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**DEVELOPING A CANOE TOUR FOR UPITREK LTD.**

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<p>The thesis was aimed to result in a sound paddling tourism product for the tour operator Upitrek Ltd. This request of product extension was based on the customer demands the company is facing. Therefore Upitrek Ltd. has acted as the commissioning party in this thesis, as the company will be provided with a fully developed tour product.</p> <p>The first section of this work investigates the history and current situation of the sector of water-based tourism, with an emphasis on paddling tourism, based on existing literature resources. This is followed by the introduction to the theoretical framework of tourism product development used in the later following case study. This theoretical framework presents the several layers of a tourism product and their significance in the development process. Furthermore the stages of the development process are explained in detail to provide a foundation for the later carried out development process. Additionally an analysis of paddling tourism in the target market is conducted by using secondary data. The outcome of this analysis reveals the current demand and thus the growth potential of paddling tourism supply.</p> <p>The case study introduced the tour operator Upitrek Ltd. and the Hossa Hiking Area as the location of the paddling tour, before moving on to the actual product development process. In this section a detailed description of the stages of throughout creation of a paddling tour was provided on the foundation of the theoretical framework. The product development process was modified to the case of the company of Upitrek Ltd. This provided the final result of this thesis as being a paddling tour for Upitrek Ltd. which is meeting its current and future customers' demands.</p>	
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## PREFACE

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## APPENDICES

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is strongly influencing today's economy in many countries around the world. According to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO 2011.) tourism is considered to be among those industries in the world which are growing most rapidly. Therefore it is important to understand the various terms used for tourism and its industry.

Throughout the thesis different types of tourism will be addressed. Definitions of the most used types of tourism will be given below. Within the progress of this thesis certain types of tourism will be introduced later in the relevant chapters. Other terms related to tourism will be explained too, as they have great importance in the process of tourism product development.

*Tourism* is the entirety of all activities and occurrences connected with the abandonment of one's centre of life and the stay in other destinations (Gabler Verlag 2011). This connotes the travel of people to places outside their regular environment for purposes other than working activities, which last over a certain period of time. Tourism therefore also includes the provision of facilities and services which enable the people to undertake those travels.

*Water-based tourism* indicates a certain type of tourism, based on activities related to water resources which are carried out by people engaged in tourism (Jennings 2007, 10). These water resources can either be of natural origin such as lakes, rivers and oceans or involve artificial resources such as swimming pools and water fun parks. Water-based tourism can be part of a holiday or the entire holiday is categorized in the sector of water-based tourism, if the main purpose of the holiday is the engagement in water-based activities.

*Recreation* is originated from the Latin expression of renewal, as it indicates the restoration of the individual in non-work times (Jafari et al. 2000, 488-489). Therefore recreation is rather related to short-term activities carried out in the time away from work and does not necessarily include a travel to another destination.

*Experiences* are not limited to tourism activities but also build an essential part of daily life. In relation to tourism experience is considered as the "inner state of the individual, brought about by something which is personally encountered, undergone or lived through." (Jafari et al. 2000, 215). This definition indicates the significance of active participation in tourism ac-

tivities, as it offers the opportunity of gaining versatile experiences and long lasting memories.

The following thesis will include theoretical chapters and a case study of tourism product development. The first chapter will introduce the sector of water-based tourism with its categorisation within the tourism industry, which then leads to the specification of paddling tourism as a type of water-based tourism. Here especially the importance of safety in all paddling tourism activities will be emphasised on as it plays a major role in the provision of activity tourism services.

The next chapter outlines the process of tourism product development. The model of Kotler et al. (2006, 304-315) will be applied to introduce the levels of tourism products. Experiences in tourism are approached in the next part of the chapter as they provide the foundation for most tourism activities in nowadays tourism industry. Hereupon the actual product development process according to Kotlers et al. (2006, 322-336) model will be reviewed and its steps will be introduced in detail. This process will act as a foundation of the later case study of developing a paddling tour product for the Finnish tour operator Upitrek Ltd.

A market analysis of the Finnish paddling tourism market is conducted in the following chapter. It provides the basis for the setting of marketing strategies after the complementation of the product development. The market analysis includes the demand side of international customers on paddling tourism and the supply of these service by Finnish and foreign tourism service providers. Also a future prospect will be included as to give a base for the marketing strategies.

The now following chapter introduces the tour operator Upitrek Ltd. as the beneficiary of the product development and furthermore the Hossa Hiking Area as the location of the product to be. The setting of the paddling tour has great significance insofar as Upitrek Ltd. is maintaining well-developed networks with the local tourism providers in that area enabling the company to operate successfully.

The last chapter consists of the actual product development process. As stated earlier this process is based on the theoretical approach of Kotler et al (2006, 322-336); however it is adjusted to the circumstances of the company of Upitrek Ltd. and the product to be developed. The outcome of this chapter is supposed to be the complete product which in its form holds the ability to be acquired and sold directly by Upitrek Ltd. A detailed product

description will therefore be attached to this thesis, together with the necessary safety instructions for the customers and a calculation of the price of the paddling tour.

The thesis will conclude with a summary of the product development and its prospect of sales success. Moreover the conclusion will include a reflexion by the author of the whole process of developing a tourism product for a tour operator and applying the theoretical models to this practical case study in order to obtain the result of an optimal product.



## 2 WATER-BASED TOURISM

Water-based tourism as part of the overall industry of tourism is interrelated with many forms of tourism. In order to limit the broad field of the industry water-based tourism can be categorized under the sectors of nature-based tourism, sport tourism and adventure tourism, depending on which features of water-based tourism to look at. However it has to be marked that those tourism sectors are strongly related to each other and a clear distinction is not possible. Therefore intersections are inevitable as these different types are all together molding the overall body of tourism.

For understanding water-based tourism activities as a part of nature-based tourism the resource needed for this type of activity is relevant. Water resources are mostly of natural origin and therefore activities relying on these resources can be viewed as part of nature-based tourism. In general it can be said, that all types of tourism which are depending on or carried out in natural resources and environments can be categorized under nature-based tourism. However there exist certain water-based activities which do not necessarily involve natural water resources but rather are conducted on artificial waters. These include swimming in artificial pools and certain types of paddling, like freestyle paddling, which nowadays is often carried out at artificial water parks where the water level can be controlled. These types of water-based activities are not considered as nature-based tourism. (Hudson & Beedie 2007, 173-174.)

Water-based tourism also is part of sport tourism, as the activities carried out are physical exercises for the participants and taking part in these exercises is one main purpose of the travel. Sport tourism is however also including passive participation. This fact is dating back to the Olympic Games in the ancient times. Also in today's sport tourism travelling to a place to watch sport competitions is playing an important role and it is considered as one motivation factor for those tourists to actively engage in sport tourism. Concentrating on water-based tourism there are events such as the America's Cup sailing race which attract many visitors each year. Those are considered as passive sport tourists as they do not take part in the sport but the viewing of the competition is their major motivation to undertake the travel. (Neirotti 2003, 1.)

Water-based tourism is related to adventure tourism in many ways, depending on the type of water-based activity carried out. According to Swanbrooke et al. (2003, 31) adventure tourism is consisting of 4 parts of which three constitute as the foundation for the actual adventure. Those three pillars include the travel to and at the location, the location itself and the activities carried out at the location. All together they build the physical frame for the adventure the customer is to experience. This structure also highlights the importance of the different factors of adventure tourism, here building the framework. Especially the setting has a strong influence on whether it is considered as adventure tourism or not. To draw the line from adventure tourism to water-based tourism the location is set in advance as one sort of water resource. Taking the example of lake fishing it can be considered as water-based tourism, if the customer travels to the location for the main purpose to engage in this activity. However as lakes are generally regarded as safe and therefore non-challenging settings for fishing this type of tourism is not likely to be considered as adventure tourism.

To further clarify the idea of adventure tourism Swanbrooke et al. (2003, 33) suggest the division into hard and soft adventure tourism. Soft adventure refers to those kinds of activities undertaken by tourists which do not include a high risk nor require earlier experiences in the activity. Therefore soft adventure is practicable by everybody with a basic physical fitness. Hard adventure in the opposite requires advanced skills of the activity and usually includes risks on a level above the everyday life risk.

## 2.1 History of Water-based Tourism

The origin of water-based tourism can be traced back to the Romans travelling to the sea for relaxing and spending time in and at the water. In later centuries especially in England water-based holidays were performed by the upper class. However at that time the actual activities undertaken did not include direct contact with the water but rather promenading along the coast and going on boating trips. Contrary to that seaside activities in Australia were mainly bathing and other activities in the water already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, though moral concerns restricted those activities several times in history. Due to the geographical features of Australia with many beaches and other facilities activities related to water were common for all social classes. (Jennings 2007, 1-4.)

The demand for a greater diversification of activities grew with the rising amount of people attending the water sides. Other water resources, such as lakes and rivers, were explored for leisure and tourism activities. Especially in the United States of America and European countries water-based tourism started to grow during the industrialisation as these times enabled more people to travel to far away locations and to spend their holidays with water-based activities. The challenge for tourism providers was to build up the necessary infrastructure in the same speed as the demand grew. (Jennings 2007, 1-4.)

As displayed in the earlier presented definition of water-based tourism it includes a great variety of activities which depend on water resources. However not all activities which are conducted as tourism and leisure activities nowadays do have their origin in leisure purposes. In fact many of the activities undertaken in water-based tourism were originally used by indigenous peoples to carry out their daily businesses. (Jennings 2007, 2-4.)

## 2.2 Seasonality

Seasonality is an issue strongly influencing tourism. According to Jafari et al. (2000, 521-522) seasonality is the phenomenon of variations in the numbers of tourism. They divide seasonality into two types, the first being natural seasonality and the second institutional seasonality, which is generally based on the first. Natural seasonality refers to the natural changing of the seasons of the year. As the seasons differ the more the farther a destination is located from the equator, seasonality is an issue especially in tourism destinations in Europe and Northern America. Institutional seasonality is the occurrence of planned holidays and other artificially created seasonal patterns. Many of those relate back to religious issues such as the carnival followed by the Lent in Christian religion. Also pilgrimage is a type of institutional seasonality; however it is also related to natural seasonality. This example shows the great interdependence of institutional and natural seasonality. As mentioned above institutional seasonality is most often based on natural seasonality due to the fact that the natural seasons have long influenced the behaviour of humans. In times where farming was the most important source of income, people had high seasons of work in the spring and autumn, when the grains were planted and harvested. Taking once more the example of pilgrimage this was only possible in the times where the roads were clear of snow and travelling was possible. Thus the institutional seasonality is directly depending on the natural seasons.

In the later development of tourism seasonality often was considered to be a problem to the industry as it restricts the tourism activities to certain periods of the year. Hinch & Higham (2004, 165) indicate several problems caused by seasonality and highlight the fact that these issues mostly concern tourism destinations. As they state the major issue about seasonality at tourism destinations is the unsteady flow of income from this industry due to peak and low seasons. Apart from this economic impact, also environmental and social impacts are illustrated. The arrival of tourists to a destination causes alterations to the routine of the inhabitants of the area and therefore the locals have to adapt to the changing situations. Tourism destinations which are known as such for long times have established sufficient facilities to serve the tourists arriving every year again. From this development also the local population benefits as they are also offered a broader range of services and facilities. However as a restriction many of the services specially created for the peak tourism seasons are operating also solemnly on those. Taking the example of local public transportation, a tourism destination may have set up a well-established system of public transportation opportunities, from which tourists and locals benefit likewise. However as soon as the peak season is over the transportation services are reduced to a minimum and the locals are depending on their own vehicles again. In the long run this process also has environmental impacts, as the lesser public transportation is supplied the more people use their own cars and thus increase the amount of carbon dioxide emissions. This in turn influences the climate in the way as it supports the global warming of the planet.

Other direct environmental impacts are caused by the tourists themselves when they route around the destination. Depending on the number of visitors a destination receives every year the impacts are visible in the destruction of natural environments, such as erosion and water pollution. Also an increasing demand of quality in the tourism destinations has impacts on the natural environment of the destination. Tourists may demand exotic foods which are not available at the destination, thus they have to be brought from far away locations. Another solution would be the attempt of the locals to produce this food locally which can result in loss of valuable natural resources. The example of food can be illustrated in this way that the local food at a tourism destination is being replaced by a certain food which the local farmers try to grow on their land. As this food is not originated in that location it need much fertilizer and this eventually results in barrenly soil, which the farmers are not able to use anymore. (Hinch & Higham 2004, 163-166.)

However Hinch & Higham also provide opinions of seasonality as a solution to the impacts of visitors to tourism destinations. Especially when considering the environmental impacts, low seasons provide the terrain and natural resources time to recover from the excessive strain caused by the visitors. Also the impacts to the sociality of the locals are reduced during low season and the local population is able to concentrate on their own needs without putting all energy to serve the visitors in a way that their expectations are met or even exceeded. This theory indicates the importance of seasonality in tourism to provide times of recovery to the tourism destination in order to be able to prepare for the next peak season. A reduction of seasonality and thus tourism activities on high level equally apportioned over the year may cause serious problems to tourism destinations and may even result in the decline of the attractiveness. (Hinch & Higham 2004, 165.)

### 2.3 Paddling Tourism as Part of Water-based Tourism

Emphasising on paddling tourism there are two types of boats involved. The first is the canoe originally used by the indigenous inhabitants of North America and therefore also known as Canadian canoes. These are open boats which are traditionally moved forward by one person kneeling in them and made for transportation goods and mobility on the rivers and lakes in North America. The other type of boat is the kayak which has its roots in the hunting activities of the Inuit. A traditional kayak is based on a wooden skeleton covered with a skin made of leather or, in later times, of canvas. The paddler sits inside the boat and the cockpit is the only opening in the boat. Also the paddles differ for both types of boats. The canoe is moved with a single-bladed paddle, whereas the kayak is moved by a double-bladed paddle. (Hudson & Beedie 2007, 171.)

The term paddling refers to both kinds of this activity, however also the idiom canoeing is used, though technically it only refers to the activity undertaken in a canoe, whereas kayaking would be the equivalent in a kayak. To avoid confusion the term paddling is going to be used in the further text to refer to the general activity of moving around water resources with either a kayak or a canoe.



**Picture 1.** Canoe with three paddlers. (Matzner, U. 2010.)



**Picture 2.** Kayak for a single paddler. (Matzner, A. 2011.)

The pictures 1 and 2 clarify the differences in appearance between the two types of paddling boats and at the same time provide examples of modern versions of both types of boats.

Much development has taken place in the original activity of paddling over the years through which the activity became also interesting as a leisure activity. The most famous representative of this trend is the explorer John Macgregor, who used a kayak built after the models of those in North America to explore areas from a new perspective. He also spread the word of paddling as an activity for everyone by writing about his expeditions. This led to a growing interest in paddling as a leisure activity and also tourism providers explored paddling for their own purposes. (Hudson & Beedie 2007, 172.)

Nowadays paddling has further developed and many subsections of the activity emerged. One reason for this was the improvement in design and the diversification in materials used for building kayaks and canoes. Also the water resources, on which paddling was conducted, widened and nowadays include basically any type of water resources available. Sea kayaking for an instance is undertaken on the open sea whereas tour paddling is preferably performed on calmer waters such as lakes, rivers or canals. Even artificial water resources evolved to meet the demands of play-boat paddlers. One reason for new facilities emerging especially in developed countries is the lessening use of water transportation of goods and therefore the less frequent utilisation of canals and other artificial waterway systems. In those countries where paddling as a means of leisure or tourism, mainly central Europe and the United Kingdom, has developed greatly over the last decades various types of facilities were developed to meet the needs of the paddlers. These are camp sites and boat launching places for sea kayaking or tour paddling, canoe rentals at lakes and smaller streams and attractive landscapes in combination with the above mentioned infrastructure. However according to Gralki et al. (2005, 23) the current situation in Germany is not meeting the demand and many paddlers are missing sufficient facilities which enable them to take part in the activity of paddling as leisure or tourism.

According to Hudson (2003, 15-17) paddling tourism belongs to the sector of adventure tourism. He differentiates between canoeing tourism as soft and kayaking tourism as hard adventure. This is mainly due to the different water resources on which the activities are carried out. While canoeing is often related to lakes and shallow rivers, kayaking is also associated with whitewaters and oceans, such as sea kayaking. Canoeing is generally considered to be the light version of paddling as beginners are easily able to handle a canoe after a short

time of practise. Thus kayaking often is regarded as the advanced type of paddling, which is also why most of the canoe rentals actually rent out only canoes rather than kayaks. This is also related to the risk management of paddling tourism. Canoe rentals are often located along lakes or small rivers which enables the participants to enjoy a considerably safe outing. As people renting canoes are generally regarded as beginners of the activity, the service provider is attempted to subject them to the lowest risk possible. However as stated before paddling as a type of adventure tourism is likely to involve a certain level of risk as this is one of the significant features of adventure tourism. As Swanbrooke et al. (2003, 169) state tour operators and other tourism service providers are not able to eliminate the risk of tourism in total. However they are expected to offer safe adventure tourism and thus must take into consideration the various risks which might occur in the activities of paddling tourism. Tourism providers are faced with the challenge to identify the expected level of risk of their provided product and ensure the safety of their customers to the level of risk they are put in.

In addition to the risk to the customers, tourism service providers are also faced the risks of financial loss and loss of reputation in cases of unsuccessful risk control. This can lead to the loss of customers and therefore has negative impacts on the company operations. Thus a sound risk management has to be developed to assure the minimisation of any risk connected with the service provided. (Swanbrooke et al. 2003, 169-170.)

Paddling tourism in this case is facing a number of risks to the customers and therefore also to the service provider. According to the British Canoe Union (2008) the general risks associated with paddling tourism can be categorized into three dimensions. The following list further illustrates those three dimensions (British Canoe Union 2008):

- **Lack of Knowledge:** *Insufficient knowledge of handling the equipment, objective assessment of situations is not possible*
- **Over-estimation of Ability:** *Especially applying to young and inexperienced paddlers wanting to show off*
- **Carelessness:** *Knowledge of safety has to be regarded at all times, concerns experts and beginners likewise*

Depending on the situation the risks resulting from those categories can cause serious damage to people and property. Therefore tour operators have to ensure to provide customers



with sufficient information about the activity and the tour beforehand and provide introduction an introduction to the activity of paddling prior to the start, if seen to be necessary. Furthermore tour operators are required to provide their customers with all necessary information regarding safety during the paddling holidays possible. Also an inquiry about experiences in paddling can help the tour operator to find a suitable product for their customers and therefore ensures the minimising of risks for the customers.

The Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency has developed safety guidelines for adventure services, which are to be taken into consideration when offering those services. Moreover they state the necessity of drawing up a safety document which enables the service provider to ensure the correct handling of risk assessment. Therefore the company is obliged to inform the customers about possible risks involved in the activity and give instructions on the right behaviour which minimizes the risk for them. (Tukes 2010b.)

### 3 TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Tourism products are generally seen as services as they do not consist of one tangible product the customer is purchasing but rather a combination of several services. The characteristics of services include the intangibility, the need for co-production by the customer and also the non-ability of storing a service. These features make each service unique and much dependent on the circumstances under which the service is purchased and performed. Thus the tourism experience to the customer is also very much dependent of the service performance. (Singh 2008, 129.)

For the development of tourism services it is reasonable to differentiate between the various branches of the tourism industry. The following Table 1 presents one way of differentiation among the sectors with exemplary types of tourism businesses for each sector.

**Table 1.** Sectors of the tourism industry (Seaton & Bennett 2000, 112.)

<b>Tourism branch</b>	<b>Company examples</b>
Accommodation & Catering	Hotel, campsite, restaurant, Bed & Breakfast
Attraction	Amusement park, science centre, events
Travel Organisers	Tour operator, booking centre, travel agent
Destination Organisation	local tourist board, municipal, national tourist office

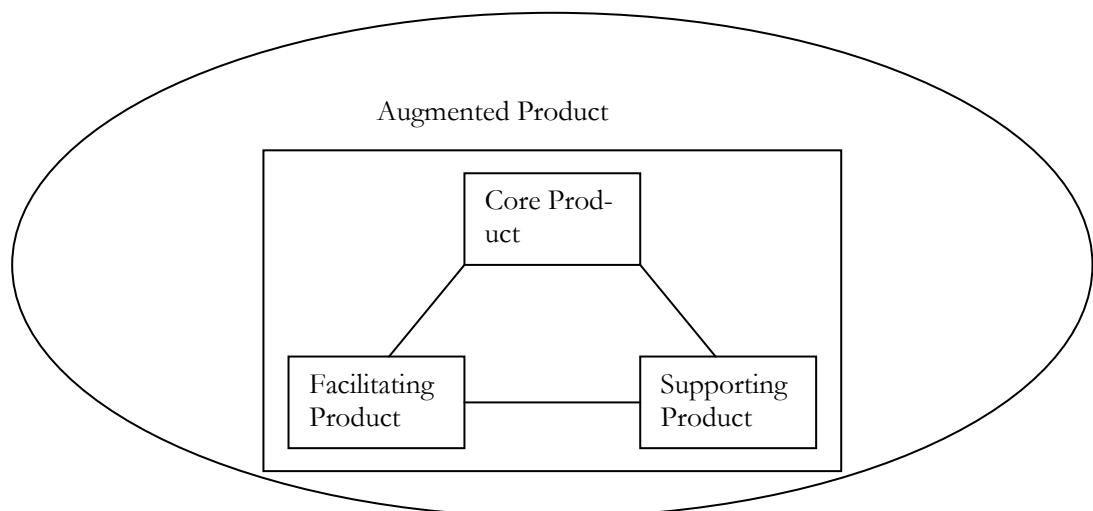
According to this table the company of Upitrek Ltd. it is most likely to be positioned among the branch of travel organisers. However the company's operations are strongly based on networking and co-operation with other tourism branches. Most of the tours offered by Upitrek Ltd. rely on the co-operation with the local tourism service providers such as accommodation businesses or other tour operators guiding the tours. Also the necessary equipment for the tours is mostly rented by Upitrek Ltd. from other tourism service providers. Thus Upitrek Ltd. can rather be considered as a combination of an assemblage of different tourism branches based on the business of a tour operator.

Taking the differentiation of tourism branches as a foundation the tourism industry is clearly one of the more complex and thus attention has to be paid to the right approach to tourism product development. As products are considered to have both a symbolic and a physical side it is important to know both features of the product before bringing it to the market. Here the tourism provider has to be aware of the fact that the perception of the tourism product from the side of the customer is very likely to differ from the tourism providers' point of view. In other words the tourism provider offering the product knows about the physical as well as the symbolic features of the product whereas the customer might see only one of the features and decided upon that whether the product is meeting the expectations or not. It therefore can be said that the perception of the customer is playing a key role when considering the success of a tourism product. (Seaton & Bennett 2000, 113.)

### 3.1 Product Levels

There are different approaches towards the features of the product to be developed. The above mentioned dimensions of symbolic and physical sides are one approach. The more common classification of the different parts of a product includes at least the core product and the augmented product. However depending on the source of literature there are other parts facilitating the core product. In this product development process the model of Kotler et al. (2006, 304-315) will be applied. The figure below introduces their idea of the tourism product concept.

**Figure 1.** Product levels (Kotler et al. 2006, 305.)



According to Kotler et al. (2006, 304-305) the core product is accompanied by the facilitating and the supporting products whereas the augmented product provides the overall setting of the product. The core product is why the customer decided to purchase the overall product and does not refer to the physical but rather the symbolic feature of the product. The facilitating product could also be described as the access to the core product as it is providing the necessary facilities which make it possible for the customers to approach the core product. Tourism product providers need to define the facilities necessary to access the core product and must include those in the overall product. Unlike the facilitating product, supporting products are not necessarily part of the end product. However core products often include also supporting products as they add extra value to the end product and therefore can be a means to gain competitive advantages towards similar products on the market.

In addition to the above described end product there is the augmented product which can be described as the means how the end product is offered to the customer. This means includes multiple parts which all must be correctly applied to the core product in order to develop a successful end product which is attracting the customer. The different parts are the accessibility, the atmosphere of the tourism experience, the co-production and the interaction among the customers and among customers and tourism providers. Especially the factor of interaction between customers holds potential of conflicts or unfulfilled customer expectations. As different customers have various expectations towards the product and also to other customers it is challenging for the product provider to reconcile all those expectations in order to leave everybody with successful experiences. The augmented product can be summed up to the frame in which the core product is presented to the customer and therefore this frame is the part of the product which leaves the greatest impression of the product. Thus the success and the experiences of the customers from the tourism product are highly dependent on the augmented product. (Kotler et al. 2006, 307-315.)

### 3.2 Experiences in Tourism

The augmented product in tourism is related to the tourism experience the customer is receiving from the product. In recent years the expectations of tourists towards their holiday activities have shifted so the today's expectations cover holiday experiences lasting much longer than the actual holiday. In order to meet this new trend tourism service providers

have to adapt their products to these expectations and allow the customers to actively take part in the creation of the holiday experience. This is done by varying means, strongly depending on the type of holidays the customer is undertaking. The overall demands to today's holidays are the gaining of new knowledge, participation and interaction with the local community visited same as with other customers (Arsenault 2004, 3-9).

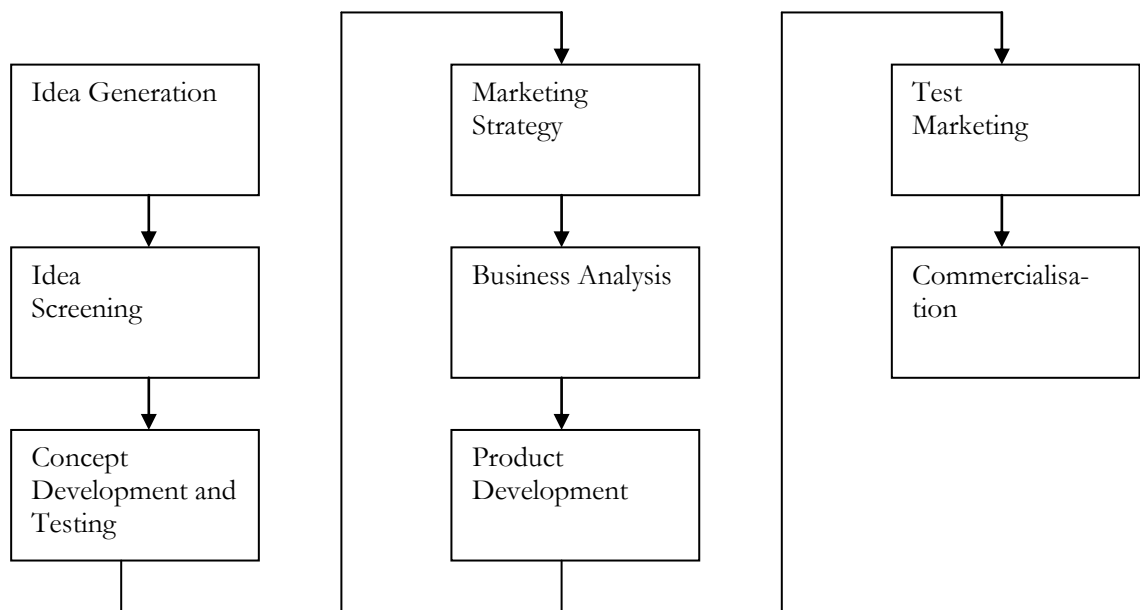
Thus the standardized holiday package has served its time and new tourism products must include features which will satisfy the above mentioned wishes for experiences. This is not always a simple task for the tourism service provider as even in a group tour with a specific theme, the customers' expectations may vary. Taking the example of a bird-watching tour in the Finnish Archipelago there might be customers participating who are looking forward to gain and deepen their knowledge about sea birds while other customer are rather taking part because they expect to see some rare birds they are not able to watch in their home place. This example displays, that tourism service providers shall try to include personal experiences to each single customer during their holiday experience. That is best done by offering a great variety of experiences throughout the holiday to make sure everybody get on their money's worth.

Offering experience holidays to customers is often easier for tourism service providers who offer guided group packages. This is due to the ability of the guide to provide the customers with in-depth knowledge and lead them to extraordinary places where the average tourist is not able to go. Moreover group tours often include several individuals which have not met before the starting of the tour and therefore they are encouraged to actively get acquainted with each other and to exchange their expectations and experiences. Apart from that also tourism product providers offering self-guided tours for small groups such as a group of friends are able to provide their customers experiences. These can include the accommodation at local hosts and therefore the interaction with the local community. Furthermore the itinerary can include activities which offer the chance of intercultural encounter with other travellers in the area or with the local community. As one of the most effective means of providing holiday experiences is the supply of memorabilia. Those are personalized souvenirs which the customers receive after the holiday and the most common ideas are photo disks or albums from the activities undertaken. However especially customers of self-guided tours are more likely to receive other kind of memorabilia, which rather create memories of the area visited. (Arsenault 2004, 10-13.)

### 3.3 Product Development Process

Kotler et al. (2006, 322-336) highlight the importance of a systematic approach of the product development process in order to ensure a successful product. This process involves several steps which will be illustrated in the figure below.

**Figure 2.** Product Development Process (Kotler et al. 2006, 323.)



In the process of product development the company is required to gather product ideas to enlarge the product range. Depending on the company, the Research and Development department might carry out the whole process of product development. However smaller companies are not likely to have those capacities and therefore the idea generation has to be performed in a simpler way. A common way is the brainstorming method which results in a wide selection of product ideas. The next step of idea screening investigates the feasibility of the ideas generated and therefore separates out only those ideas which seem reasonable in terms of financial resources and personnel capacities. Another important factor determining the feasibility of a product is whether the product matches with the company profile. Also the potential target group has influence to the product at this stage as the company has to decide whether the new product will attract the same target group it is addressing with existing products or rather attract new customers with the new product. This decision directly relates to the stage of concept development and testing as the target group determines the

foundational features of the product. Testing the concept at this early stage allows the company to adjust major issues concerning the overall product concept. However companies are not obliged to test their products but instead can try to rely on their business experiences to forecast the customers' opinions of the product. In this case the chance and the consequences of failure to the company have to be considered whether to be reasonable risks. After having created the initial product, the next step would be creating marketing strategies which indicate the way the product will be entering the market. At this stage the company chooses its market position and, however indirectly, explores its competitiveness, enhanced by the new product. Moreover the company is required to build up a short- and long-term plan of company goals in regard to profit aims and market position. Before the product can enter the development stage, the company's past operations have to be investigated to ensure the product will actually act as a valuable enrichment to the company rather than weakening its market position.

Once the business analysis has proven to gain competitive advantages through the new product it can enter the stage to the actual development process. According to Kotler et al. (2006, 332-333) at this stage the yet intangible product gains its tangible shape which then builds the core product. Hence the other parts of the end product, as stated earlier are yet to be included in the product. This stage is significant in terms of adding value to the product and providing experiences to the customers in order to meet and possibly exceed their expectations. Though the stage of product development is the most crucial phase within the whole process of product development, as its result is the main idea of the process, the last two stages of test marketing and commercialisation are required to bring the product to the target group. At the stage of test marketing the earlier mentioned marketing strategies have to prove their correctness on the actual market. If this test turns out to be unsuccessful the product is very likely to be a failure as well. Thus the outcome of the tests provides the company with a valuable tool to estimate whether to actually bring the new product to the market or not on the stage of commercialisation. Also the time and the means of putting the product on the market have to be considered at this last stage. Only when all decisions have carefully been done the company is ready to launch their new product.

## 4 MARKET ANALYSIS OF PADDLING TOURISM IN FINLAND

The market of paddling tourism in Finland consists of the supply and the demand side. In order to understand both sides of the market an analysis of each will be conducted. Roberts and Hall (2001, 185) identify two general characteristics of supply and demand at niche markets:

**Demand side:** Customer segmentation into specified groups

**Supply side:** Differentiation of products and services from competitors

Though these characteristics are limiting the total market of the tourism industry, the market of paddling tourism in Finland can be considered as being a niche market. This will be proven by the analysis of the demand side later on. The differentiation of tourism products and services is a necessary matter to be able to gain competitive advantages. Therefore tourism service providers have to know their competitors and the products and services offered by those. Also the tourism providers on the market have to categorize the customers in order to ensure to meet the customers expectation with the product developed.

### 4.1 The Finnish Supply of Paddling Tourism

The analysis of the supply side will mainly concentrate on Finnish tour operators, as they are considered to be the direct competitors of Upitrek Ltd. However to analyse the market situation of paddling tourism in Finland also foreign paddling tourism providers will be shortly analysed to identify possible competitive advantages of those. The Finnish Tourism Board FTB (Räsänen 2004) conducted a research of paddling and other outdoor activity tourism in Finland. The result stated a sound amount of paddling, hiking and biking tourism; however the quality of these products do not meet the customers' expectations. Another finding of FTB was the insufficient source of information for the potential customers. Finnish paddling, hiking and biking tourism products do not find their way to the customers due to the lack of experience of the tourism providers. This is also reflected in the fact that Finnish tour operators do not know the expectations of their customers and therefore are not qualified to supply matching services and products. The only exception of this fact is Finnish



Lapland, which is highly developed in terms of tourism as it is one of Finland's major tourism destinations especially among foreign tourists. Other parts of Finland, such as Eastern Finland, have great potential in particular for paddling tourism, which is still underdeveloped in a region with high potential. According to FTB the development of paddling tourism is the key factor of tourism development in Eastern Finland. Though tour operators have to overcome the obstacles of marketing the destination rather than the actual product they are providing. (Räsänen 2004.)

International tour operators offering paddling tourism in Finland are mostly located in Germany or in Russia. These are generally offering at least the same amount of sole paddling holidays in Finland, whereas generally tour operators in central Europe mostly offer paddling tourism in Finland as a part of multi-activity holidays. The common duration of paddling tours consist of several days which supports the fact that paddling tourism is rather to be considered a type of single-activity holiday. Considering the travel distance to the destination tour operators in central Europe, other than Germany, still have not been able to discover the full potential of Finland as a full-value destination for paddling tourism. As most tour operators in central Europe are offering paddling tours on easy or moderate level there is still a great potential to be discovered by this market. However it is stated that the main competitors of Finland in terms of paddling tourism are the neighbouring countries Sweden and Norway due to the simpler arrival possibilities, the distinct variation in the landscape, especially in Norway, and the wider range of paddling products available. (Add Value Research Finland Ltd. 2011, 9-15.)

## 4.2 Customers Demand of Paddling Tourism

Considering the general demand of paddling tourism in Finland the Border Survey Interview conducted by FTB (Tilastokeskus 2009, 52) states that merely 1 % of foreign visitors participated in paddling tourism while on holidays in Finland in 2008. The most popular area for this type of tourism is Central Finland. One reason for that can be found in the short distances between natural and urban environment, as this situation is preferred by the common paddling tourist in Finland. Moreover the well-developed infrastructure contributes to this situation. Thus the areas of Eastern Finland, including the Saimaa Lake area and the Kainuu

region with its versatile waterways, are not yet popular as paddling tourism destinations due to their lack of fully developed tourism infrastructure and nearby towns.

FTB conducted a research on the potential customers of different types of nature tourism (Innolink Research Ltd. 2010) among Europeans and identified several facts about paddling tourists in Finland. First of all Germans and British are the most common paddling tourists in Finland, whereas French and Dutch are rather taking part in other outdoor activity on their holidays in Finland. The general image of Finland as a tourism destination consists of the values of safety, unspoilt nature, peace and tranquillity.

Generally paddling tourism customers can be classified into several types. Hudson & Beedie (2007, 178) have categorized the paddlers into those renting boats without previous experiences, those paddling on their own, mostly with their own boats and those joining guided tours. Another categorisation was done by Gralki et al. (2005, 42) on basis of the German paddling tourism market. They differentiated between canoe club members, boat owners without canoe club membership and those renting canoes. FTB categorized paddling tourists into “devotees, independent customers and package tour customers” (FTB. 2004, 2). As in Germany many paddling tourists are part of a canoe club or own kayaks and canoes by themselves, this situation does not match with the average paddling tourist to Finland. Therefore the classification of Gralki et al. will be disregarded for the further record. The classifications of Hudson & Beedie and this one of FTB however concur in the main idea and can be merged to the four types of

- **Beginners**, *renting boats without experiences*
- **Individuals**, *organising tour and paddling independently*
- **Group tourists**, *joining guided package tours*
- **Enthusiasts**, *relying on own equipment and skills*

According to FTB (2004, 2) the group of individuals and enthusiasts can currently not be separated. This is caused by the tour operators’ unawareness of the different needs of those two customer groups. Generally paddling tourists in Finland are no regular canoeists, hence paddling is rather considered as a holiday activity. A common motivation in all categories is the thrill seeking and wish for adventure. However the level of adventure differs between

the members of those groups. Sole paddlers are considered to have much experience however prefer to stay on relatively calm waters and look for affinity with the environment rather than thrill adventure. Those paddling in groups are very likely to look for the ultimate adventure and spending quality time with friends or family is one more motivator for them. (Hudson & Beedie 2007, 177-179. Innolink Research Ltd. 2010, 23.)

Approximately a quarter of all paddling tourists in Finland prefer self-organised tours. Considering the earlier statement of combining individuals and enthusiasts, this fact illustrates the different needs of the customers as the number of paddling tourists using tourism services may be less than the 25 % of self-organised tour paddlers. However a total amount of 16 % is engaging in packaged paddling tours when on holidays in Finland. The most common type of paddling tourism therefore is a tour undertaken with friends, paddling several days on rivers with a moderate level of difficulty. (Innolink Research Ltd. 2010, 11, 23.)

As Innolink Research Ltd. (2010, 31) further found out in their international nature tourism research customers engaging in any kind of outdoor activities during their holidays have the tendency of combining several types of activities. Therefore multi-activity holidays are much preferred by customers. Regarding paddling tourism customers to Finland tend to prefer a combination of paddling and biking or hiking activities during their holidays. However those visiting Finland for paddling tourism stated to be interested as well in cultural tourism and cottage holidays in summer and winter activity tourism. Therefore the typical paddling tourist can be considered as a rather active person interested in discovering the country by various activities in natural environments in combination with cultural encounters.

### 4.3 Prospect of Paddling Tourism

As one result of the still high degree of unrenownedness of Finland as a paddling tourism destination FTB created a development strategy for paddling tourism 2009-2013 (Björilin et al. 2009.). This development strategy provides an overview of the current situation of paddling tourism in Finland and at the same time states general aims for the paddling tourism to be achieved by 2013. According to this development strategy there is a number of well-developed paddling tourism products available; however their chances on the international market are weak due to the lack of marketing experiences of the tour operators. Finnish

paddling tourism providers are requested to investigate their customers' demands in detail to develop sufficient marketing strategies for each customer group. Also product qualities have to be adjusted to a general standard that customers can be sure to obtain the level of quality they are expecting from the products. Therefore networking between the different service providers is favourable as it provides benefits for the supply and the demand side alike.

In 2006-2007 the University of Applied Sciences of Mikkeli carried out a project on small tour operators in Finland offering paddling tourism. The aim of the project was to gather the various paddling tourism providers to strengthen their position on the market and to enable them within this network to enter also other markets. Therefore the outcome of the project was a network of tour operators from different parts of Finland which provide their service together on one common webpage where all paddling tourism products are assembled and offered in Finnish, English and German language. After the project itself was completed no new attempt to update the webpage was made, although it would provide a reasonable foundation for the expansion and improvement of the paddling tourism in Finland. (FTB 2008.)

As the German-speaking countries are the origin to most of the paddling tourists in Finland, the tour operators are required to strengthen their position on those markets in particular. The two main competitive countries to Finland, identified by FTB (Björlin et al. 2009, 8), are Sweden and Poland, which both have the advantage of closer distance to the middle European market. This threat to Finnish paddling tourism has to be overcome by providing high quality products and holiday opportunities for paddling tourists and at the meantime strengthen the national networking of the tourism suppliers. In addition to the above stated development strategy of paddling tourism in Finland, FTB also developed an action plan on the same topic to provide tour operators and other suppliers involved in this type of tourism with concrete means of improving and strengthening their business operations. Moreover the 'Outdoor Finland' program of FTB, dealing with outdoor activity tourism in Finland, created on-topic product guidelines to be applied by tour operators when developing new paddling tourism products. Those will be also applied for the product development process in this thesis.

## 5 PRODUCT ENVIROMENT

The following chapter introduces the company Upitrek Ltd. as the beneficiary of the paddling tour to be developed. Apart from a general description of the company and its operations also the importance of co-operation with other tourism service providers will be highlighted. Especially tourism service providers in the Hossa Hiking Area are an issue to Upitrek Ltd. as most of its business operations are based on these networks. Therefore the Hossa Hiking Area will also be introduced as a national hiking area of Finland. Furthermore the area as a tourism destination will be presented and especially the versatility of tourism service providers will be emphasised on.

### 5.1 Upitrek Ltd.

Upitrek Ltd. is a tour operator located in the region of Kainuu. The company is a family run business founded in 2000. The main issue of the company was always the environmental aspect of its tours as the programmes offered are described as unmotorized treks. The tours offered include various types of activities and most tours are guided group tours. An exemplary tour of Upitrek Ltd. would consist of 7 days trekking or skiing from cabin to cabin. The company started off with a cross-country skiing tour along the Russian border and this tour is still included in the program range. According to Urpo Heikkinen (2011a), the owner of the company, this tour is still considered the most popular among all tours offered by the company.

During the peak season Upitrek Ltd. is employing several wilderness guides to guide the groups. Also trainees from the Wilderness Guide courses join the tours as assistant guides, alongside the other guides. In winter 2011 one internship placement was offered to the author of this thesis not only as an assistant tour guide but also to support the office work. This engagement of students from the Kajaani University of Applied Sciences might be continued in the future.

The company of Upitrek Ltd. has been providing tours with guaranteed departures. These tours take place whether there are only two participants or the maximum of twelve. The company has created a high level of customer satisfaction. Those tours not having guaran-

teed departure dates are arranged on demand for individual customers or groups. (Heikkinen. 2011a.)

As Upitrek Ltd. is offering unmotorized tours in Finnish nature, the company also has an environmental policy stating their attitude towards environmentally friendly travel. This aspect is important to the company; however according to the feedback of the customers this emphasis is not clearly known among the customers (Heikkinen. 2011b). The statement of environmental policy is available at the web pages of the company yet only few customers book the tours directly and therefore merely a small number of customers are aware of the attitudes of the company towards environment.

As stated above most of the tours are sold via other tour operators or travel agencies. When choosing suitable resellers of the tours the company is accurately inspecting the reseller's profile in order to ensure that Upitreks tours match with the product range of the reseller. Furthermore resellers who themselves have set environmental policies or offer nature friendly tourism products are preferred for reselling the products of Upitrek Ltd.

## 5.2 Hossa Hiking Area

Hossa Hiking Area is, together with the neighbouring Kylmäluoma Hiking Area, the first national hiking area in Finland, founded in 1979. The Hossa Hiking Area is located at the northernmost point of the Kainuu region, close to the Russian border. The area consists of approximately 90 square meters. Hossa Hiking Area holds some of the oldest rock paintings in Finland and other traces of human presence in the area since approximately 9.000 years. Also relicts from later settlement, such as timber camps and remnants of log floating show the long history of man's utilisation of the natural resources in the area. The hiking area is managed by Metsähallitus, the Finnish Forest and Park Service administration. The forests of the area are partly put under protection so that economical utilisation of the natural resources is conducted in approximately 50% of the forests of Hossa. Most of the hiking area belongs to the European network of Natura 2000 sites, which are statutory protected areas defined by the European Union. Therefore forestry is applied in a considerate way which protects the rare species and biotopes of the area. (Seppänen. 2008, 4. Metsähallitus 2011b. Metsähallitus 2009.)

At the GoExpo 2011 Outdoor Fair in Helsinki, the Hossa Hiking Area was voted the Trekking Destination of the Year 2011. The topic of this year's competition was water excursion destination and Hossa Hiking Area, offering a vast selection of water excursion opportunities, won against 10 other areas from all over Finland. As the hiking area is also well known for its fishing opportunities, insiders call it the fisherman's paradise. According to Metsähallitus (2011b) the tourism service providers of the area started very early to develop a well organised network which provides all necessary facilities to meet the demands of visitors.

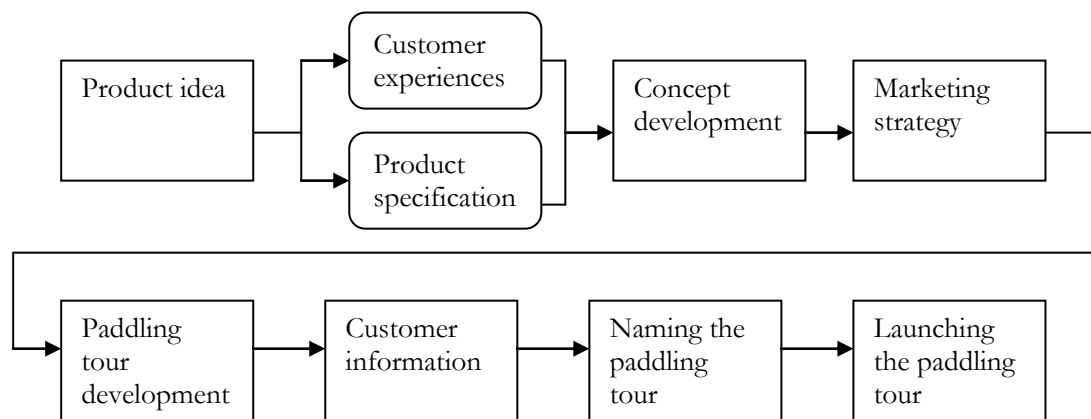
The annual number of visitors to the hiking area amounts to approximately 50,000, making it the number one destination for nature tourism in the region of Kainuu (Metsähallitus 2011b). Moreover the number indicates the well-developed tourism infrastructure, as Hossa provides a great diversity of nature tourism services, including program services, accommodation and catering and nature experience facilities such as marked hiking trails. The main motives of people visiting the Hossa Hiking Area are therefore based on the natural environments such as the landscapes and the activities which can be conducted within these environments. Many visitors also come to Hossa to simply enjoy its natural attractions. Therefore nature observation, landscape viewing and walking are among the most popular activities carried out by visitors in the Hossa Hiking Area. (Seppänen 2008, 18.)

The area also has a visitor centre available, which is located centrally at the Öllöri Lake. The visitor centre of the Hossa Hiking Area is managed by Metsähallitus, the Finnish Forestry and Park Service administration. Metsähallitus has rented out the operation of the visitor centre to Hossanretki Ltd., a company offering different services at the visitor centre and in the entire hiking area. Those include the catering for the rental cabins, reception for the camp sites, equipment rental, and information material provision about the area. Moreover visitors can purchase fishing licences same as souvenirs and basic food stuff at the visitor centre. The visitor centre holds several exhibitions and also offers conference facilities in an auditorium. Additionally the company is a local tour operator offering nature group tours in the Hossa Hiking Area. The co-operation of Upitrek Ltd. and Hossanretki Ltd. will be mainly used for the on-site serving of the customers. On behalf of Upitrek Ltd. Hossanretki Ltd. will provide the rental equipment to the customers of the paddling tour and also take care of the transfer to the starting and from the end point of the route.

## 6 DEVELOPING A PADDLING TOUR

For developing the paddling tour as a product for the tour operator Upitrek Ltd. the product development of Kotler et al. (2006, 322-336) illustrated earlier will generally be applied. However changes to the original process are likely to appear when adopting the theory to the case of Upitrek Ltd. As the idea was generated before the start of this thesis this stage will not be included in the further text. The same applies to the stage of idea screening. This is due to the statement of Upitrek Ltd. (2011c) that customers of its tours demanded canoeing products. Hence the process of product development is demand-driven and certain features of the product are predetermined.

**Figure 3.** Adapted product development process. (Kotler et al. 2006, 323. Modified by U. Matzner 2011)



The actual product development process starts at the stage of concept development, as can be seen from the figure above. In addition to the original process structure provided by Kotler et al. (2006), this case includes two additional steps. The construction of the paddling tour makes it relevant for the tour operator to provide sufficient information to the customers. Therefore an emphasis was put on customer information in this development process. The other crucial issue is the name of the product as it has great influence on the selling success. Thus it will be included as another stage of the product development process. Furthermore as the product itself contains different levels, as shown earlier, the paddling tour product will be split into these levels as well.



## 6.1 Product Idea

The product idea to be developed to a full product is a multi-day paddling tour. As the company operates mainly in the Hossa Hiking Area the location of the paddling tour is set there as well. Moreover Upitrek Ltd. has developed valuable networks with the local tourism providers over the years and as the paddling tour will strongly rely on those networks, it adds benefits to both, Upitrek Ltd. and the local providers alike. The networking strategy enables Upitrek Ltd. to sell new products without great investments, as the required equipment and facilities are available from the networking partners. Those in turn benefit from an increase of visitors to the area and thus higher income.

Before starting the product develop process the different product levels have to be clarified in order to completely understand the whole framework of the product. When developing a tourism product it is essential that all product levels are taken into consideration as they all are part of the end product. Tourism service providers thus are required to set up the levels of their new product to be developed to ensure they provide a sound product which meets the expectations of their customers.

### 6.1.1 Product Specification

According to Kotler et al. (2006, 304-307) the core product is what the customer is actually paying money for. In the case of the paddling tour the core product is an active hiatus in the Finnish wilderness. This corresponds with the motivations of tourists engaging in paddling activities during holidays as stated earlier they are seeking adventure in natural environments. This indicates the longing for breaking out of the daily routines which will be achieved by participating in this paddling tour.

The facilitating product for the tour is versatile as it consists of the enduement with equipment for the paddling tour, such as the boats and the transportation to the start and from the end point. Furthermore the facilitating product includes the provision of information about the route. Therefore the facilitating product enables the customers to engage in the paddling tour product.

In consultation with Upitrek Ltd. the supporting product for this paddling tour is an extra day of activity. This will be a day of hiking during the tour, which enables the customers to explore the area from a different perspective and also to discover the vast opportunities of hiking in the area. Hence this extra day adds value to the tour and also provides an opportunity of a rise in interest in the area which then can be a motivator to the customers to come back another time for a hiking tour. Thus also the service providers benefits from the supporting product as they provide a foundation for customer loyalty.

### 6.1.2 Customer Experiences at the Paddling Tour

The last level of the product is the augmented product. This will be combined with the customer experiences as both add value to the end product and are essential for providing long lasting memories of the holiday to the customers. One aspect of the augmented product and the customer experiences alike is the interaction between visitors and the local community. As the paddling tour is taking place in the remote Hossa Hiking Area and there is no guide involved in the tour, the potential interaction of the visitors and locals is minimal. In order to provide the customers of the paddling tour with a chance of interaction with the locals the tour includes a lunch opportunity at the visitor centre. The centre is not only an attraction for the visitors of the area but also locals gather here regularly. Another benefit of this lunch is the opportunity for the visitors to gain knowledge about the area as the visitor centre holds changing exhibitions about the area. Hence this fact serves the demand of the customers to broaden their knowledge during their vacation.

Another aspect of customer experiences during their holidays is the participation in activities. The paddling tour provides excellent opportunities for this. As stated earlier, in the industry of tourism services are more likely to be sold to the customers than tangible products. Therefore the co-production by the customer plays an important role in the purchase of the service. In the case of the paddling tour the customers are able to experience the holiday only if they are willing to actively co-produce the service. This is done by partaking in the tour itself but also the experiences of preparing the food at an open fire or setting up the accommodation each day anew is part of the overall experience the customer gains on this tour.

The last part of experiences is the provision of memorabilia by the tourism service provider. This feature allows the customers to keep long lasting memories of the tour and provides the tour operator Upitrek Ltd. with a tool to maintain customer loyalty. This is due to the fact that customers whose expectations towards a holiday were exceeded are likely to return to take part in another tour of the same company. Therefore Upitrek Ltd. would be well advised to provide some sort of memorabilia which enables the customers to keep lasting memories of the paddling tour. A suggestion would be the typical Finnish wooden cup called “Kuksa”, as it represents an important tool for the Finns on their versatile outdoor activities. This cup would be given to the customers in the beginning of the tour that they are able to use it already during the tour when enjoying coffee or tea prepared over an open fire. This also provides them to experience and take part in the Finnish culture during their paddling holidays in Finland.

## 6.2 Concept Development

The product idea, given by Upitrek Ltd., is a multi-day canoe tour in the Hossa Hiking Area. The reason for choosing this destination is the well-developed network the company is maintaining with the local tourism providers. During an interview with Urpo Heikkinen (2011a), the owner of Upitrek Ltd., he displayed his idea of the general frame of the canoe tour. According to his opinion the tour to be developed shall be a self-guided canoe tour along the waterways of Hossa. The decision to be a self-guided tour is based on the fact that the tour in this way does not require much effort to be implemented and also the absence of a guide during the tour will enable Upitrek Ltd. to offer the tour at lower-cost, in opposite to guided tours. Also the tour can be tailored to the wishes of the customers and therefore attracts a wider range of customers. According to the researches of FTB stated earlier, this is a useful valuable tool to reach different target groups and to fulfil the expectations of the customers. Also the tour will include one extra day of activity, basically hiking, which enables the customers to discover the area from yet another perspective.

As Upitrek Ltd. maintains valuable co-operations with the local tourism service providers at the Hossa Hiking Area, the paddling tour to be developed will mainly be based on these networks. The main co-operation partner will be Hossanretki Ltd., the tour operator company running the visitor centre. As stated earlier the company also rents out canoes and kay-

aks and arranges catering and other services for the visitors of the Hossa Hiking Area. Depending on the wishes of the customers co-operations with other tourism service providers in the area will be considered. However they are subject to negotiation in each situation.

Although the theoretical foundation for the product development process involves a product testing phase (Kotler et al. 2006, 329), this will be conducted only after the completed development process. This decision was influenced by different factors of which the seasonality had the greatest significance. As the product is developed during the winter season, test paddling is not possible in this period. Also the product is demand-driven which proves the interest of the customers in this kind of product. Finally the product does not involve high expenses and therefore a low level of demand will not result in great losses to the service providers. However a testing will be conducted in the beginning of the summer season 2012 by a voluntary group of potential customers from Germany. The outcome of this testing then might still influence the product in certain matters, though the general product will be sold the way it is developed in this thesis.

### 6.3 Marketing Strategy

As stated above this product development is demand-driven. Hence the target group is already set, though the new product might have the potential to attract new target groups as well. However in accordance with the on-topic suggestions concerning paddling tourism (FTB 2011, 3) Upitrek Ltd. has agreed to set the limits of the suitable target group according to the level of difficulty. Thus the company recommends the tour especially for beginners and those paddlers who possess little experiences, due to the easy to moderate level of difficulty. For positioning the product in the market the matrix of new products (Holloway & Robinson 1995, 82) is applied. This matrix provides a valuable means for the company to control whether the product fulfils its purpose of a new product or it rather being a modification to an existing product. Moreover the market position in terms of competition is elucidated by the classification in the product matrix.

The figure below illustrates the matrix and the position of the paddling tour is indicated by the yellow field.

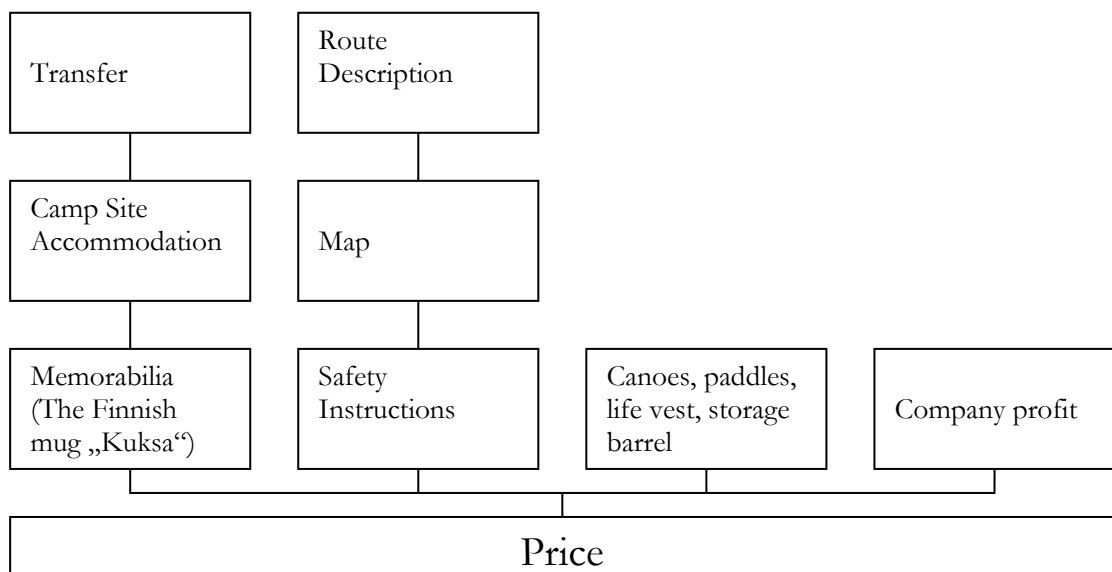
**Figure 3.** New Product Matrix (Holloway & Robinson 1995, 82.)

		Market	
		New	Existing
Product	New	Establish new product to new markets	Present new product to existing markets
	Existing	Relocate existing product to new target market	Adjust existing product to current market

As the matrix states the paddling tour to be developed for Upitrek Ltd. will be positioned as a new product in an existing market. The reason for that is the presence of a paddling tourism market in Finland, as stated earlier in accordance to the researches of FTB. However the product is a new type of paddling tour combining paddling with another activity, hiking in this case.

The marketing strategy also consists of the pricing of the product. Product pricing is mainly dependent on the expenses of the service providers. Therefore the content of the actual price has to be set first. The figure below will therefore illustrate the different factors making up the final price.

**Figure 4.** Price structure



As visible in the figure above, the segments of the price can be summed up to different categories such as the *equipment*, *information material*, *other expenses* and *profit*.

*Equipment* means basically the equipment necessary to take part in the paddling tour. As Upitrek Ltd. does not own any of this equipment, the expenses are the rental prices for these by Hossanretki Ltd. The *information material* will be partly purchased by Upitrek Ltd. and then resold within the package to the customers. The safety instructions however will be provided directly by Upitrek Ltd. and therefore they include expenses for the company as well. *Other expenses*, as illustrated above, are mainly the transfer costs. These arise from the service of transfer to the starting and from the ending point of the tours. Another expense included is the accommodation in the beginning and at the end of the route, as this takes place in the Karhunkainalo camp site, the only accommodation place of the tour for which a fee is charged. Finally the other expenses also include the provision of memorabilia, which in this case will be the traditional Finnish mug called “Kuksa”. The last category of expenses is the *profit* for the company itself. As the tour is created to provide Upitrek Ltd. with profit, this has to be added to the tour price as well. The total price will be calculated in detail on a price sheet in the attachments.

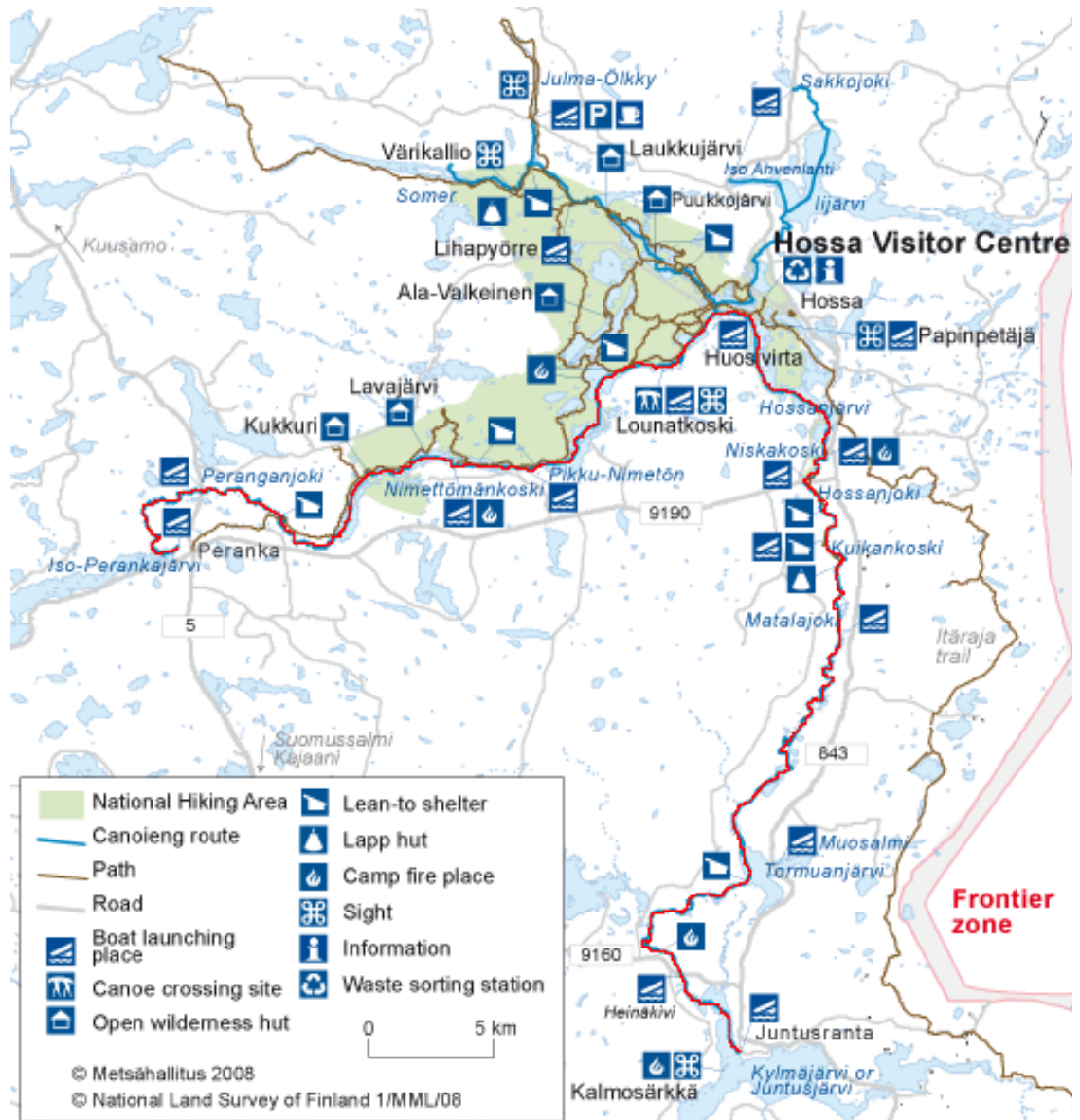
For the marketing Upitrek Ltd. is relying on its current marketing connections with other tour operators and resellers. Moreover the tour will be available from the network of nature and adventure tourism service providers in Kainuu, Wild Taiga. As one target market is the German tourism market, the development of the tour will be featured in an article for the German kayaking magazine “Kajak”. Although the tour as a tourism package will not be the main aspect of the article it will provide sufficient information on the tour package and the provider Upitrek Ltd. Finally the company may benefit from the survey of FTB (2011b) about distribution channels, which resulted in a portal of tourism service providers in Central Europe and Russia. The portal provides Finnish tourism service providers with detailed information about suitable resellers of their products and services, categorized in countries and activities.

## 6.4 Paddling Tour Development

The paddling tour will be conducted on the waterways of Hossa and will last for 8 days, including the days of arrival and departure. The tour starts at the Peranganjoki River close to the main road 5 and ends at the village of Juntusranta, covering approximately 70 kilometres of distance. The types of waterways used in this route are rivers with occasional rapids and lakes. The rapids are classified according to the International Whitewater Classification (American Whitewater 2005.) and do not exceed the classification III. Therefore the tour is suitable for beginners and experienced paddlers alike. This fact influenced the choice of the route in this respect as it matches the demand of paddling tourists in Finland; hence it suits a large target group. (Innolink Research 2010, 23.)

In order to keep the level of costs low for both, the customers and Upitrek Ltd. as a supplier, the chosen accommodation for the tour will be in tents and on-site shelters. This decision was made in regard to the findings of FTB that paddling tourists prefer accommodations at a moderate level rather than high-class lodging (Räsänen 2004, 3). Furthermore it adds the special experience to the product as the customers are enabled to encounter the environment in a direct way and fulfil their longing for adventure.

The season for the tour is dependent on the natural seasonality. Usually the waterways of Hossa are navigable with canoes by the last week of May when the ice has melted. However at this time of the year the water level is high and therefore influences the rapids in the way that their level of difficulty may change to the next higher one. Therefore the season for this canoe tour will be set from the beginning of June till the mid of October. As the natural seasonality may change from year to year, the company is able to adjust the season for the paddling tour according to the expected weather conditions. Nonetheless the customers will be advised to always check each rapid from the shore before deciding whether it is navigable. Certain rapids have marked portages which are highly recommended to use. In general the water level enables the customers to paddle the route at all times during the season, though as paddling takes place in natural environments, hot and dry summers may cause very low water levels. (Juntunen 2011.)



**Picture 3.** Map of the Hossa Paddling Routes (Metsähallitus 2011b, modified by U. Matzner)

On this map the route of the paddling tour is indicated by the red line. The Hossa visitor centre as the reception point is indicated in bold letters. The accommodation places are also shown on this map. A more detailed map with each day's route will be included as an appendix.

The customers will arrive at Hossa visitor centre to receive first information about the tour and, if necessary will be given instructions for paddling. The next day they are transferred to the starting point of Peranganjoki with all equipment, from where they start their paddling tour. The accommodation will be in tents or the available lean-to shelters and wilderness huts along the route. The customers will receive recommendations for the overnight places;



however they are encouraged to adjust them to their own likings. Before the tour the customers will be given detailed information regarding the hiking day and recommendations concerning the best spots for hiking will be made. When paddling on the Nurmiselkä Lake the customers are invited to stop for a visit to the Hossa visitor centre where they are offered to have lunch. Upon arrival in Juntusranta the customers will be picked up and return to Hossa visitor centre, where they will spend another night at the Karhunkainalo camp site before returning home.

The customers will receive the basic equipment such as boats, paddles, life vests and information material in the beginning of the tour. However they are asked to bring along their own equipment such as tents, sleeping bags, cookers et cetera. Also the customers have to provide themselves with the food and water reserves. This will be made clear to the customers before the purchase of the trip in order to ensure their sufficient stores.

Regarding the safety of the customers they will be informed about the level of difficulty of the tour and their required preparations. If required by the customers they will receive instructions on how to paddle the canoes to ensure proper handling. The equipment is controlled and maintained regularly to ensure its safety. A detailed description of the tour, including each rapid, will be included in the information material as well. Moreover the customers will receive a list of telephone numbers for the case of emergency. Finally they will be informed about the fact, that despite the controlled equipment and prior information, they conduct the tour on their own risk in a natural environment.

Another matter what tourists are concerned about when visiting Finland is the mosquitoes. The peak season of mosquitoes is generally the last week of June. However as this is another natural phenomenon it is subject to change and the density of mosquitoes may strongly differ from year to year. The customers of the paddling tour are informed about the availability of repellents in shops and also the visitor centre holds storage of effective mosquito repellents. (Juntunen 2011.)

## 6.5 Customer Information

The product description will include significant information for the customers. Especially the prerequisites will be stated and thus this information have be carefully gathered and pre-

sented. When publishing the tour on the webpage of Upitrek Ltd. it will consist basically of two different parts. The first one will involve the following items:

- Itinerary
- Level of difficulty
- Season and duration
- Group size
- Price content

In addition to this description the customers also find an extra document included in the tour description which provides them with further details about the tour procedure. These are constructed by taking the existing tour details of other tours of the company as templates. Therefore these details include the following issues:

- |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| • Journey             | • Weather                |
| • Accommodation       | • Equipment and clothing |
| • Food                | • Time zone              |
| • Water               | • Electricity            |
| • Level of difficulty | • Travel Insurance       |

As stated earlier the paddling tour will also be sold by resellers. Hence it is the responsibility of Upitrek Ltd. to ensure that the customers receive the same information as when purchasing the tour directly from Upitrek Ltd. Another significant aspect of customer information concerns the safety. The company's duty is to ensure the safeness of the tour for the customers. This is done by using functional equipment and providing sufficient information on the requirements of the customers concerning the level of difficulty. Furthermore this includes the provision of appropriate safety instructions for the tour. Despite the customers will be informed about the fact that they participate in the paddling tour at their own responsibility.

A detailed product description and tour information to the customers will be attached.

## 6.6 Naming the Paddling Tour

The name of the product has great influence on the success of the product as it has to attract customers to take part in the paddling tour. The name has to relate to the actual product that the customers do not get an incorrect image of the paddling tour. For creating a suitable name of the product the destination and its specialities could be applied. Although according to FTB this is a common practise of Finnish tour operators, FTB recommends concentrating on the product itself rather than on the destination of the product. Hence the specialities of paddling tour have to be put into an appealing name. In this case the paddling tour's highlight is the active hiatus in Finnish wilderness, as stated earlier. This at the same time represents the core product which the customer is purchasing and thus provides a valuable basis for creating a suitable name. The suggested name will therefore include keywords related to this feature such as together, remoteness and active. A brainstorming session resulted in the following name:

*Canoe advenTour in Finnish wilderness – An active time-out in best company*

The mentioning of the activity is important for marketing reasons as people looking for canoe tours in Finland on internet will be enabled to find that tour among the numerous search results. This name is a suggestion for the paddling tour; however Upitrek Ltd. has all rights to change it to another suitable name if desired. The final decision for this lays in the responsibility of the company.

## 6.7 Launching the Paddling Tour

As the tour does not involve high expenses for the tour operator the financial risk Upitrek Ltd. is facing is considered to be on a low level. Thus test marketing of the product is not considered to be necessary. Moreover the product development is demand-driven which ensures a certain amount of potential customers. This fact also obviates the question of whether to launch the product or not. As Upitrek Ltd. starts selling its summer product in the beginning of each year the time of launching the paddling tour correspond with this time frame. This enables the company to include the product already in next summer seasons' tour offers and therefore meet the demand of its customers in time. Regarding the selling of

the tour Upitrek Ltd. is mostly selling through other tour operators or travel agencies at the European market. Direct selling is rarely practised at this company, although the highest profit derives from this form of product selling.

Therefore Upitrek Ltd. relies on its existing co-operations with resellers on the European market in order to sell the product. Furthermore the company will contact new resellers on this market who might be interested to start co-operations with Upitrek Ltd. To support this process the company can benefit from the survey of FTB (2011b) stated earlier, which resulted in a portal of suitable resellers of Finnish nature and activity tourism products on the central European and Russian markets.

## 7 CONCLUSION

The main intention of this thesis was the development of a sound canoeing product for the Finnish tour operator Upitrek Ltd. The company is the beneficiary of this product development and acted as a commissioning party. The product development is based on the active demand of the customers of Upitrek Ltd. In addition to that the new product enlarges the company's product range and therefore offers opportunities to attract more customers. The basic prerequisites for the paddling tour were provided by Upitrek Ltd. and its business operations. This especially applied to the location of the tour as the national Hossa Hiking Area has been the preferred location for most tours offered by Upitrek Ltd.

In order to create a sound canoe tour product the theoretical aspects of product development and water-based tourism were addressed. Product development is a complex process which has to be understood throughout in order to result in a valuable product. Therefore the different levels of tourism products were illustrated and on this base the process of developing a new tourism product was expounded. The later conducted paddling tour product development was founded on these theoretical approaches.

Water-based tourism provided the theoretical subsumption of this type of tourism in the whole tourism industry. Therefore an introduction to the history and current situation of water-based tourism was given, followed by the aspect of seasonality. This feature covers a major issue to most water-based activities based on natural resources and therefore is also a matter for tour operators such as Upitrek Ltd. In the case of this thesis the company is obtaining a tool to widen their product offers for one season by the receipt of the paddling tour product. The subsequent introduction of paddling tourism served as a statement that paddling has no historical roots in tourism. Hence paddling tourism only got affected with seasonality by conducting it as a type of tourism.

The market analysis of paddling tourism in Finland illustrates that paddling is considered as a growing type of tourism in this country. Multiple researches and surveys by the Finnish Tourism Board proved the potential of Finland as a paddling tourism destination. The demand for a paddling tour, which Upitrek Ltd. is facing, further supports this fact and also reflects the current situation of paddling tourism in Finland. The existing products are not likely to be sold to the suitable market as sufficient knowledge about marketing is still rudi-

mentary. Certain projects resulted in valuable guidelines of tourism product development and action plans for tour operators. They therefore provide significant foundation for networking among tourism service providers and enable them to increase their marketing potential and attract larger amounts of customers.

The actual product development started with a presentation of the product environment. That was thought to be necessary to provide the background information on which the product was going to be developed. The first part of this chapter was the presentation of Upitrek Ltd. as a company which is benefitting from the final paddling tour product. Furthermore this introduction to the company highlighted the importance of environmental issues to the company and its customers alike. Therefore the paddling tour was created while considering the environmental policy of the company.

Also the location of the paddling tour, the national Hossa Hiking Area, was presented to clarify the outer settings of the tour. The available facilities in the hiking area served as the framework for the product development as the intention of the paddling tour was to be realisable without great investments of the company. This fact was influenced by the well-developed network with local tourism service providers Upitrek Ltd. is maintaining in the area.

The product development process was undertaken by applying the preceding theoretical approaches to the framework information available. The product was split into its layers in order to detect the actual content of the product. Moreover the product development process had to be adapted to the situation of certain given information. That implies that not all stages of the theoretical process actual had to be covered as their results were already set beforehand. Nevertheless these results had to be involved in the process as they served as the framework of the whole paddling tour product. The actual product development therefore gathered all the previously achieved and set information in the result of a self-guided paddling tour product which can be sold in its current shape directly by the tour operator Upitrek Ltd.

During the process of developing the paddling tour constant co-operation and exchange with Upitrek Ltd. ensured that the resulting product meets the company's demand as well as the expectations of the company owner Urpo Heikkinen. Thus regular updates of the current state of the thesis were given to the company and significant feedback was collected and

added to the thesis. Although the developed paddling tour product is complete in its current shape, the company may carry out modifications to their likings. The paddling tour is on one hand a complete product ready to be sold; on the other hand it is likely to function as a basis for other tailor-made products of the same sort for the company. Minor changes may also be applied to the product after the testing phase, which is to be conducted in the beginning of the summer season 2012.

In general the thesis process provided me with the challenge to select a suitable theoretical background applicable to the practical case study of developing an actual product. In the theoretical research part the greatest challenge was to set the limits for the research and the theoretical aspects to be covered. As tourism and its versatile sectors are strongly interrelated the sector of water-based tourism, with the specification to paddling tourism, had to be introduced by approaching it from different perspectives.

The same applies to the theoretical framework of tourism product development, as many different approaches had been published over the years. The emphasis on new product development enabled me to choose a suitable theoretical approach, which was adjustable to the available prior information. Also the chosen approach served as a tool for creating a sound result on an academic level. Furthermore highlighting the significance of throughout understanding entailed in personal gaining of knowledge and examining existing skills.

Having developed a complete tourism product for a tour operator provided me with the great opportunity to control my personal achievements of the studies. The thesis enabled me to apply many of the previously gained skills and knowledge in terms of tourism development. From a personal perspective I am very satisfied with the outcome of this thesis and the work ensured me to possess sufficient competencies to work in the tourism industry. I expect the work of this thesis to provide me with a valuable starting position for employment in nature-based or related sectors of the tourism industry.

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## LIST OF APPENDICES

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# Canoe advenTour in Finnish wilderness

*An active time-out in best company*

This self-guided canoeing tour will bring you to the unspoilt waters of the national hiking area of Hossa in East Finland. The tour leads along small rivers winding their way around eskers and through lakes where you can enjoy the typical Finnish landscape of lakes dotted with small islands. Along the route small rapids, which are suitable even for beginners, offer diversity to the otherwise calm waterways. In the evenings you will be able to enjoy a camp fire before heading to your sleeping bag. This tour is particularly suitable for small groups.

## Itinerary

### Day 1

#### *Arrival*

Upon arrival you will be welcomed by the staff of the visitor centre and receive first introductions to the equipment. Accommodation will be in tents at the Karhunkainalo camp site next to the visitor centre where the sauna will be heated up.

### Day 2

#### *Transfer, canoeing*

After breakfast you will be brought to the starting point of the tour together with your equipment and the canoes. After loading your canoes you are ready to start the first day along the Peranganjoki River. You will spend the night in an open wilderness hut at the shore of the Iso-Kukkuri Lake. If the group size exceeds 7 people tents will be used in addition to accommodate everybody.

### Day 3

#### *Canoeing*

Today's route crosses various lakes and passes several easy to moderate rapids. The several fire places along the shores invite you to stop by for frying some sausages in the traditional Finnish way over an open fire. Before you reach the campsite for the night you pass the Lounatkoski rapids which hold some relicts of the log floating relicts. The rapids have a built portage which also provides the opportunity to explore the historical buildings and relicts. Accommodation is at the camp site of Jatkonjärvi in tents.

### Day 4

#### *Hiking*

Today you have the opportunity to relax your arms and explore the area on your feet. Right from the camp site starts a hiking route which leads you around the Jatkonvaara hill. When climbing on its top you can savour the landscape from another perspective. For lunch you can try your luck in catching your own food from the lakes as Hossa is commonly known as Fishermen's paradise. You will spend another night at Jatkonjärvi camp site.

### Day 5

#### *Canoeing*

After the last days in remoteness of Finnish wilderness you return to the civilisation for just this day. On noon you can stop at the Keihälampi launching point from where it is only a short way to the Hossa visitor centre. Here you can enjoy a lunch, visit the exhibition and also stock up your reserves of food and water. After passing the village of Hossa you follow the Hossanjoki River down to tonight's shelter at the Kuinkakoski rapids.

**Day 6***Canoeing*

On this day you return back to the untouched nature as the route winds along the river of Hossajoki. Here you will find total peace and silence only interrupted by the sound of wood grouse and thrush. You might also spot reindeers in the forests as they are a common sight in Hossa. Accommodation will be at the shore of the Tormuanjärvi Lake in a shelter or tents.

**Day 7***Canoeing*

The route today leads you once more through unspoilt wilderness before entering the waters of Lake Kylmäjärvi. Here you will land at the harbour of the village of Juntusranta. Here your transfer will wait to bring you back to the Hossa visitor centre, where you will spend another night at the Karhunkainalo camp site.

**Day 8***Departure*

After breakfast it is time to pack up your belongings to return home. However you are welcome to spend another couple of days in Hossa, exploring the excellent hiking facilities.

*The distances have been specified according to the tour operator's choice of the most appealing choice. It is, however, possible to alter the distances for most of the days. The itinerary can be tailored to individual requirements.*

**Level of difficulty:** Easy to moderate, tour is suitable for novices and experienced paddlers alike.

**Duration:** 8 Days

**Season:** 01.06. – 14.10.2012

Departures on request

**Group size:** Min. 2

**Price:** 215€/person

Price includes:

- Rental of canoes (2 persons), paddles, life vests, storage barrels
- Transfer to start and from end point
- Accommodation on first and last night at Karhunkainalo camp site
- Lake side sauna on first night at Karhunkainalo camp site
- Information package (incl. map, route description, etc)

Price does not include:

- Camping gear (tent, sleeping bags, mattress)
- Cooking gear (camp stove, pots, crockery, cutlery)
- Food (has to be purchased in advanced as there are no shops in Hossa)
- Lunch at Hossa visitor centre on day 5

## Tour information

### Journey

The tour does not include transfers to and from Hossa.

The closest airports are Kuusamo (ca. 80 km), Kajaani (ca. 205 km) and Oulu (ca. 245 km) and there are busses going from all airports to Hossa during the week. Information on bus schedules and prices can be found here: [www.matkahuolto.fi/en](http://www.matkahuolto.fi/en)

Oulu and Kajaani can also be reached by train. Information on train schedules and prices is available from: [www.vr.fi/en](http://www.vr.fi/en)

The distance from Helsinki to Hossa is approximately 750km.

### Accommodation

Accommodation will be in tents and open wilderness huts during the whole trip. As the camping gear is not included in the price you have to bring your own tent, sleeping bag and mattress. The first and last night will be spent at the Karhunkainalo camp site next to the Hossa visitor centre.

#### Day 1 and 7

Karhunkainalo is a camp site for tents and caravan cars situated at the shore of Lake Öllöri. The camp site is facilitated with cooking facilities, sanitary installations, laundry and a lake side sauna. The reception of the camp site is at the visitor centre, where guests can also purchase basic food stuff and fishing licences for the waters of Hossa. <http://www.suomussalmi.fi/Resource.phx/sivut/sivut-suomussalmi/matkailu/english/accommodations/campingsites/karhunkainalonleirintalue.htx>

#### Day 2 to 6

Accommodation will be in wilderness huts, lean-to shelters or tents along the shores of the rivers and lakes. If the number of participants exceeds 5 tents have to be used at certain spots in addition to the existing facilities. The spots are all equipped with camp fire places, fire wood and dry toilets. Waste disposal points only at the Jatkonjärvi camp site and the Hossa visitor centre.

### Food

The tour does not include any food supply. Participants have to take care of their food themselves. Also cooking gear has to be brought along by the customers.

NOTE! Hossa provides only limited food supply; therefore it is important to stock up the food the reserves before coming to Hossa. In the village of Hossa there is a small shop offering the basic food stuff and also Hossa visitor centre provides basic food supply. The closest shop is in Juntusranta, 30km south of Hossa.

### Water

You have to bring your own drinking water. We advise you to carry a water canister as there is no fresh water supply during the route (except of Hossa visitor centre). It is possible to use the lake water, however we advise to boil it before consuming.

### Level of difficulty

The waters of Hossa include a number of rapids. According to the International Whitewater Classification the rapids of this tour are categorized in I till II+ class. Therefore the tour is suitable for novices and experienced paddlers alike. It is highly recommended to investigate each rapid from the shore before passing it with the canoe. Some rapids have built portages which ease the portage.

Before the tour the customers will receive instructions on handling the canoe and also safety instructions in written form will be provided. It is highly recommended to wear your life vest at all times when on the waters.

As the water ways of Hossa are natural resources they are subject to changes. In times of high floods the classification of rapids is abrogated and special care has to be taken to the passing of the rapids.

NOTE! Customers participate in the canoe tour on their own risk and responsibility!

### **Weather**

The weather in Finland may greatly vary in summer. An average day temperature is about 20°C, but can be anything from +10°C to +30°C. At night and on rainy days the temperature can even drop under +10°C. Rain showers are possible throughout the summer and sometimes it rains the whole day. In the end of August/ early September temperatures over +20°C are not common and at nights the temperature can drop to 0°C.

Summer days are long and light in Finland. In June and July there are about 20 – 21 hours of day-light per day and in August 18 – 17 hours.

Ten day weather forecast can be seen: <http://www.foreca.com/Finland/Suomussalmi?tenday>

### **Mosquitoes**

The worst mosquito period is between 20<sup>th</sup> June and 10<sup>th</sup> August. During mid to late August there are not so many as autumn approaches. However the mosquito situation varies each year and it is hard to predict how it will be. But certainly mosquitoes are **not** a reason not to come on this tour – but do bring mosquito repellent with you.

### **Equipment and clothing**

When you pack to this tour you should remember that the weather conditions can be variable. Be prepared also for cold weather and rain! Gore-tex® clothes or other waterproof clothing is necessary for rainy days.

For the day of hiking sturdy shoes are necessary. Hiking boots are recommended however other sturdy would do too.

Clothes and other equipment will be transported in waterproof barrels in the canoes. It is advisable to put your personal belongings (mobile phone, wallet etc) in a plastic bag.

### **Material not provided by the organizers:**

#### Camping equipment:

- Tent
- Sleeping bag
- Mattress
- Towels
- Camping stove
- Pots
- Crockery
- Cutlery
- Water canister
- Compass

#### Clothing:

- Sandals or trainers
- Warm jacket
- Rain clothes
- Underwear
- Socks
- T-shirts
- Long-sleeve shirts
- Swim wear
- Sunhat/ baseball cap
- Gloves
- Hiking boots

Other personal items:

- Sun glasses
- Sunscreen and lip salve (waterproof)
- Insect repellent (also possible to buy in Finland)
- Torch
- Water bottle
- Camera
- Personal first aid kit and toiletries
- Plastic bags (to protect camera, wallet from water)

**Material provided by the organizer:**

- Canoes
- Paddles
- Life vests
- Storage barrels
- Map
- Route description
- Necessary safety information

**Time zone**

Time in Finland is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

**Electricity**

The electric current in Finland is 220 V (230 V), 50 Hz. A two-pin plug system, familiar throughout Europe, is used. Adapters are available at airport shops and bigger supermarkets.

**Travel Insurance**

Clients must take care of the travel insurance by themselves. We recommend to apply for the European Health Insurance Card which is available free of charge for the citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland. The holders of the card are entitled to medical care while temporarily staying in another EU/EEA country or Switzerland (with same regulations and co-payments as the residents of that country). More information about the card is available in internet: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=559&langId=en>

Having this card helps a lot in the case of accident because without the card a client has to pay all the costs on spot and due to long distances they can be from several hundred Euros up to one thousand Euros.



## Safety Instruction

*NOTE! The organizer gives his best to ensure you a safe trip. However you have to be aware that your participation in this canoeing tour is on your own risk and responsibility.*

1. Always wear a Personal Floating Device (PFD) such as life vest when being on the water.
2. Make sure you are able to handle your equipment. The organizer can answer your questions before you start of on your tour.
3. Never paddle alone. Paddling in company increases safety and is more fun.
4. Stay close to the shore whenever possible. If a storm threatens, get off the water.
5. Always survey rapids first from the shore before paddling into them. If portages are provided, use them for your own safety.
6. Avoid dehydration. Drink plenty of water or flavoured mixed drinks.
7. Stay with the boat! In the unfortunate event of capsizing, stay with the upturned boat. A canoe is easier to spot than a swimmers head.
8. Make sure you have a bailer in the canoe. If it is missing, contact the organizer before the tour.
9. Inform the organizer of your planned route. If you make last-minute changes to the itinerary, ensure that the organizer knows about that.
10. Make sure you are well equipped for the water and weather conditions. Always carry a first aid kit and a hypothermia blanket with you.
11. Drinking alcohol while canoeing is strictly forbidden. Therefore anyone under the influence of alcohol is not permitted to take part in this paddling tour.

Telephone numbers for emergency cases:

### **Emergency call:**

**112**

### **Hossa Visitor Centre:**

+358 205 64 6041

Ari Juntunen (Hossa Visitor Centre, mobile)

+358 50 3844692

**Price calculation**

Number of participants 2

		<u>Amount</u>	<u>Single price</u>	<u>Total price</u>
		in €	in €	
Equipment	Canoes	1	120	120,00
	Paddles	2	incl.	-
	Life vests	2	incl.	-
	Storage barrels	2	incl.	-
Information	Hossa Water guide	1	5	5,00
	Map	1	10	10,00
	Safety Instructions	1	2	2,00
Other expenses	Transfer	1	80	80,00
	Accommodation at Karhunkainalo	2	22	44,00
	Sauna at Karhunkainalo	1	10/hour	10,00
	Memorabilia	2	20	40,00
Profit	per 2 Persons	1	120	120,00
<b>Total</b>			389	431,00 €
<b><u>Per person</u></b>			Rounded	<b><u>215,00 €</u></b>

