints**
- **Testing the prototype with the personnel**
- **Financial analysis**
- **Description of the product**

MARKET TESTING

- **Offering the product for the external testers**
- **Concrete testing**

COMMERCIALIZATION

- **The product is introduced to the market**

ASSESSMENT AFTER THE COMMERCIALIZATION

PICTURE 2. Product development process of the tourism product (Komppula 2002, 99)

3.1.1 Development of the service concept

In developing service concept, the first part includes gathering crucial information about the customers' needs, values and involvement. The service concept is based on the customers' needs, which are based on customers' primary- and secondary travel motives. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 22.) Information about Primary- and secondary travel motives are gathered in this research by interviews and questionnaire.

In addition to the values of the customer, it is important to take in to consideration the target groups' motives and their ability to take part. In these factors affects the resources from the target group which can be disposable time, money and physical and mental resources. These all affect on that how actively the customer will take part on the producing the product. If the product is part of the bigger entity, should the product be suitable for both the customers' needs and entity. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 101-102.)

When the customers' needs, values and the level of the participation have been clarified, it is essential to take into consideration all the resources that are available for producing the product. The resources consist of both tangible and intangible resources which are: know-how of the personnel, equipments, location and co-operators and their resources. By co-operation and specialization it is possible to combine resources, develop the know-how and provide versatile services for the customers. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 102.) The current research is using SWOT- analysis as a tool for analyzing Tampere and services as tourism destination for Russian travelers. Theory of the SWOT-analysis is explained in the next chapter.

Core idea is the outcome of the previous phases. From the results of the previous phases it is possible to create different functions, which constitutes the content of the core idea. In this phase the all possible ideas will be gathered and modified into different combinations and product packages. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 102.) In the thesis the core idea presents the results of the

research. Core idea of the current research consists of SWOT- analysis, presentation of the services, which could be offered for the Russians and experiential elements of the services for the Russians.

3.1.2 SWOT- analysis

When the company or service provider is planning to create a new product or assessing the current market situation, it should be aware of: the economic, political, legal, socio-cultural and technological events which may affect on company's operation. The current shape of the markets served by the company, nature of the competition, full details of the company's own market share and financial situations need take into consideration. (Holloway C. 2004, 30.)

Strengths need to be seen from the perspective of the customer not the company. For the leading companies a strong brand and high level of awareness within the target market are critical but a strong and positive image is a key strength for any principal. Good and convenient location is important strength not only for the company but also for the customer. In marketing tactics the company should take advantage of opportunities. Weaknesses are the ones which the service provider should study and try to find ways how to minimize them. Opportunities are presented by the chance to take advantage of any particular strengths of the business. One of the most significant opportunities can be the positive changes in the market. Changes in world politics and terrorist attacks are one of the biggest threats and unavoidable for the tourism industry. Also currency fluctuations and fuel costs increases has an influence on the industry. Every business has their own threats but if they are recognized early enough, they can be overcome and even turned into opportunities. (Holloway C. 2004, 30-32.) The SWOT- analysis is used in the current thesis to illustrate pushing and pulling factors of Tampere towards the Russian tourism market.

3.2 Customers' needs and motives

People traveling today have the need for break away from everyday life, to relax and get unforgettable experiences (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 30). Gathering information about customers' needs and motives, gives essential information how to develop right kind of products and services. If the customer would travel and use the tourism services, one should have the reason for traveling, which affects on the will and need for traveling. It is obvious that the customer should also have time and money for traveling. Depending on the customers' situation, time for traveling is used on either business or leisure. Leisure travel happens usually on holidays or weekends. Business travel means traveling, that is work related. (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 22-24.)

Most of the people who travel have a specific motive for it. It is rare that customer seeks only one tourism service on one's trip. That is why it is important to produce the product as, which will bring additional value for customer's trip. (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 24.) The factors, which affects of person's decisions to travel, are called travel motives. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 68).
Travel motives can be divided into two different groups: primary motives and secondary motives (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 25). Primary travel motive is found out when the person is making the decision to purchase the product. Primary travel motive means the reason why to travel. Secondary travel motives tell how to travel. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 68.)

Picture 3 (p. 23) and 4 (p. 24) presents these two travel motives and what they include. The questions of the questionnaire are partly planned by using the theory of primary- secondary motives. By the travel motives authors gather information about Russians' needs and motives towards Tampere region.

PRIMARY MOTIVES

WORK RELATED TRAVELING

- **Actual business trips, the main reason is working during the trip**
- **Meeting- and Conference trips, the main reason is to attend meeting or conference**
- **Exhibition trips, the main reason is to attend exhibitions**
- **Incentive trips, meaning is to accelerate the business**

PHYSICAL AND PHYSIOLOGIC MOTIVES

- **Exercising and being outdoors**
- **Taking care of health**
- **Taking care of work ability**
- **Preventing sickness**
- **Rehabilitation**
- **Resting, relaxing and break loose from everyday life**

CULTURAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, DEVELOPING ITSELF OR LEARNING NEW

- **Visiting cultural events**
- **Courses for different hobbies**
- **Cultural- or folklore trips, the main reason is to get no culture and old traditions**
- **Ecotourism**

RELATIONSHIPS, SOCIAL AND ETHNIC MOTIVES

- **Spending time with family**
- **Traveling with family or visiting family**
- **Attending family parties**
- **Seeking own roots**
- **Visiting birthplace**

ENTERTAINMENT, HAVING FUN, INDULGENCE AND RECREATION

- **Attending to spectator events**
- **Visiting amusement parks or theme resorts**
- **Shopping trips**

RELIGIOUS MOTIVES

- **Pilgrimage**
- **Religious field trips**
- **Religious retreat**

PICTURE 3. Primary travel motives (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 25-26)

According to Komppula and Boxberg (2002, 71), when the primary travel decision is done, person has to make choices at least on following matters:

SECONDARY MOTIVES

- **Where to travel**
- **When to travel**
- **How to travel**
- **How long does the trip last**
- **With whom to travel**
- **What kind of accommodation is wanted**
- **What kind of activities are wanted**
- **How much can be paid for the trip**

PICTURE 4. Secondary travel motives (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 71)

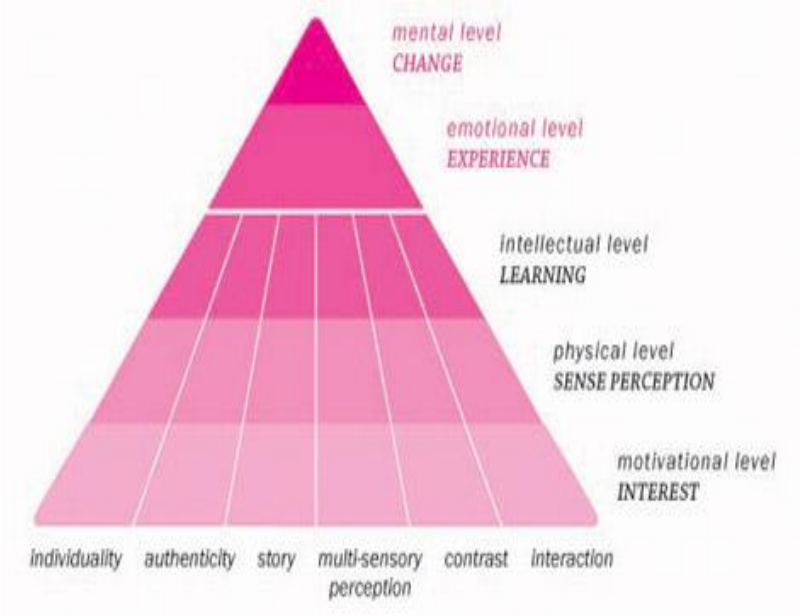
3.3 Experience

Nowadays creating new tourism products is challenging. In order to be a successful tourism service provider, it is valuable to create a tourism product that is even more versatile and improved. More specialized product, the better position in the markets. The experience of the customer is more and more important for the competitiveness of services providers. Though all the actions are not visible for the customer, every aspect of the service will have an influence on the customer's experiences. The main basis for creating experience services is customer orientation; what kind of experiences the customers are seeking. (Tarssanen, 2009. 18, 20.)

Nowadays term "experience" is more often used in marketing. Especially service providers in nature tourism and program services are highly marketing experience tourism and experience products. Since experience is subjective it is not possible to produce it, but it is possible to serve prerequisites in order to arouse the experiences. To provide experiences, it is essential for service providers to know how to create images from different kind of experiences. In addition it is essential to develop the kind of service system that the repeated experiences will become an objective for the customers. (Boxberg & Komppula, 2002. 27, 29.)

Experience Triangle (Picture 5, p. 26) is a tool for assessing and developing experiences created by services. It is a model developed by R&D services of LEO. The model illustrates how the experience is originated from the service and what are the levels of customer's experience. Levels of experience are illustrated on the right side of the Experience Triangle, starting from the motivation and ending on the top of the Triangle, where the mental level will lead in to a change of an individual. Below of the Triangle there are illustrated the elements of an experience, which are essential for every level of experience. The Experience Triangle shows that the service provider can have an effect on the motivation, and on the physical -and rational level, but not on the mental and emotional levels of the customer. (Tarssanen 2009, 11, 12; Wiren 2009, 31.) Experience

Pyramid is used in the current thesis to present the experiential elements of the services for Russian tourists in Tampere region (Chapter 5).



PICTURE 5. Experience Pyramid (Tarssanen 2009, 11)

3.3.1 Customer Experience

Motivational level means provoking the interest of a customer. On a motivational level there are created expectations for the customer. Customer feels the desire and is ready to participate and experience. At this point the Motivational level can mean for example marketing, which is one of the main tools to allure the customers. The marketing part should already fulfill the possible elements of an experience: individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast and interaction. (Tarssanen 2009, 15.)

According to Tarssanen (2009, 15), on the Physical level the customer experience the product through one's senses (LaSalle & Britton 2003, 9). Through physical senses we are aware where we are and what are we doing.

This is the level when the technical quality of the product or service is measured.(Tarssanen 2009, 15.)

On the Intellectual level we process and handle sense incentives given by our surroundings and start to learn, think, apply the information and make up our own opinions. On the Intellectual level the customers decide whether they are content on the product or not. (Tarssanen 2009, 16, according to LaSalle & Britton 2003, 9) In order to serve a good product, it should offer learning experiences for the customer, for example learn something new, develop and get new information (Tarssanen 2009, 16).

According to Tarssanen (2009, 16) customer will undergo the actual experience on the Emotional level. It is hard to predict or control the emotional reaction of an individual. If the basic elements needed are taken into account in the service, and the physical level functions well, it is very probable that the customer will experience a positive emotional reaction, which one feels meaningful. (Perttula 2004.)

On the Mental level the customer will experience personal change, if the experience is positive and strong. This experience might lead in to permanent change in customer's physical state, mental condition and lifestyle. The customer feels that one has changed as a person. (Tarssanen 2009, 16, according to Aho 2001, 35.) Through the experience one can adopt a new hobby, way of thinking and find new resources from oneself (Tarssanen 2009, 16).

3.3.2 Elements of the product

Individuality describes the uniqueness of the product and that there is no other product elsewhere. Individuality is shown in customer orientation, flexibility and the opportunity to tailor the product to meet the needs of every customer. It is possible to tailor the product almost endlessly, but then also the costs will in-

crease. It is a challenge to produce a service which concept is easy to duplicate. (Tarssanen 2009, 12.)

Authenticity in the experience product means the creditability of the product. As its simpleness authenticity means the true culture and lifestyle of the area. (Tarssanen 2009, 12-13). According to Tarssanen (2009, 12-13) in the end the customer will define the authenticity of the product. The product is authentic, if the customer experiences it as believable and true, though the product is completely fictional. Part of the authenticity of the product is its cultural and ethical permanence. (Bruner 1994, 397.)

Story is closely related to the authenticity of the product. It is essential to bound all the elements to each other with a story, when the experience will become compact and more captivating. A good story distributes the social meaning and content for the product and experience, and gives a reason for the customer to experience the specific product. Story is the plot of the product and a good story consists from the elements of fact and fiction. (Tarssanen 2009, 13-14.) If the story is unprofessionally conceived, it is hard for the customers to organize their impressions about the product and it will not offer memorable experiences. (Pine & Gilmore 1999, 46.)
Multi -sensory perception means that the product is possible to experience with several senses. This kind of product offers impulses for different senses, for example visual, scents, audio visual, tastes and senses of touch. In order to validate the theme and support the attractiveness of the product, all the impulses should be in harmony. (Tarssanen 2009, 14.)

According to Tarssanen (2009, 14) contrast signifies the difference of the product from the customer’s viewpoint. It is essential that the product is different and offers something new and exotic for everyday life. By experiencing something new, enables the person to see oneself from different viewpoint, and liberates to see and experience the life in a different way. (Turner & Turner 1978, 249-253; Jokinen 1991, 133-134) When producing contrast it is essential to take into

consideration the customer’s starting point. For one something exotic can be everyday life and vice versa. (Tarssanen 2009, 14.)

Interaction is interplay between the product and the customers. It signifies also successful communication between the service provider and the product. Experiencing something together and being a part of a community is highly attached to interaction. The awareness that the experience is generally approved and valued increases the person’s social status and brings one closer to specific group. (Tarssanen 2009, 14-15.)

3.4 Russian as a customer

Following chapter introduces information about Russians as a customer, which might be essential to know when serving Russian customers. The data for the chapter was collected from the interview of Nataliya Kohvakko, Russian traveller service guide (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakapalveluopas) done by Zakuska-project of the Rovaniemi Adult Education Centre (Rovaniemen ammatillinen aikuiskoulutuskeskus).

In order to develop a product it is important to study and know about the target group which in this research are the Russian tourists travelling to Finland, especially to Tampere region. Several researches have proved that knowing the culture has significant meaning for successful business and selling the product. It is easier to respond to the foreign customers' expectations and needs, when one knows their cultural background, country's history and way of thinking. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 6)

Most of the Russians are orthodoxies and it has its impact on their way of thinking. It is not only a religion for them but also a part of Russian identity. Patriotism is very important for Russian people and they are very proud of their nationality. They cannot understand why Finnish people have negative and disdainful attitude towards Russian people. A Russian does not want to be alone

and he/she needs other people around him/her and that is why family community is in important role which includes parents, parents-in-law, children, grandchildren, grandparents, cousins, second cousins, aunts, uncles and closest friends. In family community they celebrate, grieve and solve problems together. Family is wider concept than in Finnish culture. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 11-12.) Usually Russians also travel in bigger groups for example with family and friends (Kohvakko 2011).

Russians are very emotional, they express their feelings openly and they are temperamental and their interaction is much louder and active than Finnish. Sign language of the Russians is very lively (Kohvakko 2011) which is important to remember on service situations because the problem may not be as big as it seems from the view of a person who does not know that. It is also good to remember that the Russians do not always follow the rules and they are charmed by danger and adventure. They think that laws can be read in a flexible way which is something that Finnish people may not understand. In this case the role of relationship between customer servant and customer is important because the way of action of the customer is depending on the relationship. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 14.)

According to census (2002) only 4, 8% from the population of Russia (6,9 million) speak somehow English. The main reason why Russians do not speak English is that the language is not part of their daily life. All the English programs and movies are dubbed into Russian. Some might say they understand and can speak English, but the reality might be different. It is rare if Russian traveler know English as well as one understands written text in English or English guidance. Language issues have influence when choosing holiday destination. Many Russians with good income and middle class citizens do not have English skills, which is why they choose holiday destinations, where they can have service in Russia for sure. (Kohvakko 2011.) The skill of knowing foreign languages is developing in Russia; in schools in they teach English, German and French. English is getting more and more popular as a common language and English skills of the Russian people has grown strongly. (Venäläisen

matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 21.) Beside of that the Russian customer prefers service in their own language.

Russian hospitality is known all over the world and more deep in south Russia a person travels, more hospitality one can receive from Russians. When Russian travels to the destinations he/she expects personal service and may not understand rules and terms of mass tourism. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 14.) Russian customers do not travel to the destination only for accommodation and food, they seek for experiences. They are demanding and expect to get their money's worth. Especially Russian customers with good income want to get as best service as possible and expect to get respect since they pay a lot of money. Usually the price does not matter if the service is good. Customers who are middle class also expect to get good service if they have paid for it. They also think since they have worked around the year ten to eleven hours per day, on the vacation “there is no tomorrow”. They do not save money or bring it back from the vacation. On the other hand, if there is possibility to pay less from the same service, they will gladly do that. (Kohvakko 2011.)

Confidence is important when creating relationships with Russians and in customers’ service situations it is important to create the confidence. Making a confidential relationship it is important to know own attitudes towards the customer because Russians sense easily how people look at them. Successful communication situation requires creating personal contacts. First impression born in very first minutes from tone of voice, impressions, external presence and how the person acts. It is essential to understand customers’ needs and the relationship need to be taken care of especially with the travel agencies. In Russia the customer relationship is wider concept than in Finland and it is also part of free time, for example fishing trips and cruises with clients. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 12.)

4 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE RUSSIAN CUSTOMERS

Following chapter presents the planning and conducting phases of the questionnaire and the results of the questionnaires.

4.1 Planning and conducting the questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaires was to gather information about primary- and secondary travel motives of the Russian tourists traveling to Tampere region.
The questionnaire (Attachment 1) was translated into Russian by Zhanna Rogozhina, a colleague from the project. The questionnaires were printed on the paper. In Sokos hotel Ilves, Holiday Club Tampere Spa and Dream Hostel the questionnaire was handed out for Russian customers when they checked in and for the customers of Tilausmatkat in the bus when departing from Tampere to St. Petersburg and arriving from St. Petersburg to Tampere. In department store Sokos the questionnaires were given on the cashier for the Russian customers, who did tax-free shopping.

First questionnaires for the Russian customers of Sokos hotels was carried out between the New Year's Eve and the Twelfth Day in 2010, which is the busiest season for Russian outbound tourism to Finland. The authors expected to get great amount of respondents, thus there were expected to be so many Russian tourists in the Tampere region.
Original plan was to conduct questionnaire in Sokos Hotel Ilves and Holiday Club Tampere Spa. The plan was changed since the scale of data did not meet the requirements of the research. Authors decided to conduct the questionnaire also for the Russian customers of Tilausmatkat Oy.
Though the authors conducted also the questionnaire for the customers of Tilausmatkat Oy, the number of respondents did not meet the expectations. On august 2011 authors decided to try once more to get the last questionnaires filled and conducted the questionnaire in Sokos Hotel Ilves, Dream Hostel and

department store Sokos, which finally gave satisfactory results. The desired amount of questionnaires was 60.

Questionnaire consists of twelve questions. Eleven questions are closed questions and one is an open question. The authors wanted to keep the questionnaire short, since in most places it was handed out in the situations where the contact with the customers were not that long.

In order to get the quantitative data, the results of the questionnaires were analyzed with the statistical analysis program Tixel. The quantitative data together with the background information about the characteristics of a Russian, theory of Experience Triangle and information gathered from the interviews constitute the final results of the research.

The final amount of responses is 51 questionnaires, which is 85% from the desired 60 filled in questionnaires and can be counted as satisfactory result. The actual amount of the questionnaires was 53, since two respondents were not from Russia, but spoke Russian. The results of the questionnaires are presented and analyzed in two parts. First part presents the background information of the respondents and the second part what services the respondents used during their stay in Tampere region and what services they would like to be offered more in Tampere region.

4.2 Results: primary- and secondary motives of the respondents

The results of this chapter introduce the values, needs, and involvement of the Russian customers traveling to Tampere region. The following figures (Figures 3- 14, p. 34- 49) present the primary- and secondary travel motives of the respondents. The results are presented in percentages.

Figure 3 (p. 34) presents the distribution of gender. Figure shows that 61 per cent from the respondents are female and 39 are male.

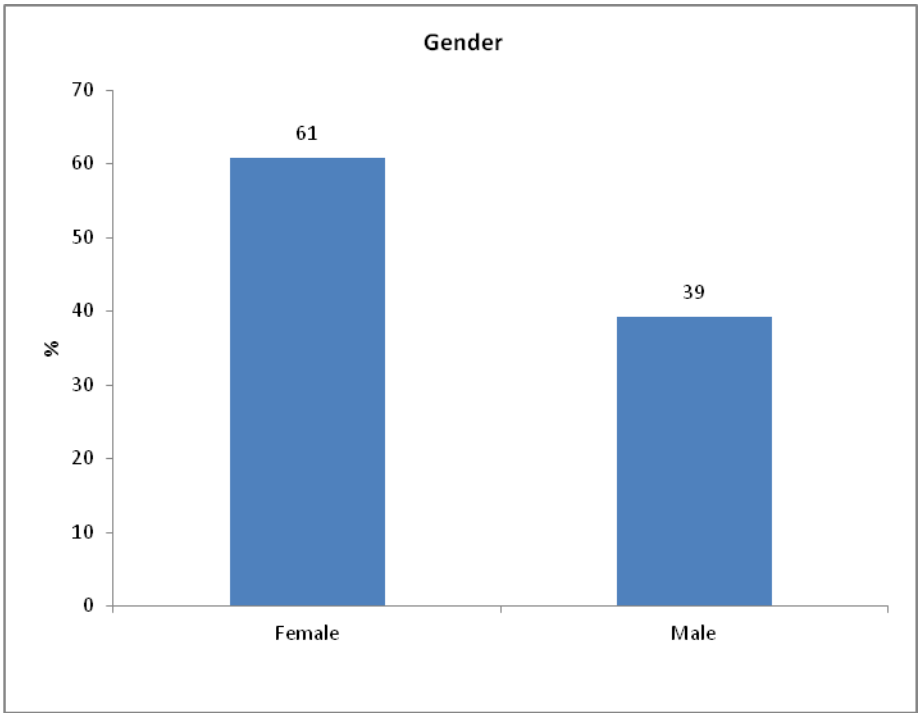


FIGURE 3. The gender of the respondents

As the figure 3 shows, the majority of the respondents are female with 61 per cent. Reason for this could be that the biggest amount of filled in questionnaires was gathered from the department store Sokos, where 15 respondents from the 25 were females. Shopping is one of the favourite activities for Russian residents, especially for the Russian women (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 8). According to research made by Research- and education center Synergos shopping is thrid important reason (25%) for Russians to travel to Finland (Manka 2010).

Following figure (Figure 4, p. 35) shows the age distribution of the respondents. Figure 4 shows that 3 per cent of the females are under 20 years, 29 per cent are 21 to 30- years- old, 26 per cent are 31 to 40- years- old, 13 per cent are 41 to 50- years- old, 16 per cent are 51 to 60- years- old and 13 per cent are 61 to 70- years old. None of the female respondents are over 70- years- old.
15 per cent of the male respondents are under 20 years, 20 per cent are 21 to 30- years- old, 35 per cent are 31 to 40- years- old, 10 per cent are 41 to 50-

years- old, 5 per cent are 51 to 60- years- old, 5 per cent are 61 to 70- years- old and 10 per cent of the male respondents are over 70 years.

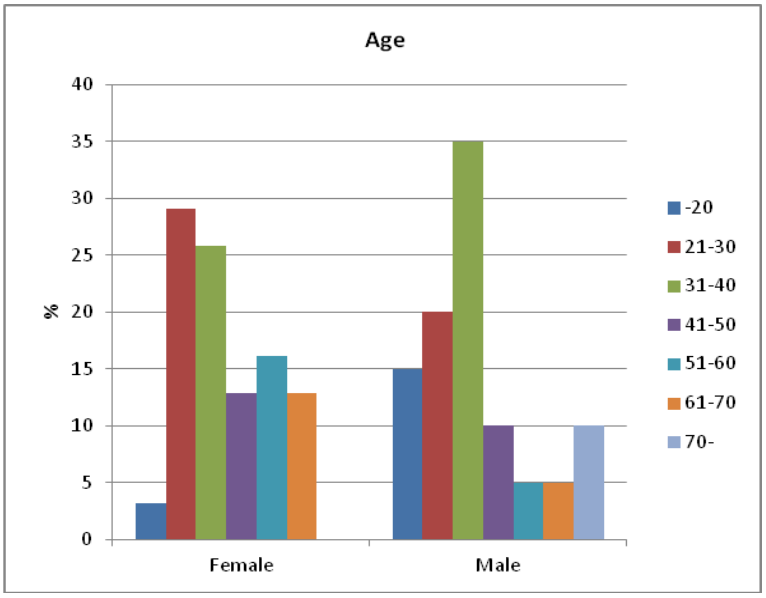


FIGURE 4. Age distribution of the respondents (N=51)

Figure 4 illustrates that most of the respondents are between 21-30 years and 31-40 years. This result is supported by the research made by Research- and education center Synergos, which shows that 28 per cent of the Russians traveling to Finland are between the ages of 25 and 34 (Manka 2010). Between the females 29 per cent are 21-30 year-old and 26 per cent 31-40 year- old, but between the men, respondents in age of 31-40 is clearly the biggest group (35%). The figure shows that there are quite big difference between the female and male respondents who are 51-60 years- old and 60-71 years- old. 5 per cent from the males are 51-60 or 60-71, but of the females 16 per cent are 51-60 year-old and 13 per cent are between the ages 61-70.

Figure 5 (p.36) presents the city of residence of the respondents. 61 from the respondents are from St. Petersburg, 22 per cent from Moscow and 18 per cent from other places of Russia, for example Karelia and Vyborg.

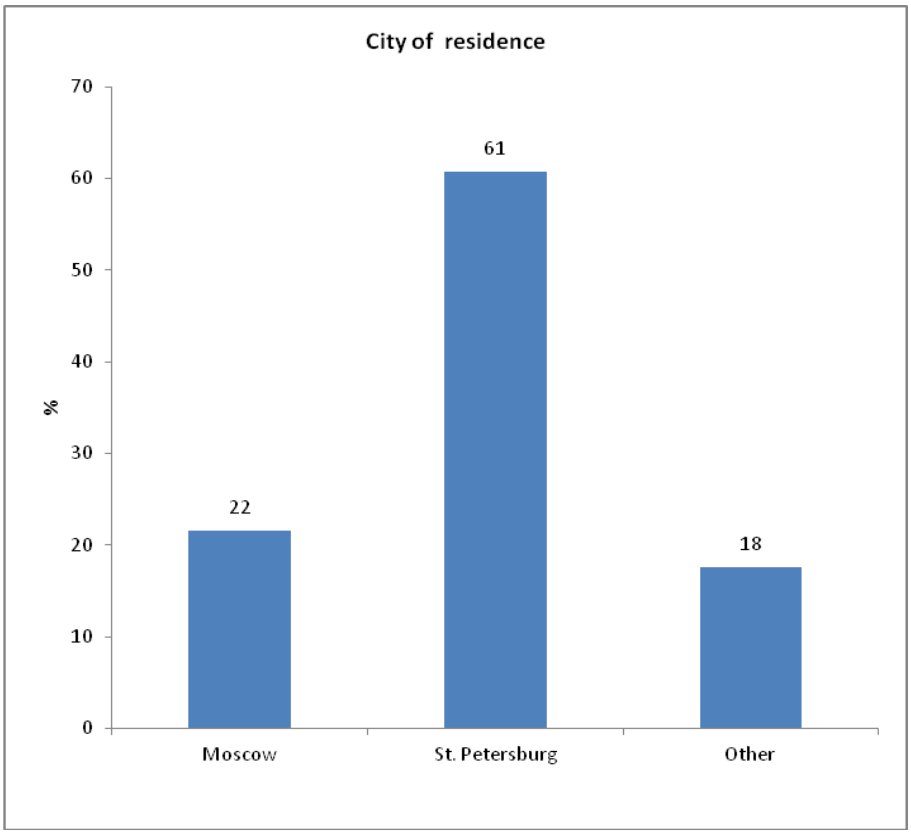


FIGURE 5. City of residence (N=51)

Figure 5 shows that most of the respondents are from St. Petersburg, which confirms the fact that residents of St. Petersburg are the biggest group, who travel to Tampere region. This result also supports the objective of the TASC-project, which is to answer the needs of Russian middleclass tourists, who come from St. Petersburg. (Koiviola 2010, 4.) The result also shows that there could be good markets in Moscow.

Figure 6 (p. 37) illustrates that 47 per cent of the respondents have not been in Tampere region before, 31 per cent one to three times, 10 per cent four to six times, 2 per cent seven to ten times and 10 per cent have been in Tampere region over ten times.

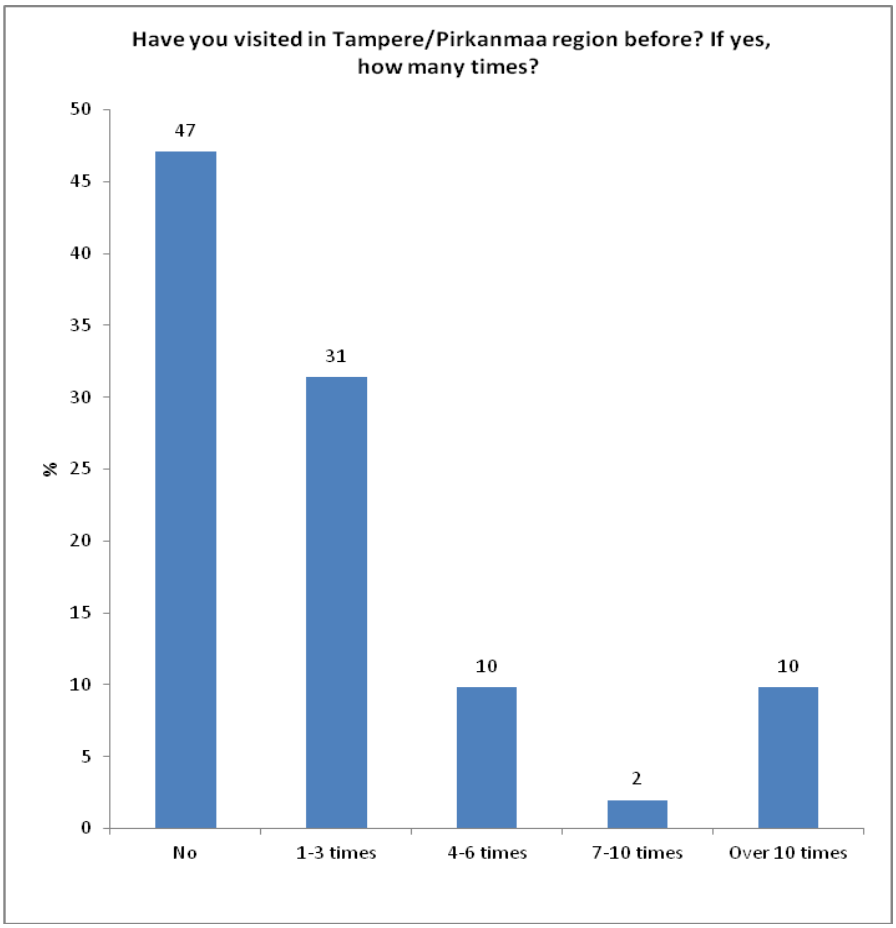


FIGURE 6. Number of the visits in Tampere region (N=51)

Figure 6 shows have the respondents visited in Tampere before and how many times. The question clarifies how known destination Tampere is between the Russians travelling to Finland. Almost half (47%) of the respondents were in Tampere for the first time. Earlier figure (Figure 2, p. 8) about the city where the Russian residents will stay night in Finland shows that only 7 per cent of the respondents stay in Tampere (Manka 2010). Theme interviews of the same research shows that at the moment the demand in tourism in Tampere region is low and does not meet the potential. Tourism in Tampere region is based more on transit traffic. Theme interviewees answered that some reasons for the low demand is unawareness towards Tampere region and lack of regular connections between the countries. (Manka 2010.) Though Tampere seems to be quite unknown destination yet, 31 per cent of the respondents have been in Tampere region one to three times before. This shows that the demand might be growing little by little. There are some respondents (10%) who have been in Tampere

region over ten times before, which also gives positive view for the development of the demand.

Following figure (Figure 7) illustrates that 59 per cent from the respondents travels with their family, 29 per cent with their friends, 4 per cent with their partner and 8 per cent alone.

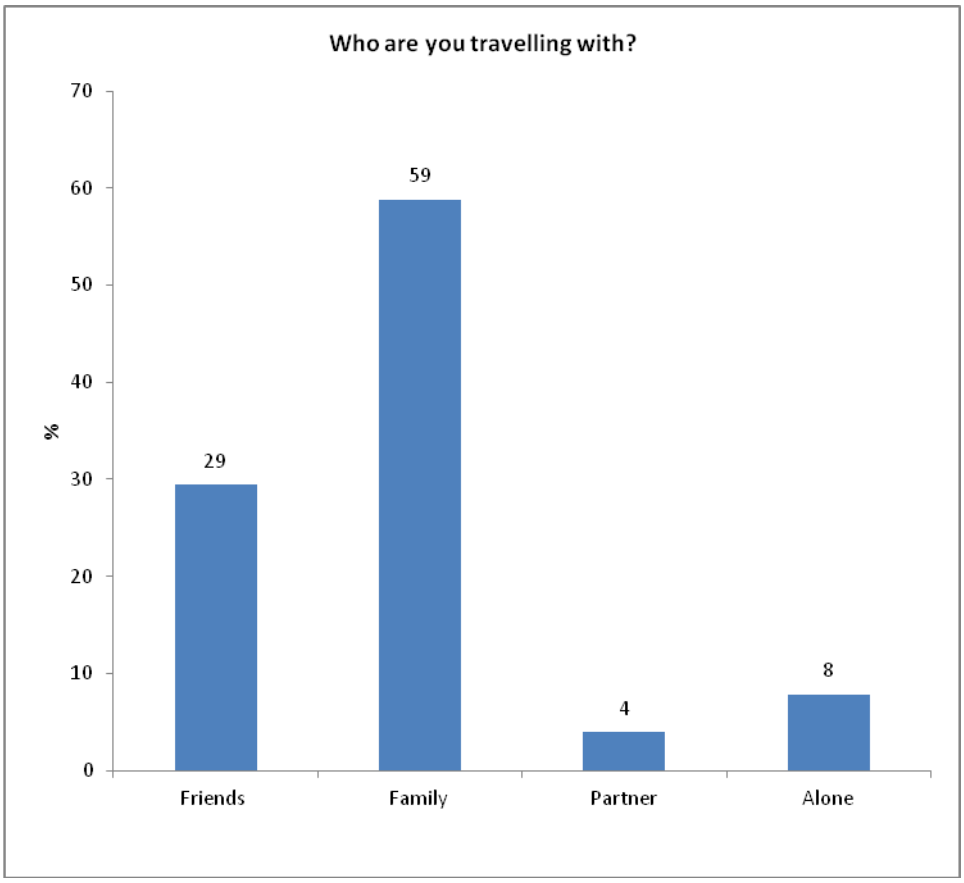


FIGURE 7. Travelling companion of the respondents (N=51)

Figure 7 shows with whom the respondents are traveling to Tampere region. Most of the respondents (59%) are traveling with their family and 29 per cent of the respondents are travelling with their friends. It is notable that many of the respondents marked for the questionnaire that they were traveling with both family and friends. According to Kohvakko (2011) Russian families travel often together with their friends and their family. As it was mentioned earlier, family is a wide concept in Russia and Russians do not like to be alone. That could be

also one of the reasons why 4 per cent of the respondents travel with their partner and 8 per cent alone.

Figure 8 illustrates how many days the respondents will stay in Tampere region. The figure shows that 34 per cent of the respondents stay in Tampere region one to three days, 32 per cent four to six days, 14 per cent seven to ten days and 20 per cent over ten days.

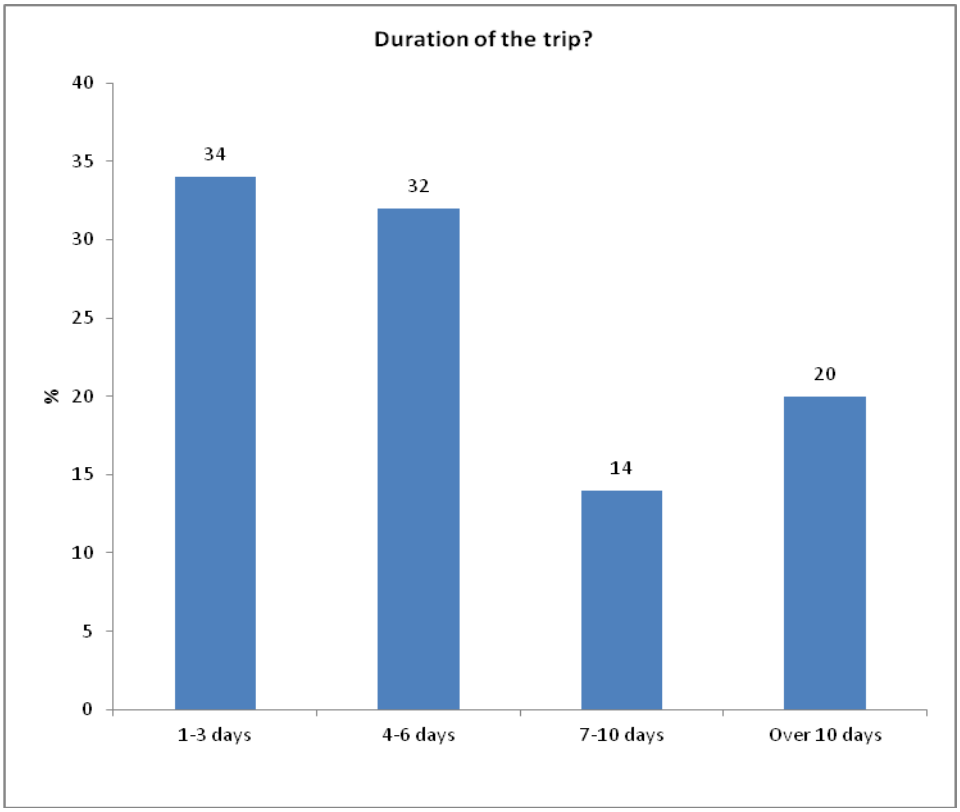


FIGURE 8. Duration of the trip in Tampere region (N=51)

According to figure 8 34 per cent of the respondents will stay in Tampere region one to three days and 32 per cent four to six days. Though most of the respondents stay one to three days, it is positive that almost as many stays four to six days. This shows that the respondents are not only passing by and making quick stop in Tampere region. It is slightly suprising that 20 per cent of the respondents stay in Tampere over ten days, but 14 per cent seven to ten days. The results shows that those who are staying in Tampere region for sev-

en to ten days do not use any accommondation services. These respondents might visit their friends or family.

Figure 9 is about the means of transportation used by the respondents when traveling to Tampere. 62 per cent of the respondents came by their own car, 18 per cent by bus, 12 per cent by train, 4 per cent by airplane and 4 by charter bus.

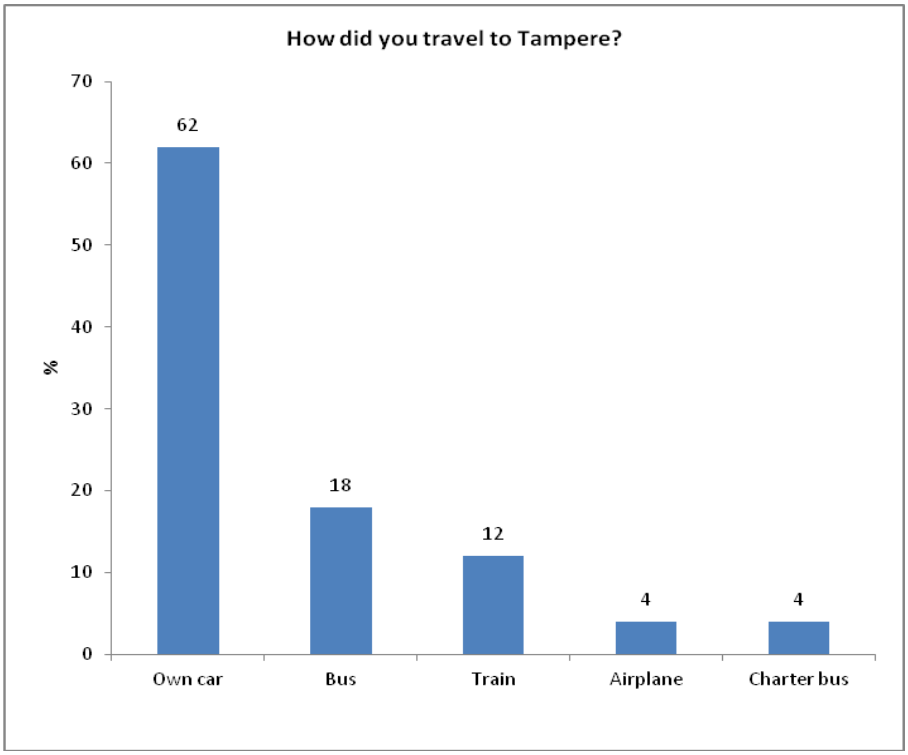


FIGURE 9. Means of transportation (N=51)

Figure 9 shows that 62 per cent of the respondents travel to Tampere by own car, which is the easiest way to get to Tampere, since there is not any regular connections between Tampere and Russia. According to Manka (2010), especially 22 to 25- year-old men with good income travels by their own car to Finland. The use of the own car is as common as they have more travel experience in Finland. 18 per cent of the respondents came to Tampere by bus and 90 per cent of them were women. Buses are mostly used by 25- and over 55-year-old women and people with lower income (Manka 2010). Most of the re-

spondents who came by bus were customers of the Tilausmatkat Oy, which operates between St. Petersburg and Tampere. 12 per cent of the respondents traveled to Tampere by train, which means that they might have taken the Allegro, first speed train operating between Helsinki and St. Petersburg and then changed the train to Tampere. (Helsingin Sanomat 2010). This can be supported by the fact that all the respondents traveling by train are from St. Petersburg. 4 per cent of the respondents came to Tampere by airplane and 4 per cent by charter bus.

Figure 10 illustrates the ways of booking the trip by the respondents. 80 per cent of the respondents booked their trip by using the internet, 9 per cent by using travel agency, 2 per cent by phone and 9 per cent on the spot.

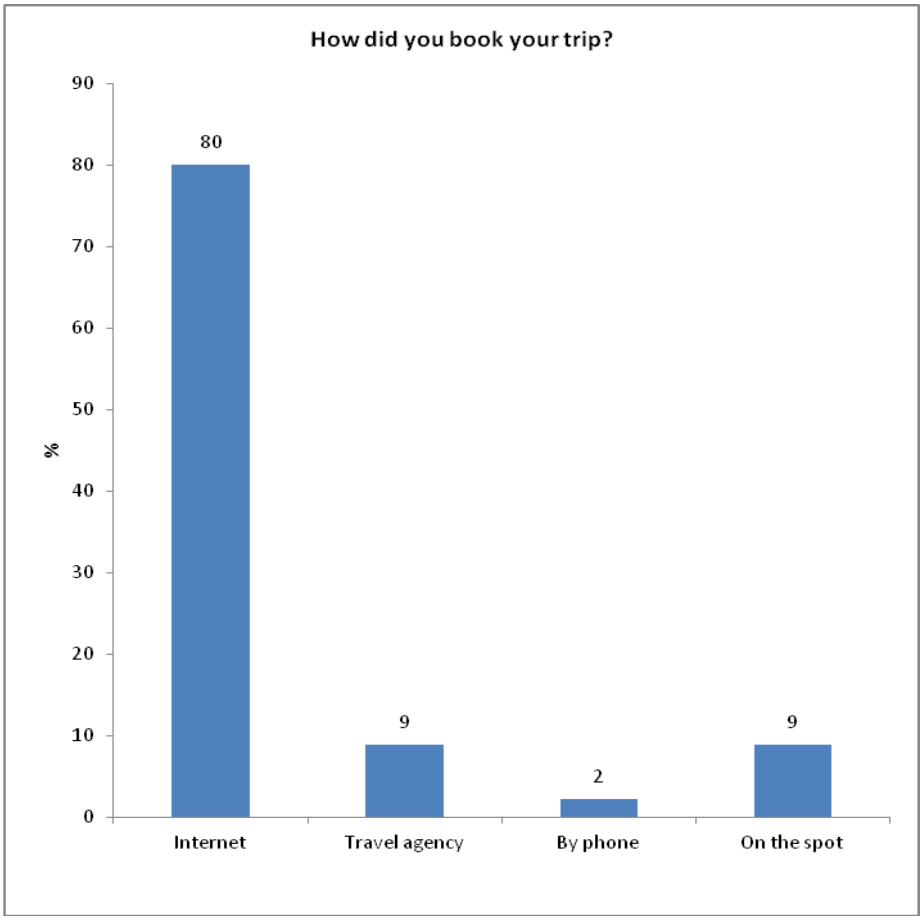


FIGURE 10. Ways of booking the trip and services (N=51)

According to figure 10 (p. 41) 80 per cent from the respondents booked their trip from the internet. Internet is counted as the third of information source, which have affected on Russians decision making to travel to Finland (Manka 2010). 9 per cent from the respondents booked their trip from the travel agency, which shows that booking through travel agencies is still used in Russia. Only 2 per cent booked their trip by phone. Reason for this could be the lack of language skills of the Russians and Russian language skills of the personnel in Finland and. According to Kohvakko (2011) Russians consider that Russian language skills of the Finnish personnel is one issue that should be developed. 9 per cent of the respondents booked the services on the spot, which means that Russians should have the ability to book services also on the spot.

Figure 11 (p.43) presents the ways how the respondents found information about Tampere region. 67 per cent of the respondents found information about Tampere from the WebPages, 25 per cent heard from their friends, 4 per cent found information from Exhibitions, 2 per cent from travel agency, 2 per cent from the magazines.

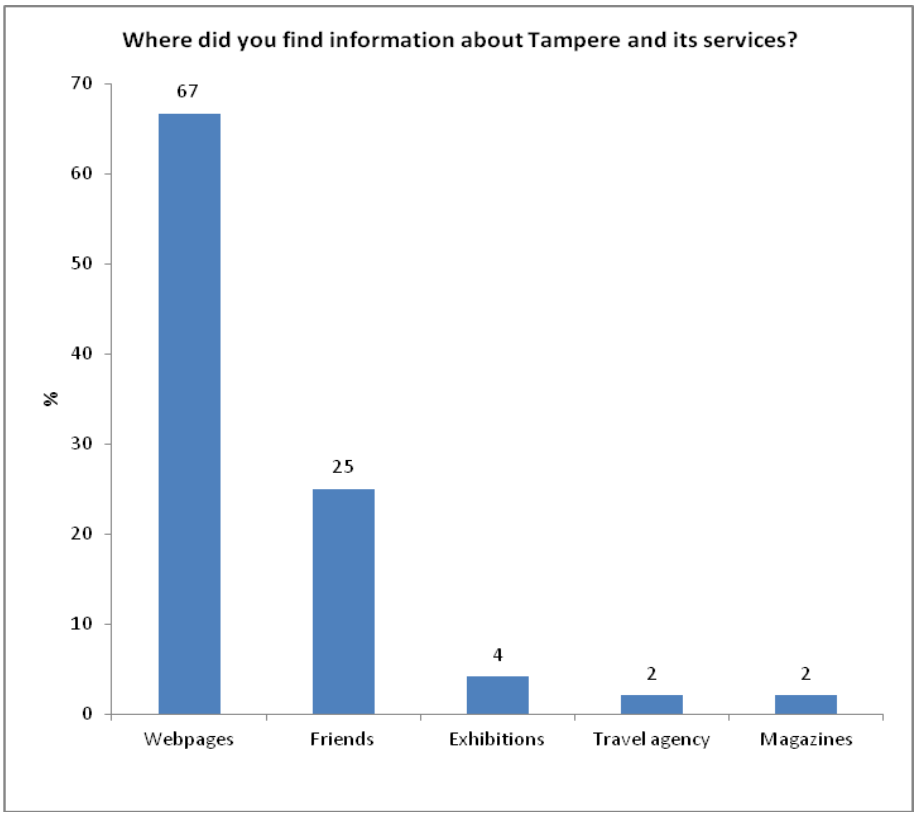


FIGURE 11. Ways of finding information about Tampere (N=51)

Figure 11 illustrates that more than half (67%) of the respondents find information about Tampere from the webpages. The most used web pages for searching information about Finland are Finland's country portal, www.visitfinland.com (39%) and the web pages of the destination cities (31%) (Manka 2010.) Nowadays tourism web pages of Tampere, are renovated and translated also in Russian, which makes searching information about Tampere easier for the Russians. (www.visittampere.fi). 25 per cent of the respondents get the information from friends, which shows the meaning of word of mouth. The respondents were asked from what WebPages they found their information. Most of the respondents mentioned that they used Google or Yeandex.ru. One respondent got information from the guide- book about Finland taken from the Finnish visa application centre. Also WebPages www.gofinland.ru were mentioned.

For the following three questions (12, 13, 14, p. 44- 48) respondents were allowed to choose as many options as they wanted.

Figure 12 presents respondents' main reasons for traveling to Tampere region. 47 per cent of the respondents travel to Tampere region because of the shopping opportunities and 24 per cent come to visit their family and friends. 8 per cent travel to Tampere region in business matters, 36 per cent because of the nature, 23 per cent because of the culture and 21 per cent come because of the location. Price is one of the main reason for 11 per cent of the respondents and 38 per cent travel to Tampere region, since it is a new location. 15 per cent travel to Tampere region, since it is a familiar destination. Sport activities are main reason for 8 per cent of the respondents and wellness for 17 per cent of the respondents.

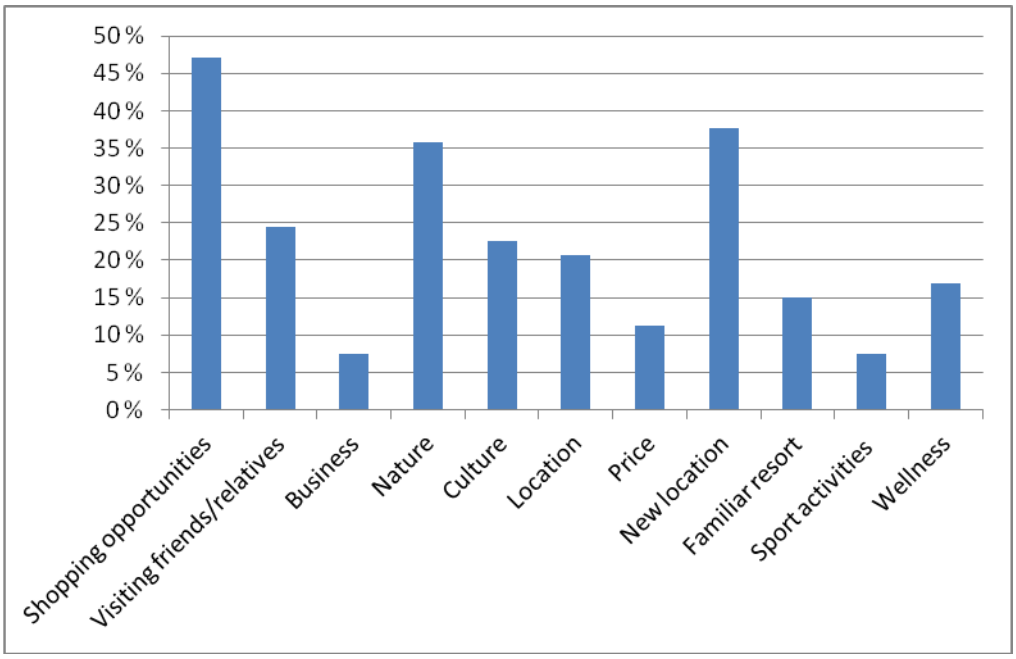


FIGURE 12. Main reasons for traveling to Tampere (N=51)

Entertainment, having fun, indulgence and recreation are travel motives which include different kind of events, amusement parks, theme resorts and shopping trips (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 26). This travel motive seems to be the motive for most of the Russians traveling to Tampere region. Figure 12 shows that the main reasons for traveling to Tampere are shopping opportunities (47%). Also the figure 14 (p. 48) shows, that shopping services in Tampere are highly used among the respondents. The respondents would like to be offered different

kinds of shopping trips for example to Ikea or Ideapark (Figure 13, p. 46). Russians likes to buy high-level products and trademark is very important. They want to buy products, which are genuine leather, silk, cotton or fur. (Kohvakko 2011). Souvenirs are also big part of the shopping experience. Russians like to buy products, which reminds them especially from the place they have visited. (Kohvakko 2011). According to authors' own observation, the supply of the souvenirs in Tampere is quite limited. There are no shops, which have good selection of souvenirs.

Social- and ethnic travel motives means spending time with the family or traveling to meet them (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 26). According to the results of the questionnaire (Figure 12, p. 44), visiting friends and families (24%) is one of the main reasons to travel to Tampere region. The results also show that most of Russians are traveling with their family and friends to Tampere region (Figure 7, p. 38). Over half of the respondents traveled with their family and the second biggest group was traveling with their friends. Many Russians travel in bigger groups, which consist from their family and friends, and usually travel in groups of two to three families (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004, 11).

Physical and physiologic travel motives are the primary travel motives, which includes taking care of health. Since this primary motive is also about enjoying outdoors, nature belongs to this group. (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 25.) Notable amount of the respondents (36%) considered the nature to be one of the main reasons for traveling to Tampere (Figure 12, p. 44). Closeness of the nature, pureness and safety are one of the main reasons why Russians travel to Finland. That is something totally different for the tourists who come from St. Petersburg, Moscow or other bigger cities in Russia, where the nature is hard to reach. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakapalveluopas 2004, 6). According to Kohvakko (2011) the most interesting activities in the nature for the Russians could be fishing, hunting and picking berries and mushrooms. Kolari (2011) says that significant part of the fishing tourists, who travels to Pirkanmaa area, are from Russia. Fishing is one of the most popular hobbies in Russian. Fishing is more popular among the men than women, but it is upcoming new trend

among the wealthy Russian women. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakapalveluopas 2004, 7.) Renting cabin is one of the main ways for Russians to spend their holidays in Finland (Kohvakko 2011). Spending time at the cabin surrounded by the Finnish nature is a dream for many Russians. It is important that cabin locates near the activities and the city. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakapalveluopas 2004, 6.) Many of the Russians, who have stayed on cabin, would like to rent cabin again. Russians value cleanliness, nature, lakes, boat, sauna, kitchen, shower and peacefulness, when they are renting a cabin. (Kohvakko 2011.) Wellness (17%), is also one of the main reasons for the respondents to travel to Tampere (Figure 12, p. 44).

Following information presents primary travel motives, which includes cultural and psychological motives, and developing itself or learning new. (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 25).
Culture (23%) is also listed as a one of the main reasons to travel to Tampere. In order to create memorable experiences, the product should be authentic, which means that it should show true culture and lifestyle of the area. (Tarssanen 2009, 12-13). Russian tourists are very interested on the culture of the area where they are traveling to. They want to explore the local lifestyle, history and traditions. They are also keen to taste local food and buy local products. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakapalveluopas 2004, 8.)
Cultural events on the other hand were attended only over 10 per cent from the respondents (Figure 14, p. 48), which might explain that the Russians do not find the cultural events in Tampere region. Figure 13 (p.47) shows that some of the respondents would like to be offered more farm tourism and theme evening parties. Inland water cruises is the most wanted service. These activities can be included to this specific primary motive, since they are cultural and traditional activities (Verhelä & Lackman 2003, 26). These previous facts shows that there could be demand for such services and this primary motive could be even more common among the Russians traveling to Tampere region.

Figure 13 (p. 47) shows what kind of services respondents would like to be offered. 32 per cent of the respondents would like to be offered shopping trip for

example to Ikea and Ideapark, 25 per cent wellness services, 9 per cent gala dinners, 17 per cent live music- nights, 32 per cent theme evening parties, 43 per cent cruises on the inland waters, 21 per cent museum tours, 36 per cent city tours, 17 per cent nature program service, 17 per cent farm tourism, 11 per cent member cards and 24 per cent discount tickets.

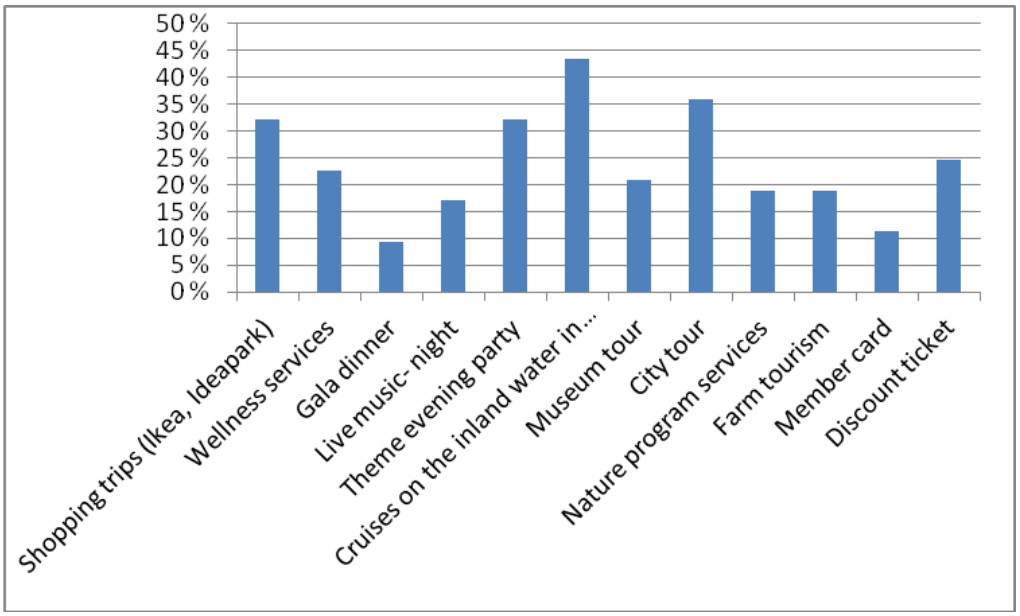


FIGURE 13. Services liked to be offered in Tampere (N=51)

Figure 13 shows that arranged cruises on the inland water (43%) seemed to be the most wanted. There are cruise companies that arrange cruises on lakes Pyhäjärvi and Näsijärvi, one of them is Hopealinjat (www.visittampere.fi). Companies do not have web pages in Russian, which can be the reason for that they have not reached Russian customers yet. Hopealinjat Oy is interested on developing services towards Russian markets (Räsänen 2010). Second most wanted service among the respondents is city tours (36%). During summer season there are arranged city tours in Tampere, but only in Finnish or English (www.visittampere.fi). Theme evening parties (32%) are also wanted by the respondents. For example in Hotel Rantasipi, Laajavuori, Jyväskylä they arranged a Russian New Year party for their Russian customers which included President Putin's' new year speech that was showed live from a big screen. The program also included a Russian Santa Claus and the New Years' tree was collected to-

gether with the customers. (Keskisuomalainen 2007.) Russians are also interested on learning about the culture of their holiday destination.(Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004). Theme evening parties could be based on the Finnish culture as well. Shopping trips for example to Ikea or Ideapark (32%) are also wanted. Russians likes to buy high-level products and trademark is very important. They want to buy products, which are genuine leather, silk, cotton or fur. (Kohvakko 2011.)

Figure 14 is about services used in Tampere region by the respondents. 62 per cent of the respondents use accommodation services, 42 per cent restaurants, 45 per cent shops, 8 per cent tourist information, 9 per cent spas, 13 per cent museums, 4 per cent night clubs, 17 per cent sightseeing tours, 13 per cent cultural events and 2 per cent organized activities.

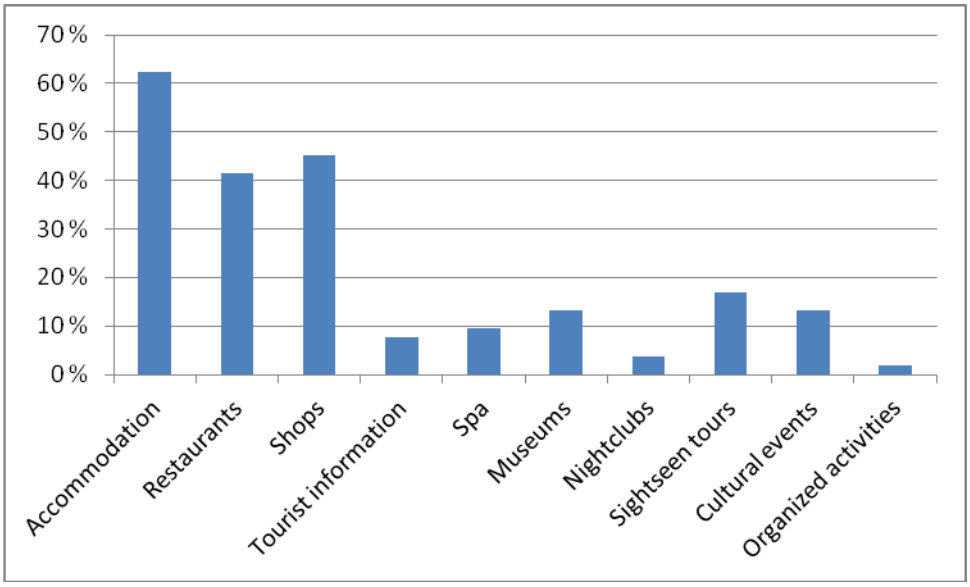


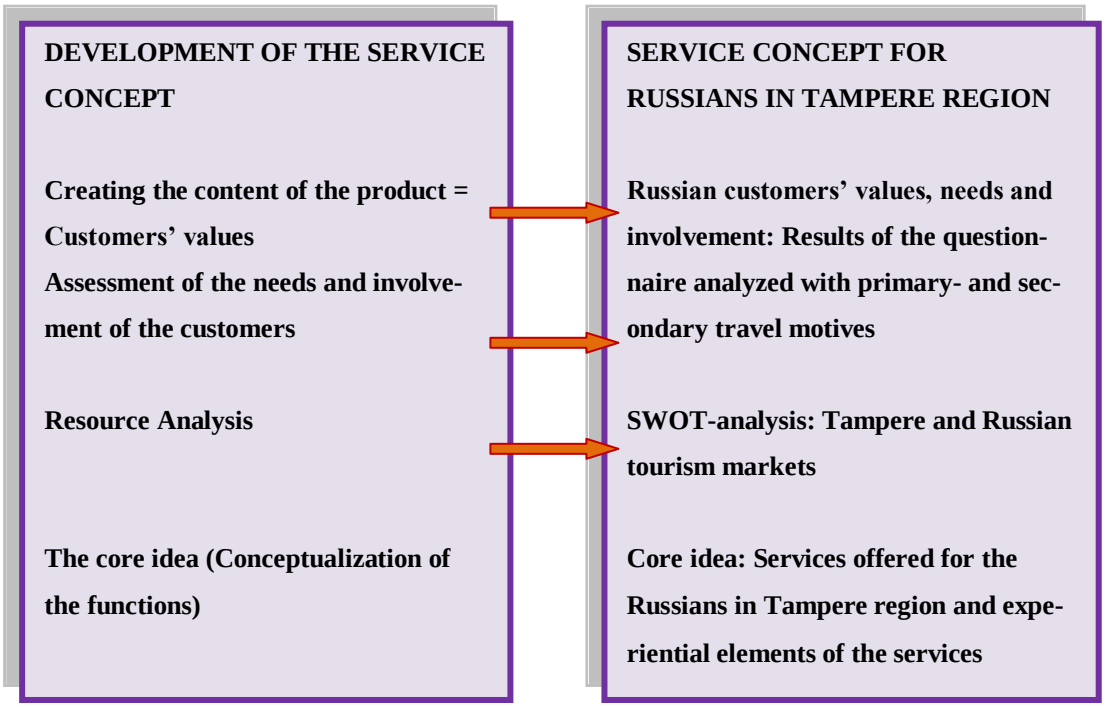
FIGURE 14. Services used in Tampere (N=51)

Figure 14 illustrates what services the respondents use while their staying in Tampere region. Accommodation (62%) is the most used service. Ten of the filled in questionnaire are from Ilves and Holiday club Tampere spa and 8 from the Dream hostel. The reason for small amount of respondents from the hotels in the city center could be that Russians are looking for different kind of accommodation. According to Kohvakko (2011) renting a cabin is the most popu-

lar way to stay in Finland. Kolari (2011) comments, that most of the Russian fishing tourists stay at the cabin when visiting Pirkanmaa area. This fact could prove that Russians traveling to Tampere region prefer more staying at the cabin outside the city center of Tampere. Shops are the second most used (45%) services among the respondents. Russians spend lot of money on shopping in Finland. Russians had spend already 12,9 million Euros on tax-free shopping until June 2010. They plan on using more services in Finland than they use in reality. The supply of Lapland and Tampere are considered to be more attractive than the rest of Finland, since in Tampere and Lapland Russians use more different kinds of services. (Aamulehti 2011.) Some of the respondents did sightseeing tours (17%) when they were staying in Tampere. The results do not tell whether they did sightseeing by themselves or attended on organized sightseeing tour. The less used services among the respondents were organized activities (2%), night clubs (4%) and tourist information (8%). Use of the organized activities and tourist information might support the statement that the services are not properly marketed towards Russians. Tourist information of Tampere might be difficult to find if the tourists do not know where to look for. Tourist information could market more towards Russians and emphasize more information about the location and they have services in Russian.

5 SERVICE CONCEPT FOR THE RUSSIANS IN TAMPERE REGION

This chapter presents SWOT- analysis about pulling and pushing factors of Tampere in Russian tourism markets and the core idea of the service concept. The core idea introduces what services could be offered for the Russians and what experiential elements the services could include. The part of the experiential elements of the services is created by using the Experience Pyramid. Picture 6 is based on the product development process model by Komppula & Boxberg (2002, 99) and represents the part of developing the service concept. All the other parts of the process are left off. The picture at issue is edited to be suitable for the purpose of the current research and forms the frame for the chapter. The box on the right side illustrates how the authors apply the model. Values, needs and involvement of the Russian customers were introduced in former chapter, which presented the results of the questionnaire and was analyzed with primary and secondary travel motives.



PICTURE 6. Development of the service concept (Matkailutuotteen tuotekehitysprosessi: Palvelukonseptin kehittäminen, Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 99)

5.1 SWOT- analysis: Tampere region and Russian tourism market

After the need, values and involvement of the customers are studied, the resource analysis is done. This part gathers the information about tangible and intangible resources of the company. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 102.) Following chapter introduces the resource analysis, which is the SWOT-analysis (Picture 7). In this research the authors use the SWOT- analysis for defining the pushing and pulling factors of Tampere region and its services in respect to Russian market. The information to the SWOT –analysis is gathered from the questionnaires, interviews, authors own observation and secondary data.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Location	Russian language skills	Exemption from visa	Helsinki
Easy connections by own car	Knowledge of Russian culture	Russian travel agencies	Prejudgment
Nature	Lack of introducing the real culture of the area	Development of tourism field	Economical situation
Shopping opportunities	Lack of cooperation	Nature (fishing) and Culture	Decline of the cooperation
Culture	Hotel rates and capacity	Cooperation between service providers	
Visit Tampere webpage in Russian	Lack of regular connections	Inland water cruises	
	Weak marketing (Demand and supply)		

PICTURE 7. SWOT –analysis: Tampere region in respect towards Russian market.

5.1.1 Strengths

Location is one of the main reasons for 21 per cent of respondents to travel to Tampere (Figure 12, p. 44). Tampere region is easy to reach by own car, because Finland and Russian are neighbor countries. This is one of the reasons why most of the respondents (62%) come to Tampere by their own car (Figure 9, p. 39). Tampere region is also easy and quick to reach from Helsinki and other biggest cities in eastern and southern Finland.

Tampere locates in the banks of the Tammerkoski rapids and has breathtaking lake sceneries, magnificent glacial ridges and lush forests next to city centre (www.visittampere.fi), which is also one reason why the location is of the strengths. Location is the reason why nature is a strength factor for Tampere. The nature is close to city centre and offers several possibilities to spend holidays. 36 per cent of the respondents also consider that nature is one of the main reasons for traveling to Tampere region (Figure 12, p. 44), which also supports the fact that nature has significant part in tourism in Tampere in general. Russian tourists can go in winter time for cross-country and downhill skiing, ice skating, ice fishing, ice swimming or snow shoeing. On summer time it is possible to go boat cruises, rowing, kayaking, hiking, Nordic walking and golfing. Fishing is good throughout the year. There are many service providers in Tampere region who offers these services but they have not reached Russian customers yet. There are also two big national Parks next to Tampere region called Seitseminen and Helvetinjärvi. (www.visittampere.fi.) Cabins surrounded by the nature, but close to city centre is very popular way of spending holiday in Finland for Russians (Kohvakko 2011). Some of the Russians will only stay in the cabin for the whole vacation if the cabin is not that close to the city centre (Kolari 2011). Cabins can also be considered as strength factor for Tampere region, because they are highly used by the Russians (Polvi 2011). Authors state that nature can also be considered as possibility, since it has lot of potential, which is just there to be discovered.

Shopping is the main primary travel motive for the Russians to travel to Tampere. As the results shows, 47 per cent of the respondents travel to Tampere because of shopping (Figure 12, p. 44). This is a definite strength for Tampere region. Tampere offers great shopping opportunities, since the city centre is compact and the shops are within a short walking distances. Ideapark and Ikea can also be considered as pulling factor for Tampere region. 32 per cent of the respondents wanted to be offered by shopping trips to Ikea and Ideapark (Figure 13, p.47). Arranged shopping trips could be seen as opportunity for service providers.

Culture (23%) is one of the primary motives for Russians to travel to Tampere region (Figure 12, p. 44). Russians wants to know about the history, traditions and culture of the destination they are traveling (Kohvakko 2011). The research shows that culture could have even more demand, if the supply meets the demand. Culture can also be considered as opportunity, since it has lot to offer if it is developed into right direction. Tampere has many cultural events during the year; music and film festivals. (www.visittampere.fi.) A Finnish-Russian culture forum was founded in 2000 and its aim is to help in start and to do the cooperation between Finnish and Russian culture creators. It operates in whole Finland. (www.kultforum.org).

As the research shows, the respondents search information about Tampere and book services through internet (Figure 10, 11, p. 40-42). Since it seems that Russians do not have enough knowledge about Tampere region, internet is the key tool for improve this fact. The authors have noticed that there have been some movements towards Russian market in Tampere region.

Tampere has new WebPages called www.visittampere.fi, which are also in Russian language. This is a positive feature and proves that Tampere region is investing and improving their markets towards Russia. (www.visittampere.fi.) Respondents did not mentioned Visit Tampere- WebPages as the way of finding information about Tampere, but by active developing of the pages and getting more visibility in Russia could change the situation.

5.1.3 Weaknesses

.According to Nataliya Kohvakkos' presentation about Russian customers, only 4,8 % (6,9 million) of Russians has some kind of English language skills. If the destination does not offer services in Russian, it might effect on decision making when choosing the holiday destinations, especially among wealthier people. According to the boarder interview (2008) made by Research- and analyzing center (TAK Oy) to Russian tourists, there were lack of service and guidance in Russian language (22%). It is important that Russian customers feel that they are well noticed, for example giving service or other important material in Russia or solving problems fluently. (Kohvakko 2011). In addition to Russian language it is useful to have knowledge about Russian culture. There are differences between Finnish and Russian culture that may affect on intercourse. As it was mentioned before, for developing products it is essential to know target group and its culture.

According Kolari (2011) it is unfortunate how little our own local culture is represented for example when offering food for Russian tourists. Tourists are expecting to eat local food, but for example the fish they are offered is from Norway, not from the waters of the area. Offering pure local food for Russian tourists, could give totally new value for the dining experience and for their whole trip. (Kolari 2011.) This fact applies also to other elements of the services. Finnish people should be proud of their culture and show it to people, who are visiting the country. Russians want to get to know to the culture and history of the destination they travel to. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas. 2004) Culture could be considered as strength but lack of introducing the real culture of the area is a weakness.

One weakness of Tampere region is incoherence of services, lack of dynamic product development and undeveloped co-operation between service providers. (Elämystalouden strategiatyön sidosryhmäkysely 2009). Authors' own observation is that there is some cooperation in Tampere region towards Russian markets, but it should be done in larger scale and be more devoted. There should

be one larger cooperative network instead of many small ones. Objective of TASC- project is to create operational platform with devoted partners to answer the needs of Russian tourists (Koiviola 2011). All of the interviewees of the research agreed with the authors and considered that co-operation with other service providers is essential and they were willing to do co-operation. The Finnish-Russian culture forum offers help with the co-operation between Finland and Russia and especially in cultural territory. (www.kultforum.org.)

In year 2010 Tampere had the most expensive hotel rates in Finland. Average hotel rate was 108€ per night when in Helsinki average hotel rate was 100€ per night. Tampere was a fourth of the most expensive cities in the Nordic countries and Oslo was the most expensive with 117€ per night. (Talouselämä, 2011a.) Also Jarmo Polvi says that the prices of the hotels in Tampere can be considered high. Before there were more Russian customers travelling as a group, because of reasonable hotel rates, but nowadays the hotel prices for the groups are also high. This makes for example the package prices expensive, because possible operators between the hotels and Russian travel agencies charge also their commission. Hotel rates could be one of the reasons why cabin accommodation is more popular among Russian customers. It is cheaper to rent a cabin with a group than stay in a hotel in Tampere. (Polvi, 2011.) Hotel capacity in Tampere is quite small and especially during summertime hotels are often fully booked. Supply of hotel accommodation is developing in Tampere rapidly. There will be new hotels built. This might also decrease the rates, because the competition is increasing.

Tampere has an airport in Pirkkala where are two terminals; Ryanair terminal and terminal one for other airlines but there are not any flight connections from Tampere to anywhere in Russia. (www.finavia.fi). Flights between Tampere and Russia could increase the number of Russian tourist in Tampere region dramatically. There are no regular connections between Tampere and Russia, which also affects on Russians decision making when choosing the destination from Finland. (Manka 2010). There are some bus companies, for example Tilausmatkat Oy, which operates between Tampere and St. Petersburg and

they operates three days in a week and the duration of the trip is between 11 to 13 hours, which is quite long. (www.tilausmatkat.info). Lack of regular connections can be seen one the reasons for Russians travelling to Tampere by their own cars (Figure 9, p. 39).

According to Manka (2010) some Russians, who were interviewed said that one reason for not to choose Tampere region as a destination is unfamiliarity among the Russians. This could prove that marketing Tampere region for the Russians is lacking. The results of the questionnaire show also that the respondents do not use organized services (2%). Three main services they use are accommodation, restaurants and shops (Figure 14, p. 49). This could arise from the reason that Russians cannot find the supply that Tampere has to offer. Russians are keen on using different experiential services, excursions and other organized activities, so the reason cannot be because of the demand. (Kohvakko 2011). As it can be seen from the Figure 13 (p. 47) the respondents would like to be offered organized activities for example shopping trips and city tours. Marketing of services in Russian is still very small in Tampere region which is a weakness for the area.Thus there are lot of potential which could also provide services for Russian customers, it seems like the product has not developed as the time has changed. Innovation and will to develop is a key to stay or get to the market.

5.1.3 Opportunities

One major opportunity for Tampere is the possible exemption from visa between Russia and Finland. It has been estimated that the number of border crossing between Finland and Russian will increase double amount. Nowadays there are eight million border crossings between Finland and Russia per year, but the exemption from visa could increase it up till twenty million per year. Tourism field in Tampere region should be prepared carefully for this case. (Polvi, 2011; Talouselämä, 2011b.)

As we can see from the Figure 4 (p. 34) online bookings are the most popular way to book the trip between the Russians, but booking through travel agencies is still used. Tourism service providers should make personal contacts with the Russian travel agencies and really show what they have to offer. By making good business contacts with Russian travel agencies the number of Russian groups traveling to Tampere could increase. (Polvi, 2011.)

Nature and culture can be also opportunities, because the possibilities what Tampere can offer for Russian tourists in the nature are endless. Current research together with other researches done, show that many Russians would like to enjoy of the Finnish nature and culture. Interviews have shown that fishing is one activity that Russians like to do in Tampere, especially in summer. Numerous of lakes offers great prospect for fishing in Tampere region. Russians rent cabins on the lake areas and go fishing, either with a guide or themselves. (Kolari 2011.) Fishing tourism can be considered as a possibility that is easy to produce. There a lot of potential in the waterways since Tampere is the most vivid inland port city in Finland. It is possibility to develop more the waterborne traffic together with the harbor, - restaurant, and event culture. (Tampereen ja Pirkanmaan elämystalouden strategia 2010 - 2012, 2009.)

5.1.4 Threats

Helsinki is the capital city and it has straight train connections to St. Petersburg, Moscow and Vyborg. By the new train connection, Allegro, the amount of Russian tourists to Helsinki have grew but it can be seen as an opportunity for Tampere as well if Tampere know how to encourage Russian customers to travel to Tampere.

Prejudgment can be a threat for developing services for Russian customer. Finland and Russia has its own history together and it still affects on attitudes between these two nationalities. According to Manka (2010) Western-Finland is felt to be less friendly than Eastern-Finland.

Economical situation and global warming is and will always be a threat to whole tourism industry. If the economical situation changes in negative way in Russia it affects on the way how they spend their money.

5.2 Example services for the Russian customers in Tampere region

It is essential to offer to Russian tourists the opportunity to enjoy positive and unforgettable experiences, when visiting Tampere Region. In order to make this possible should local service providers in the field of tourism consider how to develop their services into a product, which will meet the experiences the segment is seeking. By investing on the service, which creates the environment for positive and unforgettable experiences will add the value of the company. This enables the possibility to get the position on the Russian market, and by that develop tourism in Tampere region.

Now when the Russian customers' values, needs and involvement are studied and the resource analysis about Tampere towards Russian market is done, is time to create the core idea. Creating the core idea means picturing the content into different functional alternatives, in other words it means combining different activities together. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 102.) The following chapter is not introducing core idea of a single product. It will introduce services which could be offered for the Russians traveling to Tampere region and the experiential elements the services could be applied.

The primary motives for the Russians are shopping opportunities, nature, visiting friends and families and culture (Figure 12, p. 44). Services which the Russians would like to be offered the most are cruise on the inland waters, city tours, shopping trip to Ikea or Ideapark, theme evening- party and wellness services. Farm tourism and nature program services got also some interest (Figure 13, p. 48). These two services are also mentioned by some of the interviewees. One service that came up during the research is equipment rental service (Kohvakko 2011; Polvi 2011). Russians traveling to Tampere region are mainly

individual travelers, who travel with own car (Figure 9, p. 39). These individual travelers should be taken into account when offering services for Russians (Kohvakko 2011). As it has been mentioned before, fishing is very popular among Russian tourists who travel to Finland. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakaspalveluopas 2004,). Also Tampere region has fishing tourists from Russia who usually rent a cabin (Kolari 2011). Previously mentioned services can be considered to be the ones that could be offered for the Russian tourists in Tampere region. Following information introduce examples of the services created by the authors.

EXAMPLE SERVICES FOR THE RUSSIAN CUSTOMERS IN TAMPERE REGION

INLAND WATER CRUISES TO IDEAPARK AND EDEN

- **Playback guiding (Russian, Finnish, English)**
- **Finnish meal from local products**
- **Discount tickets to restaurants and shops of Ideapark, or services of Eden**
- **Information leaflet about the tour in Russian**

SIGHTSEEING TOUR IN TAMPERE

- **Playback guiding (Russian, Finnish, English)**

NATURE

- **Picking mushrooms and berries**
- **Fishing trips**

EGUIPMENT RENTAL

- **Through hotels**
- **During winter time**
- **Hiking travel HIT and Suomen latu**

THEME EVENING PARTIES

Finnish evening party

- **Finnish dinner from local products**
- **Finnish music**
- **Stories about Tampere region**
- **Games**

Russian New Year Party

- **Russian Santa Claus**
- **Decorating the New Years' tree**
- **Russian style dinner**
- **Fireworks**
- **New Year concert**

DAY AT THE FINNISH FARM

- **Finnish farm life and history**
  - **learning**
- **Traditional local food**
- **Souvenirs**
- **Farm hotel**
- **Sauna**

PICTURE 8. Example services for the Russian customers in Tampere region

Since the inland water cruises, shopping trips Ideapark and wellness are the most wanted service to be offered, authors decided to combine these three services. There is inland water cruise company which offers boat cruise from Tampere to Hämeenlinna. During this cruise the boat stops in Lempäälä and Spa Eden in Nokia. (www.hopelinjat.fi.) Russians could be offered possibility to take a cruise to Ideapark, where they could experience the beautiful scenery of Pyhäjärvi and do shopping in Ideapark. Alternatively they could cruise to Eden and enjoy wellness services. During the cruise there could be traditional Finnish meal offered and playback guiding in Finnish, English and Russian. Same kind of product could be offered also to Spa Eden. This product already exists, so it needs to be designed and marketed towards Russians. The product is easier to test, because the cruise is not only for the Russians, multilingual playback guiding enables that the product can be used by several nationalities. Authors own observation is that this kind of guiding is already used in cruises in Helsinki. Additional value for the product could give discount tickets for the services in Ideapark and Eden. During the cruise there could be Finnish meal made from local products. The Russians could be handed out information leaflets and discount tickets to shops and restaurant in Ideapark or alternatively to Spa Eden.

According to the questionnaire the second most wanted service in Tampere region was the city tours (Figure 13 p.48). Only 12 per cent of the Russians did do sightseeing tour during their stay in Tampere region (Figure 14 p. 50). Visit Tampere offers sightseeing- and walking tours in summer time but they do that only in Finnish and English which is why the Russians may not use the service (www.visittampere.fi). If the tours would be offered in Russian also the involvement of the Russians could increase.

Farm tourism could be one of the products which may reach Russian customers in Tampere region. Russians are keen to see Finnish farm life and get to know to Finnish family in the country side. (Kohvakko 2011.) Trip to the country side could include a night in a farm hotel, typical local Finnish food, sauna and getting to know typical farm life and its history. Russians could have possibility to buy handmade souvenirs.

Russians could be offered theme evening parties because it was one of the wanted services to be offered. Finnish evening party could include food from local products, Finnish music, storytelling and different activities, for example games. Like Rantasipi has done, there could be Russian style New Year party with typical Russian food, New Years' tree, fireworks and New Year concert.

Nature is main pulling factor in the field of tourism and also it was the third of the main reasons for travelling to Tampere region (Figure 12 p. 45). Fishing, mushroom and berry picking are popular among Russians (Kohvakko 2011; Kolari 2011) and could very simple to provide for this segment. There are many entrepreneurs in Tampere region that offers all sorts of nature activities but have not reached the Russian customers. Authors own observation is that the service providers do not have their WebPages and marketing in Russian and do not have personnel with Russian language skills. Russians can be offered multiple choices of nature activities. The main thing is that they are offered some choices. Service providers should not think that Russians are not interested on specific product, if they have not asked about it. Usually the reason is the language barrier or then the Russians think there are not such services, since the services have not been offered. (Kohvakko 2011.)

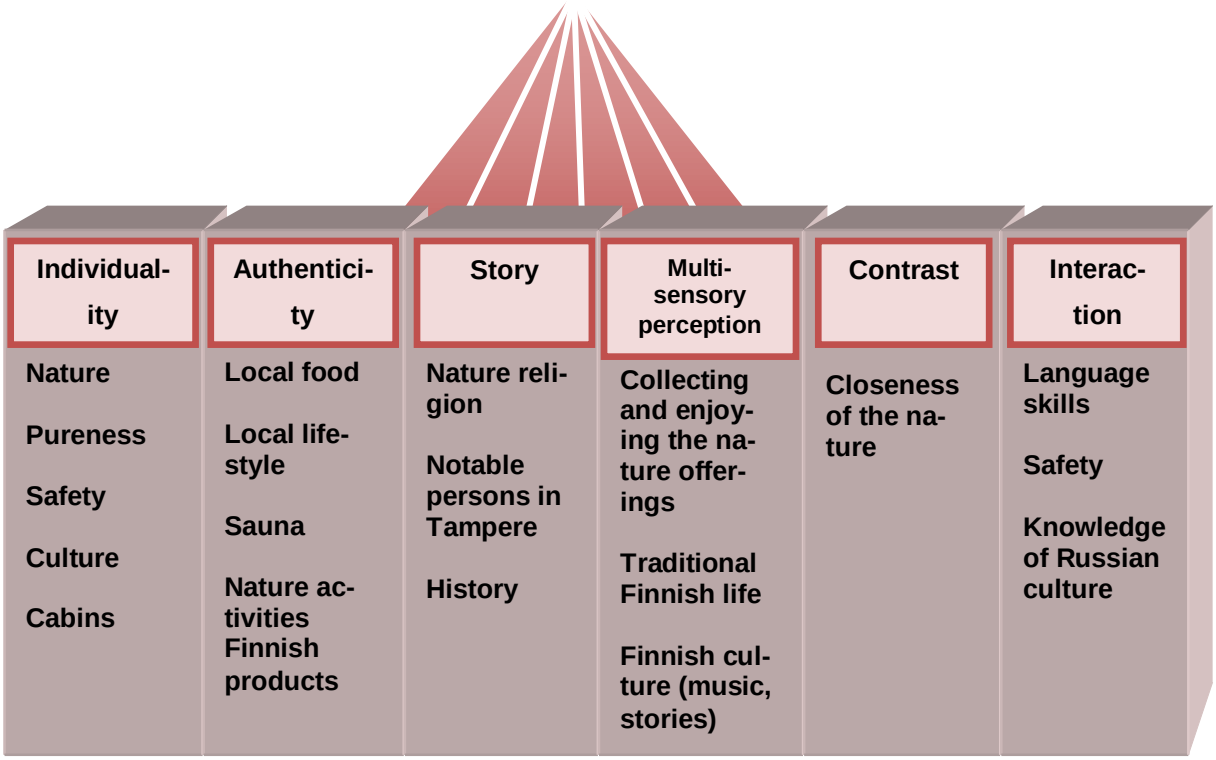
In Tampere region there are opportunities to rent equipments for nature activities but the service is not marketed for the tourists. Hotels could work as supplier between customer and the rental service. Hotels could also have for example sledges available for the customers. Potential service provider who offers rental services are Hiking travel HIT which nature program services, equipment rental and offers Nordic ice skating on the lake Näsijärvi. (www.hikingtravelhit.fi.) Suomen latu in Kauppi have ski-rental services. (www.suomenlatu.fi).

5.3 Experiential elements of the services

The main basis for creating experience services is to find out what kind of experiences the customers are seeking. Nowadays it is also requirement for staying

in the fast changing markets. (Tarssanen 2009, 20). This is the reason why the core idea is created by using the Experience Pyramid.

Russian customers seek different kinds of experiences from their trip. The results show that the primary motives of the Russians are nature, culture and shopping. They expect to experience the peacefulness and beautiful scenery of the nature, learn about destination's history, traditions and life-style and have versatile shopping opportunities, including Finnish products. (Kohvakko 2011.) The following chapter introduces the experiential elements, which could be applied to the services offered for the Russians. The three primary motives give the frame for the experiential elements. The following information introduces ideas how the experiential elements could be shown in marketing and in practice. These ideas can be applied according to the type of service. The thesis is focused on Motivational, Physical and Intellectual levels.



PICTURE 9. Experiential elements of services for the Russians in Tampere region

5.3.1 Motivational level

Expectations of the Russian customers are created on the motivational level. At this point the product is introduced for the customers by marketing. It is essential that the marketing is successful, because this part determines whether the Russians choose the product or not (Tarssanen 2009, 15). Marketing should fulfill the possible elements of an experience, which in this case is based on nature, culture and shopping. The text should be in Russia and include all the important information about the product. The main phrase could be following: *"Experience the beautiful nature and interesting culture of Tampere region and shop Finnish quality products. "*

Individuality describes the uniqueness of the product and that there is no other product elsewhere (Tarssanen 2009, 12). The product could be marketed like following: "*During the day the guests are served traditional food from Tampere region and Finland, which are made of local products. There is also possibility to spend time for shopping Finnish quality products."*

Authenticity means that the experience product is creditable. In other words authenticity means the true culture and lifestyle of the area (Tarssanen 2009, 12-13). Story is the plot of the product. When the elements are bound to each other with a story, the experience will become compact and more captivating (Tarssanen 2009, 13-14.) Local history and culture is easy to include to the product, because the surroundings are full of stories to tell. The marketing could inform following: "*Guests will learn the essence of the Finnish culture buy seeing interesting places, hearing compelling stories about Tampere region and experiencing the real traditional Finnish sauna."*

Multi -sensory perception means that the product is possible to experience with several senses. This kind of product offers impulses for different senses, for example visual, scents, audio visual, tastes and senses of touch. (Tarssanen 2009, 14.) The marketing material, for example internet pages, could include beautiful pictures about the nature of Tampere region, the places which will be

visited and food which will be served. There could be also some Finnish traditional music playing on the back ground. One option could be the product showed as a video clip on the WebPages where the customer could see what the product is about.

Contrast signifies the difference of the product from the customer's viewpoint. It is essential that the product is different and offers something new and exotic for everyday life. (Tarssanen 2009, 14.) The nature itself is already something totally different for the tourists who come from St. Petersburg, Moscow or other bigger cities in Russia, where the nature is hard to reach. (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakapalveluopas 2004, 6). Enjoying the pureness and peacefulness of the nature, just few minutes from the Tampere city center can be exotic for those, who have to drive hours to experience it in their own country. The contrast could be marketed as following: *"Experience the versatility of Tampere region. Beautiful nature is only few feet away from the lively city center and its multiple shopping opportunities. Experience the life-style of local people in one day.*

Interaction signifies successful communication between the service provider, customer and the product. Experiencing something together and being a part of a community is also highly attached to interaction. (Tarssanen 2009, 14-15.) Service, information and marketing should be in Russian and being occurred already in the marketing. Most of the Russians are traveling with their family or friends (Figure 7, p.39). This fact could be taken into account in marketing. Element of interaction could be marketed as following*: "Our professional and friendly personnel are happy to welcome you, your friends and family to join us to experience the culture and nature of Tampere region. Information and guidance will be in Russian to make your day as enjoyable as possible."*

5.3.2 Physical and Intellectual levels

On the Physical level the customer experience the product through one's senses (LaSalle & Britton 2003, 9). This is the stage when the technical quality of the product or service is measured (Tarssanen 2009, 15).
Intellectuall level means processing and handling sense incentives given by the surroundings. At this stage Russian start to learn, think, apply the information and make opinions. On the Intellectual level the customers decide whether they are content on the product or not. (Tarssanen 2009, 16, according to LaSalle & Britton 2003, 9.)
Russians expect that the service meets the information given. Cleanliness, appearance and friendliness of the personnel are also important as well as the atmosphere of surroundings. Versatility of the services and experiences about Finland are considered to be essential. All these factors are meaningful despite of the money they have spent on the services. (Kohvakko 2011.)
When considering individuality and authenticity in practice, the product should have elements, which introduce the culture and characteristics of Tampere region (Tarssanen 2009, 12-13). These elements are shown for the Russians when visiting historically and culturally important places in Tampere region, hearing stories about Tampere region, eating local food and buying local products.

Dining could happen in surroundings, which shows the culture of the area, for example traditional place surrounded by nature. The place could be also traditionally decorated. During the meal there could be Finnish music and storytelling about local history, known people and local culture. Food is a good element for introducing the local culture for the Russians and they like to taste also local oddities (Kohvakko 2011). The menu served for the Russians could be following:

- *Rye bread from local bakery*
- *Fish from the local waters*
- *Local cheeses*

- *Mustamakkara- sausage*
- *Local wines and beers*
- *Vegetables grown locally*
- *Mushrooms and berries from local forests*
- *Locally hunted meat*

Shopping is one of the favorite activities for Russian tourists when having a holiday in Tampere region (Figure 12, p. 45). They like to purchase high-level products, which are long lasting and practical which is why they value Finnish products (Venäläisen matkailijan asiakapalveluopas 2004, 6). As the results of the questionnaire shows, Russians would like to have organized trips to Ikea and Idea Park (Figure 13, p. 48). From the Ideapark the Russians can buy luxury and high-level products. Since Russians value Finnish products there could be visiting for example stores which sells famous Finnish design like Marimekko, Iittala, Finlayson Factory shop, Pentik and Aarikka or places which sell arts, crafts and natural products like Willow Farm (Marjamäen pajutila) in Kangasala, Frantsila Kehäkukka in Hämeenkyrö, Vaihmalan Hovi Interior in Lempäälä and The Yellow Country House (Keltainen talo) in Pälkäne (www.visittampere.fi). Authors own observation is that there should be more souvenir shops because at this moment there are not shops that sell only souvenirs. One option is to widen the supplies of the department stores with the souvenirs or establish new souvenir shops.

Intellectual level should offer learning experiences for the customer, for example learn something new, develop and get new information (Tarssanen 2009, 16).
By telling stories and information about Tampere region offers lot of new interesting information for the Russians. Stories will be unforgettable, if the Russians are living the story themselves. It is essential to bound all the elements to each other with a story, when the experience will become compact and more captivating (Tarssanen 2009, 13-14). The story plot could be about the life of a know person in Tampere region, historical events, life-style of the people in Tampere region or some kind of cultural theme.

Learning experiences and elements of multi- sensory perception could be offered for the Russians by introducing them for example ways how to collect offerings of the nature, prepare food from those ingredients and tasting them. Picking mushrooms and berries from the forests and fishing are mentioned to be one of the activities that could be interested by the Russians. (Kohvakko 2011). Russians could prepare their food themselves starting from getting the food and then enjoying it on a dinner. Farm tourism could also offer these kind of experiences. Farm tourism got some interest among the respondents when they were asked what services they would like to be offered (Figure 13, p. 48). Many Russians from the bigger cities have not seen cows before or how to make bread. These kinds of new experiences can be considered to be exotic among the Russians. (Kohvakko 2011). There are several ways to offer this kind of experiences. Those experiences can be found from everyday life of Finnish people, which we consider to be normal, not exotic at all.

Russian language skills of the personnel and knowledge about Russian culture are essential factor in Interaction. Since Russians do not speak other languages so well (Kohvakko 2011), it is important that all the written information about the services is in Russian. In the actual service situation, it would be good to have even one person, who speaks Russian. The one could be someone from the personnel or then hired guide for the high seasons. Safety is one of the main issues, why Russians value Finland as a holiday resort. Since thefts are part of everyday life in Russia, Russian residents are used that everything is monitored. Russians are used to frauds, so they are careful and will check what they are buying. (Kohvakko, 2011.) In this case the Russian language skills have significant influence. This will enable that the Russian customers get the essential information that is needed beforehand in Russian.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The research is part of project called Tampere – St. Petersburg connection (TASC). The aim of the TASC-project is to create cooperation network between the business life and Research and Development (R&D) Department of TAMK, and establish services to meet the demand of Russian middle class customers traveling from St. Petersburg area to Tampere region.

The aim of the thesis is to research how the services in Tampere region could be developed towards Russian market. Thesis introduces primary- and secondary travel motives of the Russians traveling to Tampere region, which is essential to know when developing the services for the segment. Based on the results of research the authors have made suggestions what services could be offered for the Russians. The information provided by the thesis can be used for further development of the TASC- project.

According to questionnaires the typical Russian traveling to Tampere region is 21 to 40- year- old female, who comes from St. Petersburg. They are in Tampere region for the first time or have been one to three times before. Russians travel mostly with their friends and families, come by their own car and usually stay in Tampere region one to six days. The services are mostly booked through internet, and also the information they search about Tampere region is from the Internet. The main reasons for travelling to Tampere region are shopping opportunities, nature, culture and that it is a new location. Visiting friends and families, wellness and the location are also the main reasons to travel to the region. The most used services during the visit in Tampere region are accommodation, restaurant and shops. Russians would like to be offered inland water cruises, city tours, theme evening- party, organized shopping trips for example to Ikea or Ideapark and wellness services. Discount tickets were also wanted.

Surprising was that according to previous researches typical Russian traveling to Finland is male (Manka 2010), but the research made by the author shows that typical Russian traveling to Tampere region is female. The reason for the result the authors got might be that data was gathered mostly from the department store. Also the respondents from the bus company Tilausmatkat were mostly females. Most used source for booking the services and finding information about Tampere region was internet. This proves that there should more focus on marketing on the internet. Service providers should put a lot more effort on theirs WebPages on marketing. There are not many companies who have WebPages in Russian or even offer services in Russian. The results of the research supports the lack of internet marketing, since only services the Russians used in Tampere region were accommodation, restaurants and shops. This might lead from the fact that they have not found information about other services from internet.

Tampere has all the potential to be upcoming destination in Finland for the Russians. From the results of the questionnaires can assumption be made, that Tampere has something interesting as a new destination. Most of the respondents were in Tampere region at the first time and one of the main reasons to Travel to the region was that it was new destination. Tampere region has good basic services, like many other cities in Finland, but is missing the additional value to offer real experiences.

One of the main reasons for the Russians to travel to Tampere region are nature and culture, but from the results can be seen that they have not found the services yet. Russians might do sightseeing by themselves and see something about the nature and culture, but they are not offered the ways to see them more deeply to get best experience as possible.
Based on the previously mentioned facts about travel motives, the authors started to construct ideas for developing services for the Russian customers in Tampere region. Results from the question about services the Russians would like to be offered gave base for the ideas.

Most wanted services to be offered were cruises on the inland waters of Tampere region, city tours and shopping trips. Common assumption is that Russians travel to Finland during the winter time but the current research is more concentrated on services that can be offered during summer time. Surprising was that most of the Russians did wanted to be offered cruises on the inland water of Tampere region which the authors used as an example in the current thesis. This wanted service can be considered as one of the main findings of the research. The service already exists but the authors have created contents for the service product which meet the needs of the Russian customers. The idea is to combine inland water cruises with shopping in Ideapark completed with good quality of local food and service in Russian.

From Visit Tampere it is possible to book city tours and they have diversified range of tours for tourists (www.visittampere.fi). Adding Russian language to this service would increase the number of Russian customers. If it is not possible to arrange a Russian speak guide, there could be guiding as a playback. Russians are interested on learning about the culture of the destination they travel to. By arranging theme evening parties could be a way to show Finnish culture to the Russians. The party could include Finnish food, music, games and storytelling. One option could be arranging Russian style New Year's party by following the example of case Rantasipi which was mentioned before.

In Tampere region are many small companies which offer locally handmade products. To these places could be organized shopping trips combined with stories about the history and culture of the area.

Wellness services could be added to previously mentioned idea about inland water cruises. Instead of sailing to Lempäälä, there could be a cruise to Spa Eden, Nokia. There is already a boat connection provided by the local cruise company. Additional value could be offered by discount tickets. For example when customer is booking a hotel room or checking in, he/she would get discount tickets to restaurants or shops. This could apply also for the cruises and other activities. Nowadays most of the tourists from Russia are an independent travelers which is proved also by the current research. The services should be tailored especially for this segment; services should be booked beforehand and on the destination.

The results of the research prove the statement that supply of tourism field in Tampere region does not meet the needs of Russians. There is a lot of potential, but it should be tailored to reach the segment. The main problems are language skills, lack of co-operation, lack of marketing and form of the services. Changes will not have to be enormous to reach the segment. Already by providing information and services in Russian will get us closer to the change.

7 SUMMARY

The aim of this research can be considered as succeeded. The research process was long and it was postponed with 6 months because of lack of filled questionnaires. The main idea was to collect all the 60 filled questionnaires during the high season from two hotels in Tampere. The number of respondents from theses two hotels could not provide reliable statistical information to be used in the research. The process of collecting questionnaires was protracted and continued on August 2011. It was very challenging to reach Russian tourists and the authors were not sure where to start to search. Right from the start all the questionnaires should have been collected from Sokos department store since it turned out to have many Russian customers. The authors do not speak any Russian which made the process difficult. It took time to translate the questionnaires from English to Russian. The authors should have planned the process more deeply and consider the structure of the thesis beforehand. Because of this the structure was finding its place during the process.

Regardless of the difficulties, the authors are satisfied on the results of the research, since it brings new interesting aspects about the Russian tourists travelling to Tampere region. The most interesting finding was the Russians interest on inland water cruises. The authors hope is that this information can be used in the TASC-project and for future development of the services in Tampere.

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ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1

Пожалуйста, ответьте на наши вопросы о туристических услугах в Тампере. Нам очень важно Ваше мнение!

Данная анкета – часть исследовательской работы, проводимой студентами Университета прикладных наук г.Тампере. Исследование послужит базой для более крупного проекта. Цель сбора информации – узнать, насколько доступные в Тампере услуги отвечают требованиям и нуждам туристов из России.

1. Пол

Женский ☐
Мужской ☐

2. Возраст

-20 ☐
21-30 ☐
31-40 ☐
41-50 ☐
51-60 ☐
61-70 ☐
-71 ☐

3. Из какого города Вы приехали?

_____

4. Посещали ли Вы ранее регион Тампере?
Если да, то сколько раз?

Не посещал(а) ☐
1-3 раза ☐
4-6 раз ☐
7-10 раз ☐
Более 10 раз ☐

5. С кем Вы путешествуете ?

Друзья	☐
Семья	☐
Партнер	☐
Один (одна)	☐
В группе	☐

6. Продолжительность поездки

1-3 дня	☐
4-6 дней	☐
7-10 дней	☐
Более 10 дней	☐

7. Как Вы приехали в Тампере?

Собственная машина	☐
Автобус	☐
Поезд	☐
Самолет	☐
Чартерный автобус	☐
Паром	☐

8. Как Вы забронировали поездку ?

Интернет	☐
Туристическое агентство	☐
По телефону	☐
Уже на месте	☐

9. Ваша основная причина поездки в Тампере?
Возможен выбор нескольких вариантов.

Возможности шопинга	☐
Встреча с друзьями/родственниками	☐
Бизнес	☐
Природа	☐
Культура (искусство, музыка, музеи и т.д.)	☐
Месторасположение	☐
Цены	☐
Новое туристическое направление	☐
Знакомое туристическое направление	☐
Спорт	☐
Индустрия здоровья и велнесс (спа)	☐

10. Какие услуги Вы бы желали, чтобы предлагались отелями в Тампере?
Возможен выбор нескольких вариантов .

Шопинг туры (например, Икеа, Идеапарк)	☐
Индустрия здоровья и велнесс (массаж, спа и т.д.)	☐
Гала ужин	☐
Вечера живой музыки	☐
Тематические вечера и вечеринки (например, в традиционном финском стиле)	☐
Круизы по озеру Нясиярви	☐
Музейные экскурсии	☐
Обзорные экскурсии по городу	☐
Услуги, связанные с организацией программ на природе	☐
Загородный и фермерский туризм	☐
Членская карта	☐
Купоны на скидки (рестораны, универмаги и т.д.)	☐

Другое , что?

_____

11. Какими услугами вы воспользовались или воспользуетесь во время своего пребывания в Тампере? Можно выбрать несколько вариантов.

Проживание (гостиницы, отели и пр.)	☐
Рестораны	☐
Магазины	☐
Туристическое информационное бюро	☐
Спа	☐
Музеи	☐
Ночные клубы/бары	☐
Обзорные экскурсии	☐
Культурные мероприятия	☐
Специально организованные программы (занятия), например, на природе	☐

12. Где вы нашли информацию о Тампере и имеющихся в городе услугах?

Интернет-страницы. Какие именно?	☐
Друзья	☐
Выставки	☐
Турагентство	☐
Журналы	☐

Другое. Что?

_____

Спасибо за Ваши ответы! и приятного отдыха в Тампере!

ATTACHMENT 2

Please be kind and answer to following questions about travel services in Tampere. Your opinion is very important to us!

The questionnaire is part of the research made by the students of Tampere University of Applied sciences. The research is gathering information to a larger project. The aim is to collect information how the services in Tampere meet the needs of Russian customers."

1. Gender

Female	☐
Male	☐

2. Age

-20	☐
21-30	☐
31-40	☐
41-50	☐
51-60	☐
61-70	☐
-71	☐

3. Hometown

_____

4. Have you visited Tampere/Pirkanmaa region before?
If yes, how many times?

No	☐
1-3 times	☐
4-6 times	☐
7-10 times	☐
More than 10 times	☐

5. Who are you travelling with?

Friends	☐
Family	☐
Partner	☐
Alone	☐

6. Duration of the trip?

1-3 days	☐
4-6 days	☐
7-10 days	☐
More than 10 times	☐

7. How did you travel to Tampere?

By own car	☐
Bus	☐
Train	☐
Airplane	☐
Charter bus	☐

8. How did you book your trip and the services?

Internet	☐
Travel agency	☐
By the phone	☐
On the spot	☐

9. Main reason for travelling to Tampere?
You can choose many options.

Shopping	☐
Visiting friends/relatives	☐
Business	☐
Nature	☐
Culture	☐
Location	☐
Price	☐
New resort	☐
Familiar resort	☐
Sport activities	☐
Wellness (spas)	☐

10. What kind of services would you like to be offered by hotels in Tampere?
You can choose many options.

Shopping trips (e.g. Ikea, Ideapark)	☐
Wellness services (massage, spas etc.)	☐
Gala dinner	☐
Live music- nights	☐
Theme evening parties	☐
Cruises in the inland waters	☐
Museum tours	☐
City tours	☐
Nature program services	☐
Farm tourism	☐
Member card	☐
Discount tickets	☐

Something else, what?

_____

11. What services you have used or will use during your stay in Tampere?
You can choose many options.

Accommodation	☐
Restaurants	☐
Shops	☐
Tourist information office	☐
Spa	☐
Museums	☐
Nightclubs/bar	☐
Sightseeing tour	☐
Cultural events	☐
Organized activities	☐

12. Where did you find information about Tampere and its services?

WebPages, if yes, which one?	☐
Friends	☐
Exhibitions	☐
Travel agency	☐
Magazines	☐

Other, what?

_____

Thank you for your time and enjoy your visit in Tampere!