Best media for advertising local tourism among the Russian tourists

Natalia Yapparova

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The thesis determined the prospects for using media channels in attracting Russian tourists. This research was meant to find advertising channels among the Russian tourists (targeting North-West region of Russia). The results of this research can be used to promote local tourism services for customers from Russian westbound.

This thesis was commissioned by the Savonlinna Travel Agency, which is the majour tour agency in the region. The idea for the thesis project rests on the fact that commissioner is knowledge-oriented about the Russian market, accomplished a number of studies with cooperation of local research institutions. This project focused on how to attract Russian tourists and better reach them by developing targeting advertising campaigns.

The project was carried out as an empirical research in Christmas and New Year season, 2012-2013. Empirical data was collected by conducting a quantitative survey in cooperation with the hotels in Eastern Finland and Helsinki city to fulfill the study goals. Therefore, the findings and conclusions were presented for the commissioner and other stakeholders. Additionally, suggestions for the development of communication channels have been made.

Research findings back up the theoretical background of the study, especially those that relate to the media channels and their choice. Keeping apace with the advertising channels can improve marketing and facilitate development of Russian tourism in the region.

Keywords

Media choice, advertising channels, advertising campaign, e-marketing

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1 Introduction

Tourism industry is appearing as one of rapidly growing industries. Marketing communication forms a core principle of the delivery tourism product and services. There is a need to introduce new products or services and create advertising channels to promote existing and new ones. As widely known, promotional channels are driven force of applying to any marketing activities which includes tourism industry. Among other industries it has modern approach to handling marketing activities, which is based on the latest marketing theories and applicable hi-tech. Tourism industry today face a challenge of incorporating new information and communication technologies in the development of marketing strategies with client communication, including advertising channels.

This create a trend of combining "traditional" marketing techniques with e-marketing the most advanced marketing solution that new technologies bring, where and insofar Internet plays a major role of transmission channel. Nowadays communication strategic tactics of tourism business including e-tourism are based both on traditional media channels and virtual promotion to create customer awareness of tourism product and being customer-oriented. Getting the right messages to the right people perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of marketing communication each business faces in client communication by means of advertising and promotional channels.

In this sense and tourism dynamically changing rapids, role of advertising is how to attract new clients and retain existing ones by improving complex marketing mix activities.

1.1 Importance of Russian tourists (background factor)

Travelling between neighbouring countries like Russia and Finland has become part of life. Of course local touring has tremendous potential to become even more exciting tourist destination for Russians due to variety of host activities, geo position and perhaps exploring and sharing cultural exchange. Today local, regional bodies widely understand the potential contribution that development of local touring brings as a tool for economic development in the region. Particularly Finnish travel industry benefited

within recent years from the increasing tourist traffic coming from the bordering country.

The potential for increasing the number of tourists is huge, since Finland enjoys a unique location next to St. Petersburg and the adjacent areas. Russia does not have connections to any other state which are as good and quick as these, and the high-speed Helsinki-St. Petersburg rail link will enhance Finland's competitiveness even further in terms of attracting Russian tourists. (Finnish Tourist Board, Finland's tourism strategy to 2020).

What is more statistical data speaks for it, as a result of growing tourism sector.

In years 2011 Russians were the largest group accounted for good 23 per cent of all overnight stays by foreign visitors. The strongest growth was seen in overnight stays by Russian visitors as accommodation establishment recorded over one million of them, which is 22 per cent more than in the year before. (Finnish Tourist Board – MEK, 2011)

Side by side with this, total number of Russian tourist increased in 2011. According to a border interview study conducted for the year 2011, almost 3.3 million Russians visited Finland during the space of a single year, which is 27 per cent more than in 2010.

In year 2011 Russian tourists spent more than EUR 850 million, an average of 264 euros per visit and 111 euros per person per day, as consistent with Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, ELY. The amount for 2011 was more than 30 per cent higher than in the previous year. As sure same fact, Russian visitors in Finland spend on average EUR 111 per day, according to the Border Interview Survey by Statistics Finland and the Finnish Tourist Board. Thereby statistics shows that Russians are bringing more and more euros into Finnish economy each year.

To proceed speaking about spendin amount of euros, it is important to mentioned that South Karelia made the top spot ahead of Uusimaa when viewed regionally and in euros. Tourists have an extremely positive effect on trade and services in Southeast Finland as well as on its hotel and restaurant sector. (Finnfacts, Russian tourists flock to Finland, 2012).

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Russian tourists have great importantance for Finnish tourism market. In correspondence with TAK Oy, a research and analysis firm that monitors tourism from Russia, the Russian visitors' spending in Finland will approach the EUR one billion mark this year. TAK has calculated that last year Russian tourists spent EUR 680 million in Finland. (Helsingin Sanomat, 03.2.2013).

Hence, Russians are the major group among the foreign tourists contributing to the country's economy. As one can see, the role of Russian tourists cannot be underestimated, as they help tourist businesses to succeed and to earn profit. At the same time the amount of tourists visiting Eastern region is trending upwards. For instance, the increasing number of Russian visitors to Finland in recent years has provided a significant boost to the retail trade in eastern Finland. Laplandia market, located in Lappeenranta near the Nuijamaa border crossing between Finland and Russia, has increased its turnover from about EUR 13 million to more than EUR 33 million in just a few years. (Finnish Tourist Board, 15.8.2012)

According to this and other articles in local newspapers Eastern region is not only popular for the great shopping possibilities but also for soak up atmospere of splendid natural wonders by staying in cottages by the lake or forest side. (Studio 55.fi, 02.10.2012)

At the same time, the amount of tourists visiting the eastern region continues to grow, it is essential to do research on them on their visit causes, travel habits and experiences at first hand. Empirical treatment helps towards the target to take opinions on people's thinking about getting information about the region and what communication channels attract their attention.

Therefore, current *thesis aimed* to define most common advertising channels among the Russian tourists for development opportunities of the touring in the Eastern Finland. The thesis research aimed to examine the theory of advertising as a part of marketing communication. Another goal was to find out how better reach potential customers and how to enhance visibility of local touring among the Russian tourists.

1.2 Research problem

Objective of the survey was to obtain Russian tourists opinions about visiting the region for improving advertising channels and its visibility in attracting Russian tourists. A plan was to conduct quantitative research and investigate what are the best communication channels to reach ordinary Russian customers to come to Finland. As the research theme and study goals described above, the research problem can be presented through the questions:

• What are the best mediums of advertising that can be used to reach Russian customers?
• Which online channels appear to be the most and least visible among the Russian tourists?
• Which range of advertising channels required for succesful marketing performance?
• Which areas of the agency marketing activities could be developed in Russian market?

From these outcomes of the study the commissioner may take the results into consideration to advance their future marketing plans. The sub-goal focused on getting opinions of ordinary Russian tourists about the attractiveness of Eastern region as tourist destination for Russians. It means how to attract them or what makes them to come to visit or re-visit the region and more specifically defined best mediums for advertising among the tourists from Russian westbound. Thereof, factual knowledge influencing medium could be used in future strategic marketing plans of increasing local touring attractiveness for different targets. Thus, the choice of channels was defined well in theory and properly tested by the empirical study.

1.3 Aims and limitations of the thesis

This thesis was commissioned by travel agency of Savonlinna city. Thesis aimed to propose alternatives on decision making process of medium choice for targets based on a research results.

Limitations were that thesis was centred only on Russian tourists and major focus was on Eastern region. However, partly survey has been conducted in Helsinki city due to the current residence of the researcher.

Theory related to the traditional marketing mix communication was not a central subject of the paper. Other aspects of promotion mix, such as public relations, personal selling, and direct marketing were leaved unexplored here. The paper studied the matters of advertising theories underlying marketing communication, and mostly advantages of e-channels presented in the empirics. The idea came from the valid part of survey respondents having good experience online to such matters as: bookings, ticketing, ranking attractions, finding accommodation, searching information before or during their visit etc. Pointing on the convergence of real-life respondent's experiences, the online channels are enough of a hit; enable to offer cutting edge ways to engage the target audience. Aside from the fact that traditional advertising mediums are quite fascinating and have captured great attention from their audiences but internet users of today have adopted new habits and this web phenomenon continues to grow.

In addition, personal learning goals were to enhance author's knowledge about advertising, media choice, IMC, familiarise with online concepts as they have active space in tourism advertising. Professional updating in the principle "of learning by doing" one more "live" project as it is own learning curve. Questions that posed during the implementation of the project such as: Which channels to apply for effective marketing performance of a travel agency? What are the most important issues to consider regarding communication channels? It is challenging task to provide suggestions for the commissioner and other stakeholders what channels would be effective and better suit for the agency's marketing mix and lead to improve marketing efforts in Russia. Ultimately, conclusions and possible suggestions were derived from the analysing of empirical results.

The empirical part of thesis was carried as quantitative research. Corollary data was obtained by conducting survey in several hotels. Few face-to-face semi-structured interviews were done to add some depth to the findings. Therefore, empirical part of the paper has little but practical value. It has revealed best media channels for advertising in Russian market, and boosted image of e-marketing channels.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Concerning the structure of the thesis, it is designed in a way that theoretical part introduces the preselected theory to the framework. The thesis is divided into 3 main parts: theory, empiric study, findings and conclusions. In the theory, introduction to marketing communication concepts in the form of advertising were brought in so that make the reader familiar with the topic.

Theoretical framework of the thesis is focused on theory about marketing communication strategy with little divagation to what is marketing plan about, explained advertising channels and media vehicles, described elements of the IMC, and understood the impact of growing online promotion channels and characteristics of the services on the internet as being online today is a necessity for any business.

Empirical chapters (3-6) took a look into regional tourism products, destination branding, and communication channels that the agency uses for marketing, and revealed the most essential communication channels based on research results.

In this section suggestions for improving marketing performance were proposed: strategies, vehicles, tools and opinions of sample group presented in the chapter. Thesis is finalised by generalising findings and giving suggestions on further research.

Therefore, the theory was clearly integrated with practice and empirical part together.
In attachments are enclosed questionnaire for this survey and brief summary of data handling for hotels as other stakeholders of this project.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Advertising theory

Theory of advertising equipped with essential backbones on the topic including the main concepts and issues behind the creation of a successful advertising campaigns for any business. All together, these theory grounds supported research problem and provided a strong basis for the empirical part.

The most substantial factors to support advertising campaigns are: types of media channels, applying marketing strategies thru advertising channels, evolution of "new media" that is not new, potential media mix for an agency. (C. Harkley, 2010). Nowadays, traditional elements of media mix and technology based methods are common ways of how delivering value of product and service is performed. Traditional media and digital methods bring communication flows to the agenda for discussion on the need for more effective marketing communication plan. It is important for the businesses to develop marketing strategy for implementation of effective and visionary marketing plan, beneficial on how to communicate advertising goals to customers. For gaining these benefits, a company must ensure on the right marketing plan, including right range of media strategies, and that they are applied effectively, thereby marketing mix should be plan in advance. The same rules obtain regarding IMC plan that comes further on.

2.2 Advertising plan as a part of marketing communication plan

Plan of advertsing campaign is something that helps the company to undertand how it works well and, finally, how to reach marketing goals to succeed. Below mentioned basic milestones very practical issues without going into details as marketing plan is a topic on its own right. The following steps distinguish advertising from the view of goals, strategy and logical map of actions without considering essential aspects such as: tourism service lifespan, client life cycle, budget, closing the gaps etc. Planning can be

defined as a process of creating milestones when undertaking any kind of campaign. Developing a clear plan might be compared with a route map that helps to make decisions on marketing activities.

Advertising stick in the mind of target audience, *who is the audience* of the travel agency: mostly tourist companies seeking for partnership, middleman, repeat customers, primary customers. In other words, they are people with whom agency have mutual interests.

The scope of campaign is defined what it will and will not deliver. The prime objective of advertising campaign is to be noticed and to recall peoples' minds to a services that agency provides. There are five keynotes why to do advertising as well as some other contiguous ideas for that. First of all a company introduces or reminds itself and what is far-reaching creates an impression. Adverts in tourism are targeting messages offering image of destination, package solutions (theme, attraction, price or holiday packages), stimulate trials from primary or potential clients, repeat customers or loyalty campaigns, etc.

Adverts may be delivered via media, non-media thru distribution of collaterial material in local shops, restaurants, hotels and so forth. In case of agency simple adverts in free-of-charge newspapers, distribution of print collaterial in targeted area (both locally in the region and border territories as well as in Saint-Petersburg, Carelia), and perhaps spoting advertising on local radio stations. They are also time specific, geographical focus. Running such campaigns mean ad spending on moderate costs that push the brand or image of the company. Targeting advertising is one of the ways to get in front the customers and to inform what the company is, what services are and about the benefits that their tourism product or services have to offer. Speaking by marketing terminology this stage is *creating awareness* of the image, brand, tourism products or services.

Thus for the agency by using radio station(s) as broadcast media, local free newspapers in Russia as well as Russian-language in Finland such as "Spektr" or "North trade route", auditory traffic advert, and online souces are perfect ways to generate more traffic coming from adverts. In marketing language this stage is to *inform the market* thru communication channels mix tactics.

Introducing some offering potentially *create a desire* to make a deal. The challenge here is to discover the offering among the competitors, what they have to offer. Whenever channel to use, the message should depicts thouroughly benefits, or offer speaks itself and statement must be prominent. That's why message itself should be short and laconic perhaps using the slogan, consider also size, shape, design, and graphics that attributed to what the company is and what is its offering. Making *good statement* has an impact and works for the company, for instance, encouraging for trials. After trials customer who is satisfied likely to make repeat deal in its turn pre-conditions for making customers to stay with a company. Thus, loaylty campaign is aimed at increasing customer retention and maintain good relations.They are typically designed to affect existing business, boosting sales.

Objectives are as many as may be desired, for example basic motives could be profit-oriented, increasing of market share, branded communications or a mixture of those three, depending on company's advertising goals. Providing image, branding, logo, themes to the desired audience could be achieved thru traditional mix tactics or via IMC approach which is relatively new trend in the marketing theory. Nowadays many marketing experts believe that all forms of marketing communication are essential for successful marketing. Today such approach is called as integrated marketing communication that is going to be discussed further in the separate section.

Communication content and delivery methods in terms of media channels should be directed towards the information needs of the target audience, and this will define the type of strategy employed. In this way different types of advertising are better to consider and concentrate on a choice among the advertising platforms. Probably success of marketing efforts highly depends on right selection out of mix tactics to enlarge communication process between company and audience.

2.2   What is advertising?

Advertising is best known and widely used to fulfill the marketing needs including increasing new business, gaining a greater share of existing business, retaining business, or attracting repeat business. Many authors employ the term advertising as a form of non-personal communication in creating or maintaining brand identity. By means of media that helps marketers in creating bonds with customers thru sharing visual messages about the brand, present product distinguish attributes, and even boost the sales.

It can be said without exaggeration that advertising platforms generate plenty of benefits. These advance features have a common outlook by different authors. The main benefits consists of getting the brand known (also achieving brand awareness) - effectively convey what the brand stands for, or also knowns as a brand identity. What is brand identity? More easily it is an image, phrase, logo that becomes synony-mous with a brand. The goal is to get the audience know about it, introduce the brand. If the ultimate goal is not about getting brand recognition then the company might seek for niche or providing unique service. Whatsoever the goals are by doing advertising the company enlarge interaction with its audiences. Thus, it is widely defined that these benefits are reachable if the right media strategy is applied to the advertising campaign goals.

In accordance to IPA (Institute of Practioners in Advertsing) advertising defines as the means of providing the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects at the lowest possible cost. This represents a highly practical and profit-oriented view of the role of marketing communications through advertising messages. This definition highlights the crucial role that advertising plays in company's strategy to drive sales growth. (Scott McCabe, 2009, 208).

Speaking about planning of advertising campaign the following steps should be taken.

Table 1. Advertising guidelines: (Source: R. A. Nykiel, 2011, 104)

Know your product/service
Advertise as part of the total marketing strategy
Develop a proposition
Create a platform
Be realistic about the level of expectation
Review the customer needs

Knowing the role product plays in the market and how consumers perceive the product is essential to creating effective advertising. Basic facts, clear picture where the products stands in the market and where the company wants it to be.

What is the the role advertising in achieving marketing goals? Depending on advertising goals the company selects the media strategies to be employed. Media strategies can be viewed thru planning, implementing and delivering the values to the targets.

Then general proposition should be conveyed in add message. Strong message on behalf product/service should address to the consumer. Advertising statement must agree with and support overall marketing strategy and meet the purpose of advertising. When planning advertising campaign the statement shouldn't exceed more than product or service can deliver.

Advertising platform is an item-by-item list of facts that support proposition. Platform statements illustrate the strength of proposition. It is a basic strategic statement that encompass company's' goals (what) and methods to achieve the goals (how it does) at given period of time. It also calls for product special features, and why it is unique or different. Thinking on advertising platforms helps to focus on the right target audiences, if necessary segment the audience for different communication channels according to how it resonates with chosen advertising channel.

Finally, the output of each campaign and level of expectation should be realistic on adequate level resulting on advertisement promise, purpose, method and costs. Speaking about advertising process and taking into accound above mentioned advertising guidelines marketer should always keep in mind the focal points of advertising strategy related to the customer needs.

According to N. Morgan and A.Pritchard (as well as Ronald A. Nykiel has cognate ideas) developing an actual advertising campaign must take consumers through a six-stage process which is slightly diffentiated in their views. Table 2 (Sources: N. Morgan and A.Pritchard, 2003, p.14; Ronald A. Nykiel, 2011, p.105)

N. Morgan and A. Pritchard	Ronald A. Nykiel
Stage 1 is awareness product or service	Purpose of advertisement, reason of doing it. Inform about product or service Convict about product/service advantages among the competitors' ones Remind consumers to use it once more.
Stage 2 Comprehension according to Morgan and Pritchard that means get customer familiarised with the benefits of purchase or product attributes.	Identifying the target audience to whom what and how to advertise. On crucial question in each and every campaign how to reach these people who will buy or use this service he advices for doing consumer market research and selecting appropriate media.
Stage 3 is acceptance – potential customers need to be sure that product or service will serve their requirements and needs.	Choosing effective, efficient, and affordable media selection for advertising.
Stage 4 –it is preference – potential customers must feel sufficiently sympathetic towards the product or service and place it towards the top of their consideration set of alternative product, services or experiences.	This stage is creation the add itself. Product or service, purpose, and budget are the practical parameters that should be carefully consideres along with target audience and quidelines previously cited.
Stage 5 it is purchase decision	Nykiel speaks about right place and time for add, considering: market (s), media selection, placement (where and when add runs) be concerned with place and timing.
Stage 6 Reinforcement – the customers feel reassured that their decision was correct and that effects will be or were positive. The time issue is important since the advertising might continue on after the purchase of the product but prior to the actual consumption.	This last stage is to fulfill customer expectations. Meeting the expectations should always be considered with total context of advertising strategy on right time, right people, right place and correct promise to motivate the customers.

From this six stage hierarchy effect model of N. Morgan and A.Pritchard, focus on how advertsing works, is a look to the four key model types of response by the same authors.

the sales response (whereby price is the key message to stipulate action)

the persuasion response (whereby the add's message is powerful enough to change attitudes towards the product or services)

involvement response (whereby customers empathize with product or brand)

the saliency group (where advertising attempts to relate the product or brand to consumers identity of social, cultural and socio-economic characteristics, so that they identify with values of the brand or product). (Morgan and Pritchard, 2001, pp. 14-16).

Therefore, any success of advertising campaing depends on improving customers attitude towards the product or service attitude, positioning to the right target audience and gaining its attention. Simply said the process of good advertising is getting exposure by the add among the target group and so gaining awareness of product, service or brand. First getting the customers knowing the product, service or brand, and then be always customer-oriented that is listen, understand them and meet their needs, that evolves building of good customer relationship based of CRM, loyalty programmes etc…Today customers are becoming more experienced and have higher expectations of quality of tourism services, they are able to make different choices between (branded) products and services based on how much and to what extent tourism companies meet their needs. Tourism businesses have to fix on core aspects of advertsing activities on delivering quality and customer value ,which will result the benefits either directly or indirectly, to profits. In this way communication through advertsing channels should be on the right level and be two-sided stream, like a dialogue. Since advertsing space is expensive and all marketing efforts are also time and money consuming, best communicational channels for advertising should be defined: how people respond, which media channels are most effective to deliver message at lower cost.

2.3   Advertising channels selection

In selecting channels for communicating there is a wide range of choices. Using advertising media, considering from high-tech possibilities involving computers to low-tactics such as fliers, leafouts and booklets. Today, for instance in tourism business, communication decisions must be made with in relation with media mix, unmediated choices such as broshure, travel magazine and new media that goes without saying. Certainly each communication vehicle has both advantages and drawbacks, that's why it is wise none to be used exclusively but in one combination or another. Not every advertising tactic will be appropriate for every business in every sutuation. For instance, small tourist agency with a lot variety of tourist activities can generate interest from distributing collaterial materials in local hotel, restaurant, shopping chains, whereas the bigger sized company might buy advertising in local targeted area thru street image advertising, free-of-charge newspapers, visual and audio messages on transportation, radio commercial etc. Probably effective assess most communication opportunities and select a mix of tools to enhance awareness between company and audience, create an image, boost the sales, or whatever else goals may be.

Again, before making (non-media) media selection for delivering advertising message, determine the number of potential customers they can reach, returns on investments, and the best cost-effective method for conveying advertising strategy. Considering needs, purpose, and budget as a part of media plan are determining advertising campaign.

Broadcast media such as television and radio – provide one type of exposure for product/service.

Print media (newspapers, magazines, supplements, catalogues, broschures, directories, yellow pages, fliers, and so on, provide another types of exposure.

New media. While neither traditional advertising nor television commercials allow for urgent or immediate promotional messages, price offers, new technologies are well suited for these purposes. (communication thru websites, blogs, social media accounts, thus enhancing advertising programmes from delivery fruits. (R.A.Nykiel, 2011, pp.122-123)

2.3.1 Television advertising

TV advertising remains the most visible and prestigious form of advertising and the most convenient way to reach an audience of millions. A 30-second spot at prime time (morning programmes, evening news or serial/show commercial breaks) might be most expensive advertising buying time. TV has still huge impact that will often dominate a room, demanding attention even if people present are not particularly interested. Appearing on TV prestige on image or brand, send a vivid message about the aspirations of the brand and places it with the most well-known brands.TV as a media vehicle that mostly powerfully reflects and projects audience aspirations and fantasies. Therefore, it is perfect medium for portraying brands as accessories to these aspirations. (C. Hackley, 2010, p.151).

Audience selectivity is available in television through variations in programmes and cable TV. What is more, access to satellite TV channels has grouping audience thru lifestyle and special interest TV channels. Satellite and traditional TV channels have a great power to convey values and to communicate engaging all sorts of people, attract public's attention on a broad reach. Commonly TV is viewed in a relaxed mood, often in the home and in the company of other people. In this way TV gives advertisers access to domestic settings. What is of interest of advertisers is that TV has a power of handle information, people are often manupulated consumers suggestible when they are watching. TV strive to produce diversity of content across the channels thus advertising reaches those who are looking for entertainment, news, general interest media.

Generally television is a sphere in itself to surprise the audience in different ways. Certainly it is exciting for the mass audience, which considers and watches mainstream channels or uses web-tv content. Nowadays TVretains its importance in the media mix, have a huge power hold its audience, diversify primetime thereby search for a new audience.

In author's view it has healthy competition within television large network along with online programmes. The audience may find something more suitable on the Internet but the quality of transmitted video on the Internet is lower. TV network together with cable channels are still competitive enough to attract attention of extensive mass

audience and will be watched in the near future. In the present view TV is not the only media on the market and the Internet different channels started to appear as much a part of it.

Typically, prestige of television channels advertising has much impact for a brand, bring to mind visual image or household name. As a rule, people watching commercial breaks might be highly unattentive or do not watch ads at all and this is one of the challenges how to encorage interest. For the brand, image or logo, broadcasting media represents something of a leap of faith. (C. Hackley, 2010, p.152).

TV broadcasting definitely has its place, despite the extension of online media. Ultimately people might like sitting in front of TV at the same time and watch same programmes of general interest – people are creatures of habit and need the social interaction that comes from watching TV with their families. That's why the potential of TV advertising is still leading platform for media makers. TV channels are perfect place for shaping an image, building attitude towards the brand that is how to inspire and motivate the audience as generally people like trying of new things and sharing experiences.

2.3.2 Radio ads

Radio as media vehicle became internationally acclaimed long ago. Likewise with TV channels it has potential to reach and impact to wide mass audience, that's why it can be perfect channel as the main medium for new brand awareness or sustaining a positive brand image campaigns. Radio has the quality of immediacy, since many radio ads can be produced in a few hours and broadcast that every day. Radio airing requires radio commercial, singing commercial or jingle commercial in the shape of prerecorded message that can be broadcast by the station.
The production cost of radio commercial is relatively low as well as cost of air-commercial. Thus, for instance, 30 seconds commercial on "Dorojnoe radio" in North-Western region of Russia may cost 430e at any broadcasting time. (Dorognoe.ru)

The low relative costs of radio make it one of the most efficient of all advertising media, and the low absolute cost mean the budget needed for an effective radio campaign is often lower than that for other media. (Belch, 2009, p. 376).

Unlike TV or print media, radio is seen as a medium which occupies the periphery of people's attention. It is often background music in workplaces, cars or households and listeners are generally doing other things while the radio plays. Moreover, radio ads can generate momentary listener attention if they are striking enough and with the radio for long periods of time there is plenty of opportunity for a listener to hear and recongnise a given ad. Furthermore, radio may play an intimate part in listeners' lives if they are forge a relationship with a particular show or announcer that they listen to at the same time of each day. Most consumers listen to the radio at some time during the week, so the medium has extensive reach to many kinds of consumer segment. (C. Hackley, 2010, p.154).

Immediacy of radio commercial is a major advantage, then its non-intrusive ad to the listeners. Rather big share of listeners to commercial or online stations proves it as an imporatant medium.

2.3.3 Press advertising

There are many kinds of print publication, including national and local newspapers, local fre-of-charge newspapers, local and national general interest magazines and special-interest magazines. As these publications are also closely related to marketing, they mean a lot for advertsing campaign. Perhaps newspaper or magazine audience is more selective media, although TV channels and radio stations are also held public attention to this or that theme approach.

Press advertising might have more customized attention to details according to the audience tastes and preferences, especially for special-interest publications.

Daily newspapers alongside with broadcast media oversee the direction and production of all content that goes to print, to air online, on TV and on radio. General press media and broadcast covers all kinds of topics – from daily news, entertainment to niche topics like scientific insights, review culture, sports or video games. By these means

media mix has an effect of media exposure, flow of information has a quality of immediacy and actuality.

Special newspapers and special-interest magazines might be useful employed for particular brand advertisements. Rational distribution to the fully detailed ad addressing to consumers which includes ad sizes, typefaces, and so on. Local and free newspapers offer opportunities to reach local customers within the context of local news and events. This can also create an image, good reputation or present the brand in a setting that makes it more accessible for potential customers. In many places reading of local items is social habit engaged on daily basis. That's why they are able to delivery part of normal everyday content geographically focused what is powerful for promoting local percularities since the content of ads implies and portrayed features of a normal everyday life.

2.3.4 Outdoor and traffic adverts

Outdoor advertising in itself refers to outdoor poster sites, 3D sites, billboards, projected pormotion images on the streets as well as transportation advertsing. Non-static floating traffic advert is becoming powerful tool in terms of visual and auditory advertising. There are many vehicles, for instance in large cities in Russia, such as public transport: buses, trolley coaches, tram-cars and metro which sell their advertising space. Digital and audio outdoor advert has huge potential with video, posters, sound tracks showing a range of ads in strategic urban areas. For this purpose mobile advertisement is also quite reasonable utensil to provide certain exposure for generating localized pockets of high awareness. Regionally this approach is likely very probable to produce good results to coincide with radio or print advertsing campaigns. Outdoor advertisement poses visible object alongside with auditory advertsiment and appears to be effective advertising medium. Such genre could be notices by high volumes of audiences who may see, hear it everyday, especially in the rush hours while walking to work or on the way to home.

2.3.5 Communication thru traditional media

Communication thru traditional mediums describes clearly what it is all about. The medium in which ads appears is very significant in the clients' mind, how the people perceive of the brand whether further brand communication or getting to know newcomer on the market. By saying newcomer it means the unknown company that introduce its name, products or service on the market; or known brand company extends its activities or launch new market entry strategy.

This traditional media channel context is essential for construct of the brand and, for instance, building effective brand communication or creating entrance linkage to the test market areas. Press publications, cooperative commercial on radio and transport modes, or whereas it is affordable TV ads, all have sense of getting company's recognition, knowing products or services or establishing brand identity. Each media vehicle is a platform where a large number of people, or targeted groups of people, who see, hear the announce and the only thing to consider how marketing of the service or brand will better fit each channel. Press publications advertise and promote the values within coherent context to give people informational or entertainment content. In addition, magazines have more long lifespan and are more specific on different topics than newspapers, therefore, targeting is for special interest group.

As for TV, radio advertising some selectivity in various audiences is also possible due to the program content, broadcast time, geografical coverage. Spot advertising relates to commercials run on local tv, radio stations within particular market coverage where the company does business activities. Local advertising on local broadcast channels in news, movies, radio airtime where the company can create an image among public. So far as concerns radio advertising commercials can build more reach, message frequency and number of stations to run the add.
At present both TV and radio stations are facing challenges with digital-based technologies that are impacting the viewing and listening audiences for commercial broadcast. Today's trend in satellite tv and radio is increasing number of young audience watching and listening networks and synidicated programms that offer dozens of statitions and TV channels.

Cable TV and radio stations broaden the program options available to the audiences as well as the advertiser by offering specialty channels, including all-news, music, sports, weather, education, cultural channels as well as children's programming. Many cable stations expanded viewing/listening options on network, therefore, enlarge and segment their audiences. (Belch, 2009, p. 365)

To sum up, advertising through mixture of modes, diversifies the audiences in the relative reach and each media has its own advantages and disadvantages, cost structure. The ultimate goal is to deliver the message to target audience at the lowest cost in the most suitable way.

In tourism industry still traditional media represents high capacity of audience and has its own place at the core of advertising campaigns. Perhaps the ideal outcome for the needs of small travel agency might be selecting of using print media or radio station(s) combine with online ads in travellogues, partners' websites, search engines and widely used sites of general interest such as, for example, online dictionary multitran.ru. The empirical part of the thesis will show and tell more about possible ways of carrying advertising campaign for the agency basically found on analysis of survey results.

2.3.6   Integrated Marketing Communication

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) means different things to different people. Here are some examples from the most respected experts on the subject.
A popular definition is that IMC is the coordination of all the communication tools so that the company speaks with one voice. All this means that consumers less likely to be influenced by single source message, perhaps message could gain more attention viewing or hearing from other sources. IMC presumes a unified selling proposition, speaking with one voice, creating a single and powerful brand personality. (Solomon, Marshall, Stuart, 2008, p.388).

A new angle on IMC views that it is an on-going process rather than tactical use of traditional marketing communication tools. Hence, in the broader sense the objectives of

IMC communication recognize other relevant audiences such as: suppliers, investors, interest groups, general public, and customer groups. In this sense, the focal point for marketing communication is also other stakeholders because by working with the company they are also creating an image, reputation among the public. These groups and individuals building network with people relevant to the business and also significantly shape attitudes towards the company's image.

In a broader modern view a company considers all sources, stakeholders, contacts it has. Thus, the primary stakeholder is usually the customer, other stakeholders could be the media, partners, local bodies who happen to work for or with the company. By means of communication channels customers and other stakeholders are recognize the brand or product competitive advantage, what makes it different from competitors.

Reaching decision on IMC strategic mix, a company must decide what combination of tactics needs to gain maximum effect on delivering the message to targets. Whether the main ultimate goal is getting bigger customer share or introducing new service, package or something else. It is always should be consider who is the audience and what the audience expects from the company. Choosing right IMC tactics is a very responsible task because they have ultimate impact on a whole advertising campaign.

Supposing the customer focus could be the prime of communication. By applying customer-oriented the company drives for long-term customer relationship with customers by satisfying their needs. This means building potential demand for on-going loyal relationships rather than seeking for one-time purchase of product or services. The goal is to provide the service or product or value that the customer wants. Customers' appreciation could come in increasing amount of package transactions, profit, and spread of activation. Communication is support the goals and strategies by motivating customers to buy the product or try services instead of its competitors. Precisely how depend on targeted audience, right mix of communication tactics and competitors' offering. There is a close link between all of these factors and they are mutually supportive.

> It's a new way of looking at the whole, where before we only saw parts such as advertising, public relations, sales promotion, employee communications, etc. (Don Edward Schultz, FILLassocates definitions for marketing communication).

The logic is that a target message communicated across different media channels which may act to mutually reinforce the message being sent to the consumers and other stakeholders. IMC approach utilizes the advantages of diversity of communication channels to arise the message to be delivered. As a result, IMC strategies provide a continuous stream of communication from various sources periodically and present content to targets.

Advocates of IMC also bring to the agenda questionable issue such as efficiency and effectiveness in traditional media use, that today's consumers are less responsive to traditional advertising. It may be that is soundly for youngsters, average age population – they might use technologies as the most immediate interest.

To the authors' point of sight there is no decay for television, radio, and press in conventional view, and what is more, traditional media keeps up with times shifting network channels to cable, satellite, computer and mobile networks. It means that almost every traditional broadcast channel has its online broadcasting or print media has online versions instead of having only print ones.

Nevertheless, current approach also involve technologies where the overall goal is to strengthen and expand customer database by communicating in all possible ways such as on-going dozens of cable and satellite stations, each of which can deliver a message to a selected portion of viewing or listening audience. Supporters of IMC emphasise that is one of the easiest ways for a company to maximize the return on its investments in marketing and promotion. With respect to customers, changing technology environment, developing e-media, with changing lifestyles, media usage, consequently shopping patterns.

To sum up, the single voice message of IMC also considers communication with customers' at all possible ways as a primary focus, not other marketing goals. Prime focus on building and maintain long-lasting relationships with them. Each customer is important, avoid of risk losing him/her to the competition. As this approach stress on – it is easier and less expensive to keep an existing customer than to attract a new one. That's exactly why such method measures the company success by share of customer, and by lifetime value of a customer, not a market share. This means prioritizing customers, IMC strategies often rely on CRM, loyalty programmes.

IMC esteems two-way communication with customers instead of sending impersonal message by means of television, magazine, newspaper or outdoor advertising being less responsive in giving feedback.

IMC approach seeks for developing new media communication tactics to share their opinions, letting the customers know where you are to keep the company on top of consumers' minds.

A major characteristic of IMC strategy is that tactics using elements of communication tactics – advertising, public relations, personal selling, sales promotion, customer feedback – in one single integrated marketing plan. Stream of communication implicates receiving information on a regular basis in the right amount.

To understand how the process works, consider how the company establish the objects and reach them (establish a presence in the market) for a new product, service. These steps draw a parallel to traditional marketing plan approach previously mentioned. Create awareness or make an impression, inform the market or stick in peoples' minds, create desire why the services should be purchased from the company off-competitors. Commonly the demand for the services or the desire to purchase from the company rests on customer-centric strategies and good CRM approaches including working with prospect and primary customers to encourage trials and creating loyalty campaigns.

2.3.7   Online communication channels in E-marketing

In business and particular in tourism industry using online channels is one of the major communication tools with potential partners and customers. Today's technologies bring versatility of digital communication such as electronic media, mobile devices and digital television at communication flow. E-marketing has an exceeding success in relatively lower costs, global reach, 24 hours availability, networking and delivering of two-way communication flow to the large number of visitors.

In tourism business interactive media is widely used for immediate bookings and reservations; establishing virtual and real B-to-B business contacts; updating information on an as-needed basis; having a qualified audience with possibility to track how many customers see the messages. Interactive media specifies mobility of market, displays inno-

vation, medium of exchange information and experiences that's why it has also great potential for area of application marketing and netvertising.

Constantly need for cost improvement has resulted great attention being paid to non-traditional media, especially digital and mobile. New media is still a term widely used in business although most forms of new media are no longer new. It is now common for brand advertisers to set up a dedicated website, to offer a web-based retail interface , to target consumers with text or multimedia messaging or to produce CD, DVD-roms or videos for publicity purposes in through-the-line, integrated marketing communication campaigns which can operates across the media mix. Interactive television is another new medium with great marketing potential, but one that has so far proved less popular among TV viewers than the industry expected. It took TV 13 years to get 50 mln users; it took the internet five. The potential for marketing communications with mass coverage and targeted themes is attractive due to the ability to target audience using tailored messages with direct-response potential. Chasing popularity of application marketing and netvertising is caused by onrush of mobile devices, tablets. (C. Harkley, 2010, p.182).

As noted, telecommunications and broadcast technology are onrush that new media do not remain new in few years. Internet is perhaps could be relatively new to traditional print and broadcast media. Nowadays digital technology has reduced the cost of producing promotional brochures, videos, CD-ROMs and DVDs for circulation. (C. Harkley, 2010, p.293)

It seems likely that mobile and portable devices are nearly new and novelty has alluring image for consumption. Mobile telecommunication and electronic payment and data storage have become key aspects of IMC along with logistics and order fulfilment. New media has the capacity for direct response. Thus, for carry entertainment promotions by means of audio and visual clip as supplement to print material or demonstrate product and services on the web. Internet advertising campaigns enable to do all of marketing compressed into a short time and single place.

At the moment meaning of application marketing and netvertising is consistently growing. Mobile internet at smart portable devices is at our fingertips and can serve work, communication, information, entertainment needs. It is always-on access and flexibility

in answering the current needs regarding information, fast transactions and search responsiveness.

Mobility is one thing that these smart phones offer. Anyone could easily read and find out about a website without having to use a laptop. With a well-developed mobile site, it is easier to reach out to a wider market with more precise targeting. Mobile phones have capacity to transmit video, television or radio. With providing WAP mobile version site, people could see a company's interest in providing extra quality service to their customers. Keeping up with the latest trends in internet and mobile technology gives internet users the impression that the business is willing to try different means in order to provide easy access to their customers.

What is more, mobile devices offer powerful ways of generating consumer engagement. Whether one browsing websites, or emails, reading or sending text messages, playing mobile games, downloading ringtones, playing music, taking photographs or downloading an application, there is volition and attention present. Mobile advertising presents within context of mobile phone usage. (C. Harkley, 2010, p.296).

Some of newer media vehicles already being used in leisure and tourism for advertising include search engine keywords, smart website, video links, banners, fleeting ads, classified ads.

Online channels serve today as a primary place for breaking in business contacts. For small agency (and medium enterprises) online presence and advertising is one the prime channels to attract and stimulate interest towards services and offerings. Personal contacts are of prime importance because of interactive communicating with clients, generate visitors' flow. Another positive role internet play is the bringing together people, using social media communities, sharing experiences and seeing themselves in the cycle of events. Visitors enable easier communicate with interest groups, forums, blogging, exchange experiences, share ideas, leaving testimonials, searching actual information.

Online channels lead to developing of illimitable space of the interactive E-marketing in Tourism. International interactive virtual tools such as blogs, travelogues, web-sites with mobile extension, social media communities, webinars, e-mail promotions, press release databases etc. Online platforms give immediate access to thousands of potential

clients and possible business contacts in partnership. Online channel platforms combine the benefits of traditional media and improve its limitations.

Broadcast, traditional media could be in tandem with digital interactive media and provide strong combination for advertising campaign. Thus, for instance online versions of newspaper, journal, prospect or brochure are sizeable platform for advertising and available to a much larger audience for a lengthy period.

In sum, digital marketing is primary part of integrated marketing approach. It is specifying mobility of market, display cutting-edge technology and innovation, medium of exchange information and knowledge. The capacity for marketing communication vehicles to provide an instant purchasing offering where Internet forms a powerful vehicle of IMC by adopting integrated strategies which link interactive website to traditional media and other advertising. Creative content and combination of media channels have assumed more importance as technological developments and precise audience driven tactics. (C. Harkley, 2010)

3 Empirical study

3.1 Destination branding

Finland might be defined for relatively small cities that are attractive because they are tidy, green and calm. Anyway, whether you go you can picture yourself in a land with splendid landscapes, purity of natural wonders, soothing silence and at the same time being in the middle of innovation and technology.

Eastern Finland personalized matches with lake nature, cultural events, winter and summer outdoor activities, skiing and canoeing – these are associated images of the region. New images about destination established awareness of services, advantages of visiting attractions and having vocation that show appeal of destination. These nature themes forming the basis of a destination's unique proposition that is also resonate in the country's image as well. Eastern Finland has a distinctive natural environment – particularly lake nature, landscapes, cultural events, local cultural attractions, summer festivals – that are main motivating factors in attracting foreign and local tourists. Geographic proximity and distance become synonymous with few hours driving to have different experience. This is strong advertising conveying message around natural unspoilit and beautiful sceneres – which creates a perception in consumers.

Regarding tourism decision, it might be assumed to be good advantage to promote the image of the agency together with the region image as a brand destination. The region has developing tourism programmes, support and investments in tourism infrastructure, and it is has image of popular holiday destination among the local and foreign tourists, especially coming from nearby countries. Although, eastern region or Savonlinna area is not a hotspot but rather known among the customers for associations with lake Saimaa cruise routes, Sulkava hiking, skiing and canoeing sport events, annual Savonlinna Opera festival.

3.2 Savonlinna Travel Agency activities

Today Savonlinna Travel agency is a major tour operator who assists and consults in all tourist matters concerning the Savonlinna region. Besides, the agency appear as a competitive local tourism service provider in the region. The agency handles accommodation, boat cruises, organised activities, guides, transportation, conferences, and tickets for operas and other events, as well as requests for brochures and maps, and for information on various events and schedules. All those services in local touring are provided in close cooperation with local tourism businesses. (Savonlinna Travel Ltd, 2013).

Perhaphs is good enough to have brand image of the region which directly associated with the name of agency by means of printed and digital techniques that could be effective advertising beneficial for both parties.

Currently the agency works in cooperation with other regional businesses locally by using link-building on its own homepage and by conducting periodic advertising campaigns in the local shops, hotels, restaurants, print media. Moreover in Russia, by doing cooperative promotion thru Russian partners (tour operators) the agency promotes special offers, travel packages for mutual benefits.Therewith the agency communicates thru website, travelogues such as Trip advisor, and through intermediates in other regions.

There are also on-going Savonlinna development projects in introducing new tourism products in the region. Growth of Russian tourism has been particularly strong and has been aided by extensive investments in new luxury villas and other high quality accommodation capacity. (Savonlinnaseutu, 2013)

Many of local businesses exploit the proximity of St Petersburg, and Russia is an important target market for the tourism industry. Negotiations to gain a border crossing point at Parikkala have been launched at a high level. Opening the border would bring unlimited opportunities for a development corridor running from Parikkala to Savonlinna and then on towards Jyväskylä. (Savonlinnaseutu, 2013)

According to above mentioned source, the number of Russian tourists has increased significantly each year (+10-20 %) during the six year period from 2006 to 2012. In

2011 the overnights by Russian tourists increased by 47% reaching the level of 60% of all international tourism. It means the value of Russian customers is continuously growing. Therefore, the agency has a great part of international marketing strategy on Russian market.

Thus, this marketing strategy is well targeted. What is more, the agency has established long-term relationship with Saint-Petersburg tour operators, representing it in local market. This tendency corresponds to the values of mutual common work.

3.3   Marketing communication channels of the agency

At the moment agency is looked for identifying best channels to reach Russian customers, thus to test a combination of several channels to advance its advertising campaigns (to descry which channels would be best work for the following marketing campaigns). As the study shows, the agency might concentrate marketing efforts on multichannel advertising, and especially emphasize on netvertising.

At present the agency has been developed e-marketing plan with strong emphasis on online channels. In a word, online flow could evolve users' interaction by posting or tagging content on travelogues, blogs, and interest communities. Another opportunity for establishing B-to-B contacts since many companies are advertising themselves thru social media.

New media bringing new marketing opportunities for the agency, including image creating, reputation, customer share, boosting sales, gathering feedbacks is also essential for improvements of e-services. Therefore, by emphasising interacting with audiences thru communications links that could enhance communication flow with customers, acquire new ones, increase positive image and lead to improvements in e-marketing performance.

It can be presumed that geographical targeting Savonlinna area (Savonlinnaseutu) speaks by its name and make image of Savonlinna travel agency more noticeable, tag together with the city as a part of the Eastern region.

4 Quantitative study

4.1 Research method

The empirical part of the thesis was conducted as quantitative research due to the nature of the study. This approach requires establishing evidences, facts or patterns between variables, counting data statistically to discover principles of their interconnection in order to gain get insight of the research questions. The empirical research was aimed to define media habits and patterns (if there are any) of Russian tourists. Key questions to consider include the following: what they search, read, watch, listen, google, and where? What issues people consider for trip arrangements and bookings and where they purchase such services? Why tourists are interested in visiting the region and what to advertise (pulling factors of selling destination)?

According to the research questions raised in the theory findings and conclusions were obtained empirically. Perceptual empirical knowledge is a reflection of facts out of data conclusions. Empirically driven research involved inductive reasoning. Inductive method meant studying individual cases and generalising them into concepts or general statements. Empirical quantitative based study counts cases in numbers and generalises information from experiences into evidence of summary.

Quantitative research based on sufficient sample group could be background information on subject and its further studies, a good statistical source which is supplemented by visual variables in graphs. It is especially efficient at testing theory aspects within numeric cases. Quantitative research consists of the data that can be analysed in terms of numbers. Therefore, it was more suitable research method for in-depth analysis of the research problem, which was a need for the commissioning party.

Research can also be qualitative, that is, it can describe events, persons and so forth scientifically without the use of numerical data. Quantitative research is based more directly on its original plans and its results are more readily analysed and interpreted. Qualitative research is more open and responsive to its subject. Both types of research are valid and useful. They are not mutually exclusive. It is possible for a single investigation to use both methods. (Qualitative and quantitative approaches to social research, Christina Hughes).

Each method does not entirely achieved the study goals, but it has own system, perhaps their combination might facilitate the interpretation of relationships between variables and give more comprehensive picture of specific subject matter.

4.2 Data gathering

The data for the research was collected from quantitative survey conducting in some hotels in Helsinki and Eastern Finland. These hotels were taken part in the survey: Hotel Cumulus (Helsinki), Cumulus Lappeenranta, Cumulus Imatra, Cumulus Kotka, Helka (Helsinki), Vaakuna Mikkeli, Rantasipi Valtionhotelli (Imatra, Lappeenranta), Hotel Seurahuone Helsinki, Hotel Scandic Continental, Hellsten Hotel Apartments, Hellsten Parliament (Helsinki), Kotimaailma (Helsinki), Holiday Inn (Helsinki), Sokos Hotel Presidentti (Helsinki), Hotel Crown Plaza (Helsinki), Hotel Anna (Helsinki), Scandic Patria Lappeenranta, Herttua Kerimäki, Best Western Spahotel Casino (Savonlinna), Sokos Hotel Vaakuna (Joensuu), Scandic Grand Marina (Helsinki), Sokos Hotel (Savonlinna). Besides named hotels the data was collected with the help of Savonlinna regional tourism organisation, and also the question form was distributed thru the local shop Muotitalo Puki in Savonlinna city. The survey was conducted in December-January 2012-2013.

Quantitative approach involves testing theory by means of designing structured questionnaire, counting responses, making statistical analysis, drawing conclusions out findings. The method was chosen right because the nature of the study proposes getting representative sample group and importance of personal opinions of ordinary Russian tourists. The survey was revealing the data-driven inference factors which influence media choices the most. In progress, totally there were 267responds obtained, 43 out of them were gathered by the commissioner. Findings were analysed statistically to get a range of vision scoping of the best communication channels and medium choices. The creative treatment of questionnaire suggests creative information treatment. The questionnaire was structured into 3 main target groups. The first set of questions 1-7 was dedicated to media choice. Question 2 has sub-item for hotel reservation sources, scaled questions 8-9 concern of the evaluation of hotel services, customer satisfaction criteria's. The rest of questions described the respondents' profile of gender and age. In

this 3rd section open-ended question 10 provides the possibility to express the opinions in general of hospitality, level of services, lack of information sources in the region. The open-ended question include qualitative features was created to supplement survey with feedback and suggestions. The survey questions for the respondents are presented in the Appendix 2.

The questionnaire was designed in English and then translated into Russian. The English version was used during negotiations with hotel top management and for the team leaders of commissioner party. The Russian version was distributed among the hotels in Helsinki and Eastern Finland. Basically Russian copy is a direct translation of the form with small changes in questions' order and also includes cover letter explaining the purposes of the study to the respondents. The questions were in sync with the commissioner to fulfil the desired outcomes. Then the question form was sent to couple of friends to avoid misunderstanding and faulty interpretation of questions. The survey questions for the respondents are presented in the Attachments 2-3.

4.3 Results and analysis

Questions from 1 to 5 were analysed and visualised by using Excel tables. These questions have a multi-response design, so the respondents were able to choose more than one option in each question. For each question analysed in Excel every variable has a percentage portion of answers relatively to the total score of respondents (that is 267).
Questions 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 were analysed by SPSS tools.
Questions 11, 12 represent personal information by age and gender of the sample group.
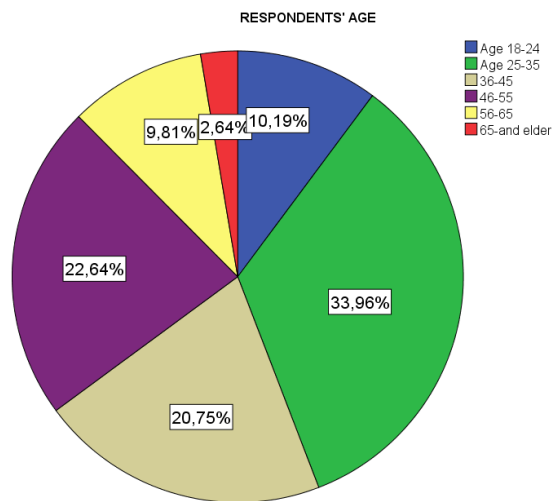
Graph 1 Age groups (Source: Statistical support data)

Age group was divided into six categories: from 18-24, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, and 65+ in order to make it more representative. Each age category is showed in percentage points on the graph. As it seen on the graph the biggest shares belong to 3 groups 25-35 – 33.96%, 36-45 – 20.75%, 46-55 – 20.64%. The youngest and senior groups have almost similar ratio. In this sense the sample group is well represented by different age groups. The majority of respondents are either average age or above middle age.

Totally 60.75% of respondents were females and 39.25% males. Both gender groups are well represented in the study.
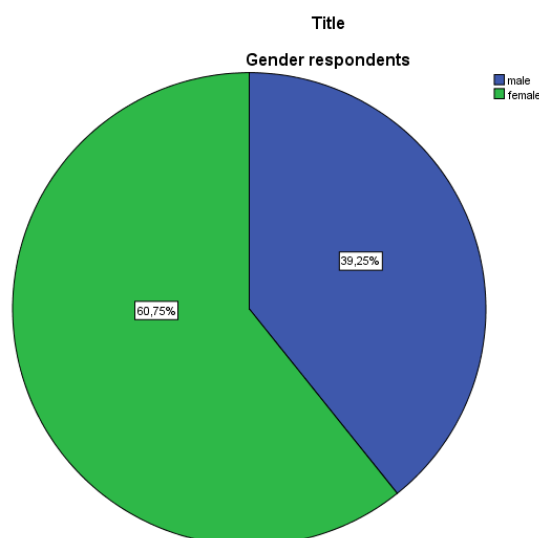
Graph 2 Gender groups (Source: Statistical support data)

Question 1 Do you think Eastern Finland has some attributive image as a tourist destination?

First question identifies the importance of criteria for choosing a destination. According to the chart below, one can see that "Location – 78.28%" is the most significant criteria for choosing destination for Russian people. In this connection spending weekends, holiday short-breaks, also car accessibility, or good possibility of buying travel package over stop – they are all motivating elements bended to geographical position. Geographical position corresponding to location is selling factor of destination due to proximity from westbound of Russia. The region is relatively popular for nature tourism as the area is rich for lakes, wood, cottage outdoor recreation. Natural physical environment, attractions, things to do can be considered core factors of visiting this or another place. The attractiveness of a Eastern region is viewed by respondents on reasons such as landscape of nature, cottage rent, season outdoor activities, culture, engaging variety of activities like spa, ecotourism, food tourism, festivals etc.

The demand of tourist-tailored experiences is making the region individual destination, which is sought through culture, adventure, outdoor activities. The respondents approached the pictures both as interest in new place to visit and familiarity with known-place to come again. These co-factors (things to do) specified why to come to the region thru individual experiences of respondents. The second highest share of responds have "Winter sports" corresponded to 38.95%. In addition to "SPA 37.83%", "Outdoor activities, 37.83%", "Summer sports, 16.48%", "Cottage, 34.46%", "Festive occasions, 29.21%"attribute to "Location" identifying the reasons for visiting region. Other attributes such as "Budget travelling, 22.85%" and "Cultural tourism, 17.6%" were also notional for respondents. All together they are pulling factors for choosing the region as a travelling destination. The lowest portion got variables "Food Tourism"- 7.49% and "Other", 3.37%. For the option "Other" the respondents have not specified the reasons but already given answers provided an extensive data for analysis.

In general this question tested the wishes of respondents which might be taken into account for marketing of destination (what). Thereof they should be accounted on developing travel packages (from budget to exotic offerings) for need satisfaction of cli-

ents (to whom). They are resulting into identifying best advertising channels to reach the targets (thru communication channels).

For each question analysed in Excel every variable has a percentage portion of answers relatively to the total score of respondents (that is 267).
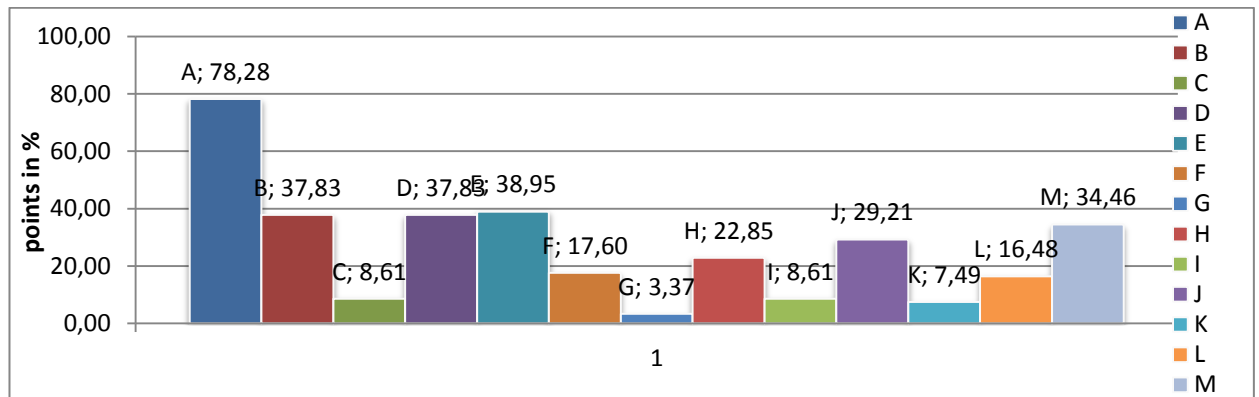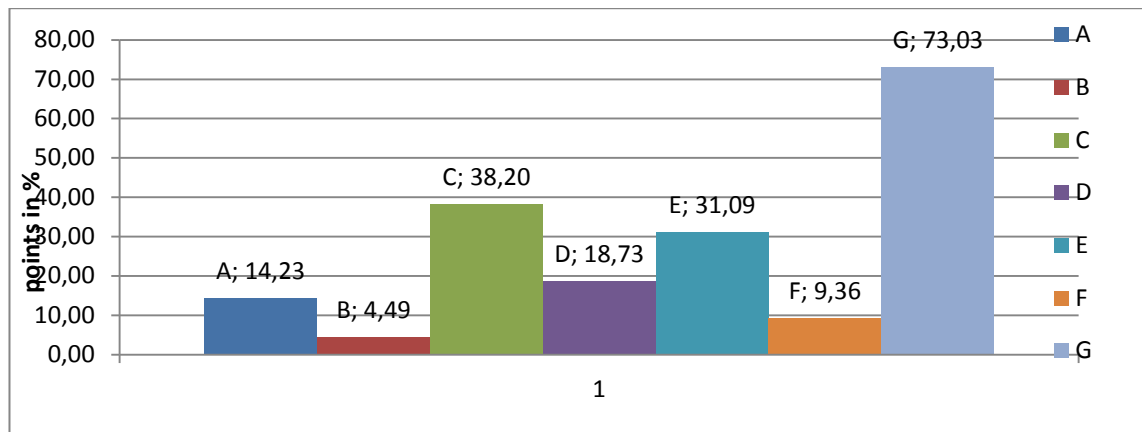

Graph 3 Pull factors (Source: Statistical support data)

A Location
B Outdoor recreation
C Event trips, musical festivals
D Aqua parks, SPA
E Winter sports
F   Cultural tourism
G Other
H Great possibilities of budget travelling
I   Green tourism
J   Spending festive ocassions
K Food tourism
L Summer sports
M Cottage

This table introduces the question in detail. The points in the question are marked with different letter codes (A-M). The codes make ease the interpretation of the analysis. The graph shows in percentages how many answers chose a certain alternative. Same logic applies to the rest of Excel graphs where variables are encoded with letters.

Question 2 What were the most informative channels used before visit (accommodation, activities, tours).

Graph 4 Media patterns (Source: Statistical support data)

A Tour operator
B Broadcast TV, Radio
C Word of mouth
D Travel brochure/guide information
E Travel blogs, testimonials
F Free of charge newspapers
G Internet

According to the chart, the highest value has "Internet - 73.03%". Second highest variable is "Word of mouth – 38.20%" followed by "Travel blogs, testimonials – 31.09%" having very important meaning for respondents. Again travel blogs and testimonials are directly correlated to usage of internet.

Such attributes as "Travel brochure, guide information – 18.73%", "Tour operator – 14.23%" have important meaning for respondents.

The lowest value have two attributes "Free of charge newspapers – 9.36%" and "Broadcast TV, Radio – 4.49%"; they either have less important meaning as other information sources. Newspapers are seen to be informative source for placing ads that would stick in audience memory. Besides it is traditional actual usage medium at present that is easy to get information without having any technical device. It has been surprisingly found that traditional television and radio have the lowest effect observed. It might be assumed that mostly small tourist companies are not selling on TV due to high cost. Cost-effectiveness of radio advertising should be a separate follow-up study. Totally foreseeable is wide application of internet where travellers can surf at any place. The study revealed the fact of ubiquity of internet reality and potential for virtual mo-

bility (WAP for mobile applications). Online practices for mobile internet are studied in question 4b.

Question 3 Have you ever used Russian language online sources listed below or anything else to arrange your trip?
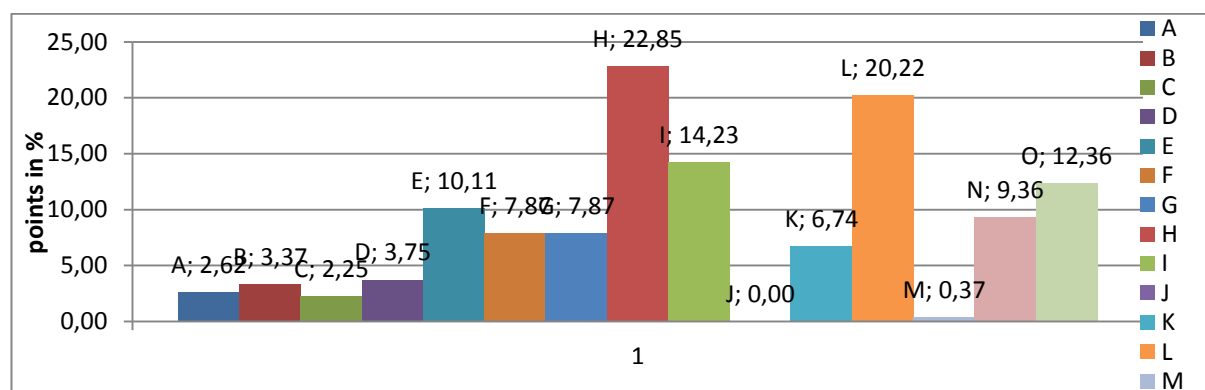
Graph 5 Travel portals (Source: Statistical support data)

A Checkinfinland.ru
B Igotofinland.ru
C Finlandway.ru
D Savonlinna.travel
E Suomi.ru
F To-Finland.ru
G In-Finland.ru
H Vkontakte
I Visitfinland.ru
J Fin-Digest.ru
K Finnish.ru
L Other sources
M Da.fi
N Stopinfin.ru
O Russian.fi

This question was intended to identify the search of information of trip arrangements from Russian language web portals. Again extensive use of this or that particular source provides advertising space of future marketing campaigns.

The largest popular social media "VKontakte" has bigger importance among the respondents with 22.85% share. VKontakte core functions are based around private messaging, managing online communities, sharing media content and links with

friends. This makes it much easier to advertise leisure and travel pages, as the alternative to a URL.

Finding a popular medium between user and search engine will yield certain results for creating awareness about the agency and services. In general internet sources allow advertisers to tailor their pitch to users who have revealed what information they're seeking. The second largest value has "Other sources - 20.22%" where respondents named different online sources: **Booking.com, Huvila.net, Huvila.fi, Adw.ru, InfoFinland.ru, HSE.fi, Fontanka.fi, Saimaa holiday, TripAdvisor, Travel.ru, Vr.fi, Facebook, Littleone.ru, Lomarengas.fi, Nettimokk.com, Vipkarta.fi, E-Finland.fi,** and search engines. These other sources should be tested to find out its potential for placing advertising.

There are also those more likely to seek particular travelogues, blogs for searching through targeted searches. Among them the third rank belongs to "VisitFinland.ru" with a share of 14.23% of the respondents. Furthermore notable amount of the respondents mentioned "Russians.fi" – 12.36%, "Suomi.ru"- 10.11%, "Stop-In-Finland" – 9.36%. Another two portals "To-Finland.ru and In-Finland.ru" has equal proportion of 7.87%". Also recognisable is "Finnish.ru" with a rate of 6.74%. It is a satisfaction to know that the web-site of the agency "Savonlinna.travel" is on 9th rank that has recognition among 3.75% of respondents. Other sources were considered as less important but they still got some recognition. "Igotofinland", 3.37%, "Checkinfinland.ru, 2.62%, Finlandway.ru - 2.25%.

In this question was determined the most popular source for making trip arrangements that is turn out to be Vkontakte. Moreover some internet portals in Russian language were proper tested how they are recognisable by internet audience.

Question 4a During your visit or re-visit where do you like to get information?
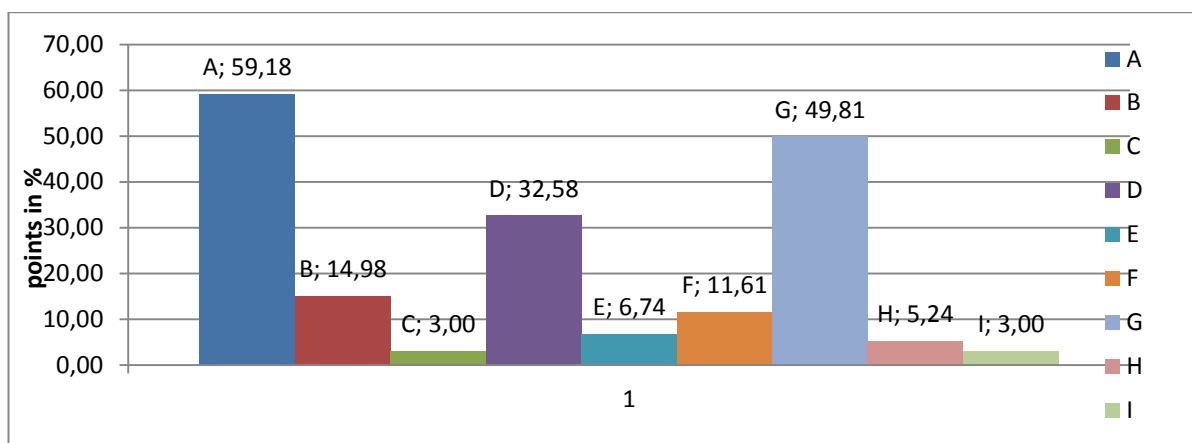
Graph 6 Tourists information services (Source: Statistical support data)

A Hotels
B Shopping centres
C Fuel stations
D Tourist information boards
E City tour offices
F   Newspapers Spektr, Trade route
G Mobile
H Train/Bus/Boat stations
I   Cruise liner

According to the graph, the highest value has "Hotels" with a biggest share of 59.18% responds. Second highest variable has "Mobile internet" with 49.18%, followed by "Tourist Information Boards" with 32.58% which having very important meaning for respondents. These three variables were taking high ranking as preferable information sources.

During their visits Russians are likely going for shopping – 14.08%. Shopping centers seem to be a place where Russians are seeking to get local tourist information as well. Perhaps distributing of promotion printed materials in the shopping centers are the places of entertaining advertising, clearance sales, and offerings.

"Newspapers" – 11.61% have important meaning for getting information. Newspapers were taking prominence with 11.61% among other channels. Regional and free newspapers with content of local news and events have been reliable information source among the Russian people. Generally local newspapers are good enough in reporting locally, local items, daily of news and convenient tool for classified and display advertising. City tours 6.74% have been considered as traditional places for tour guid-

ance, sights and still have integral role in tourism. Almost the same share of respondents was seen "Train/Bus/Boat stations" 6.24% as a place for getting tourist information on visit.

The lowest share of 3% obtained "Fuel stations" and "Cruise stations". These two places are might be good alternative for people travelling by car inside the country as well as for cruise travellers. Together these six variables represent preferable source for seeking tourist information on a visiting.

Question 4b Please define which device do you frequently use for googling?
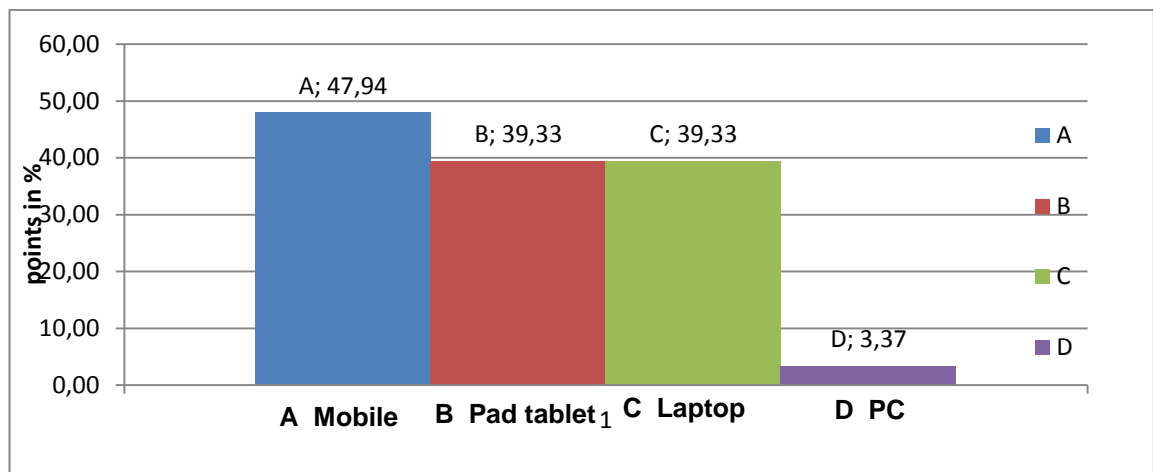
Graph 7 Applications for network (Source: Statistical support data)

Today internet technologies revealed great potential for virtual mobility. Various technologies have been employed to represent online world itself where tourist destinations are its part. It can be said that travelling and mobility are reality, from clicking travelogues, portals, bookings, checking destinations, attractions to taking online tours. In these travel blog people describe their experiences and stories. According to the graph, either all mobile internet variables have extremely significance for travellers. Thus virtual tourism world become more accessible, websites and mobile sites that move with the traveller. People take along their laptops, pads and mobiles and use them actively for googling, itineraries and entertainment.

Question 5 Which relevant information have you found from the internet during your visit?
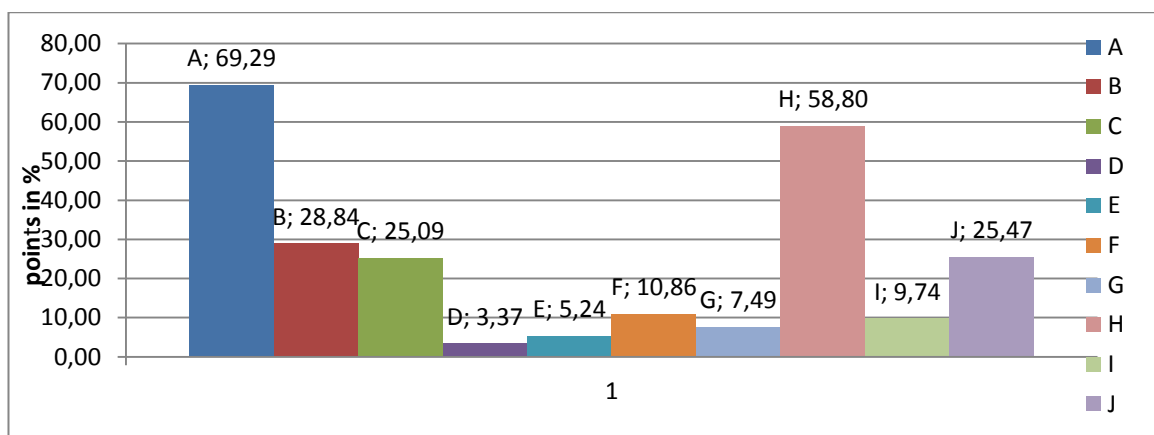
Graph 8 Googling patterns (Source: Statistical support data)

A Tourist attractions
B Outdoor leisure activities
C Train/Bus table
D Other, what?
E Guided tours
F Restaurant menu's
G Promotional events, deals
H Itinerary, road maps
I Online news in Russian
J Shopping/clearance sales

Again the points in the question are marked with different letter codes (A-J). The codes make ease the interpretation of the analysis. The graph shows in percentages how many answers chose a certain variable.

In this question the intention was to find out what kind of tourist information Russian tourists seeking during their visits. The following graph specifies that for seeking relevant tourist information Russian people prefer to access thru online channels.

The results showed that highest values stand for "Tourist attractions"- 69.29%, "Itinerary, road maps" – 58.6%. Other variables that believed important were "Outdoor leisure activities" – 28.84%, "Shopping/clearance sales" - 25.47%, "Train/Bus table" – 25.09%. "Restaurant menu's" – 10.86%, "Online news in Russian" - 9.74%, "Promotional events, deals" – 7.49% were regarded as less important factors.

In particular, Russian tourists especially interested to find more about sights, road maps, entertainment, transportation and sales in the local shops. These variables reflect their motivation for travel in the region. As it seen the pull factors are common to any other place in Finland, they are not portrayed destination itself. Speaking about marketing activities agency might emphasise of advancing travel packages with different price range, which include guided tours around main tourist attractions, extra tours for sightseers, transfer and entertainment programme in spare time (restaurants, shopping, cultural events).

It is good to find out that Russians are also interested to be aware of local news, listening news on yle.fi/news in Russian and reading press review about local items. As the results showed Russians have some interest towards any promotional events that has little in common to shopping clearance, another possibility to advertise thru non-media channels.

The ultimate goal may be to advertise and publicize the image of the agency across relevant sites and portals of (showed by the study results) – each channel deliver would message in its own way. Way finding sites, itinerary and location sites, public transport timetable, cultural and general news, on-going events, interactive travel on travelogues and communities where people hang out, travel tips – these are relative online places where to communicate by placing ads and perhaps if the demand will increase hire extra staff for working on CRM programmes.

Question 6 Which of the social network apps were useful to find more information on your trip at a short time?

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
GOOGLE PLACES	86	32,2%	181	67,8%	267	100,0%
FOURSQUARE	14	5,2%	253	94,8%	267	100,0%
GEOLOCATION	5	1,9%	262	98,1%	267	100,0%
TRIPADVISOR	32	12,0%	235	88,0%	267	100,0%
OTHER	18	6,7%	249	93,3%	267	100,0%

Table 3 Social network apps (Source: Statistical support data)

According to great popularity of Google search engine, 32.2% of the respondents prefer to approach the destination and tourist information thru Google Places. Rather recognisable is considered TripAdvisor by 12%. Foursquare has a share of 5.2%. The less preferable source happened to be Geolocation in the ratio 1.9%. Option Other was chosen by 6.7% of respondents and they could specify the exact source where they search for information. Among the given answers were Russian popular engine yandex.ru, and social media like vkontakte, facebook.

Question 8 How important the following aspects concerning your visit?

Scaled questions 8, 9 were designed for hotels – other stakeholders of project – for studying level of satisfaction in hospitality and hotel services. The respondents had to rate their answers from 1 to 4, where "1" is "not important", "2" is "less important", "3" is "important", and "4" is "very important", thus mean from "1,0-1,75" is "not important", from "1,76-2,5" is "less important", from "2,51-3,25" is "important", from "3,26-4,0" is "very important". These intervals apply for both scaled questions in the thesis.
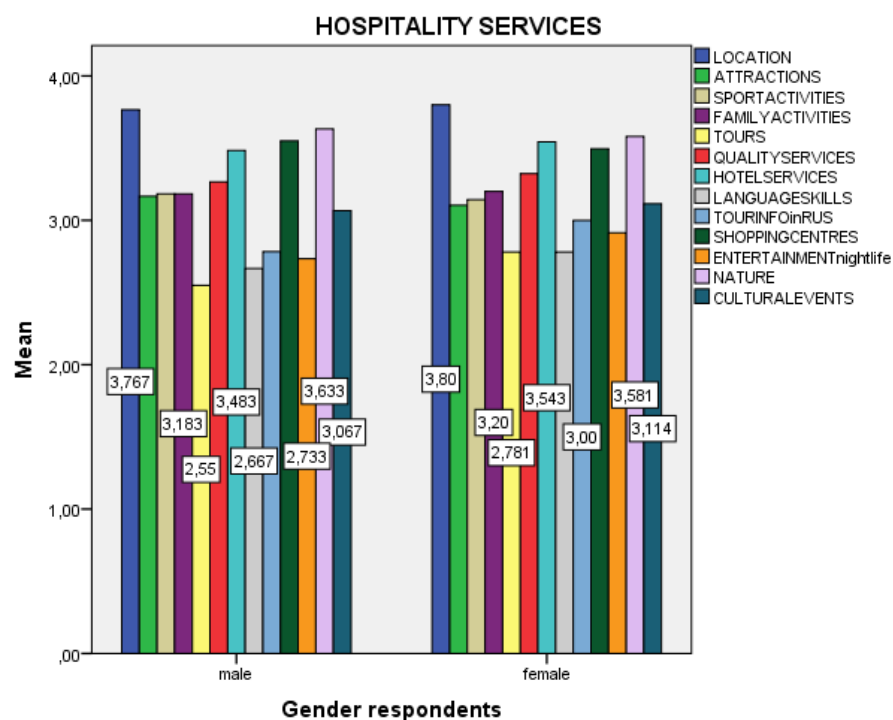
Graph 9 Hospitality services (Source: Statistical support data)

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Descriptive Statistics of Hospitality Services

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LOCATION	257	1,00	4,00	3,8093	,46628
ATTRACTIONS	248	1,00	4,00	3,1734	,77810
SPORT ACTIVITIES	207	1,00	4,00	3,1739	,91836
FAMILYA CTIVITIES	205	1,00	4,00	3,2098	,85170
TOURS	200	1,00	4,00	2,7100	,91657
QUALITY SERVICES	219	1,00	4,00	3,3196	,83398
HOTEL SERVICES	247	1,00	4,00	3,5668	,63964
LANGUAGE SKILLS	238	1,00	4,00	2,7479	1,01648
INFO in RUS	241	1,00	4,00	2,8838	,91912
SHOPPING CENTRES	246	1,00	4,00	3,5610	,65336
ENTERTAINMENT	212	1,00	4,00	2,9057	,85463
NATURE	232	1,00	4,00	3,6164	,68014
CULTURALEVENTS	220	1,00	4,00	3,1500	,82221
Valid N (listwise)	165				

Table 4 (Source: Statistical support data)

Case Summary of Hospitality Services

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
LOCATION	257	96,3%	10	3,7%	267	100,0%
ATTRACTIONS	248	92,9%	19	7,1%	267	100,0%
SPORT ACTIVITIES	207	77,5%	60	22,5%	267	100,0%
FAMILY ACTIVITIES	205	76,8%	62	23,2%	267	100,0%
TOURS	200	74,9%	67	25,1%	267	100,0%
QUALITY SERVICES	219	82,0%	48	18,0%	267	100,0%
HOTEL SERVICES	247	92,5%	20	7,5%	267	100,0%
LANGUAGE SKILLS	238	89,1%	29	10,9%	267	100,0%
INFO in RUS	241	90,3%	26	9,7%	267	100,0%
SHOPPINGCENTRES	246	92,1%	21	7,9%	267	100,0%
ENTERTAINMENT/ Nightlife	212	79,4%	55	20,6%	267	100,0%
NATURE	232	86,9%	35	13,1%	267	100,0%
CULTURAL EVENTS	220	82,4%	47	17,6%	267	100,0%

Table 5 (Source: Statistical support data)

As results showed most issues related to hospitality and hotel services are having the means over 2.51 on scale that is considered as important or highly important.

The standard deviation table showed a variance of given results. Due to small standard deviation (less than 1) in most variables, it can be said that most of respondents share the same opinion. Only one variable "Language skills" has standard deviation over 1, and few variables have deviance close to 1. This means that respondents have higher scatter value in their opinions. Besides all of variables have a high mean and these factors either important or highly important. Mainly the findings have been analysed by statistic mean value with correlation towards their percentage share of each attribute.

The mean observation showed the attitude towards hospitality services. According to the table above, one also finds the general opinion that "Location" is the most significant criteria for choosing a destination for Russians from westbound. It has the highest mean equal to 3.8 and share of 96.3%. Second largest mean has attribute "Nature" that is 3.61 and portion of 86.9%. These issues confirmed in question 1; they possibly play the most decisive role for short distance travelling.

"Hotel services" and "Shopping possibilities" obtained same mean value of "3.56" and portions of 92.5% and 92.1%. Many Russians coming for shopping which is not surprise information but one more proof collected from customer feedback. It can be said that shopping centres have strong demand and trending to increase interest among the Russian tourists. Local hospitality operations and services could be marketed through in-place by distributing collaterals and visual lobby displays (printed audio- and video materials) in the shopping centres. They are perfect venues in the towns have a bigger footfall. It means possibility for captive advertising in front of main entrance/exits, lobbies, in the very best positions that everyone can notice; and also print advertising stacked in racks.

Hotel services and quality of services are also two well defined concepts constantly on studying within the travel industry. Customer satisfaction and perception are studied in detail in order to refresh information on quest's preferences and what could be done for improvements. In this particular research the customers gave positive attitude and they are happy with hospitality services being provided. Together with "Quality ser-

vices" received mean value of "3.31" and share of 82%; activities for family has mean of "3.20" and share of 76.8% were seen important among majority of the respondents.

Along with good possibilities for "Sport activities – 77.5%" and seeing "Attractions – 92.9" gained similar mean value 3.17. Places of interest were seen a vital part of ease for many Russian leisure travellers. Good possibilities for season sport activities have positive effect on the customers' travel experience. Sport activities contribute to the clients' vitality and spirit during the trip, and of course to the whole picture of short break.

The role of entertainment in day time and nightlife obtained the mean value of 2.9 and share of 79.4% that also contributed to the whole picture of image of destination. Perhaps customers expect more emphasis on recreation purposes, event programme and activities, as well as getting more information in Russian language in the hotels. Overall attributes "Information in Russian language – 90.3%" got the mean value of 2.88 and "Language skills in hospitality – 89.1%" with mean of 2.74 both considered important as it is part of the overall travel experience.

 The lowest mean attribute has "Touring" - 2.71 and portion of respondents answered 74.9%. The fact these variable were rated over 2.51, they still regarded as an important factors. Hence the diversity of local tours, guided programme expected to be developed well but not common choice for every respondent.

To sum up leading factors such as "Location" and "Nature" "Attraction" are essentially important for respondents as well as "Hotel services", "Shopping centres" and information in Russian language; and rest of the points with lowest mean "Touring" still regarded as important attributes.

Question 9 What would influence your choice for choosing hotel?
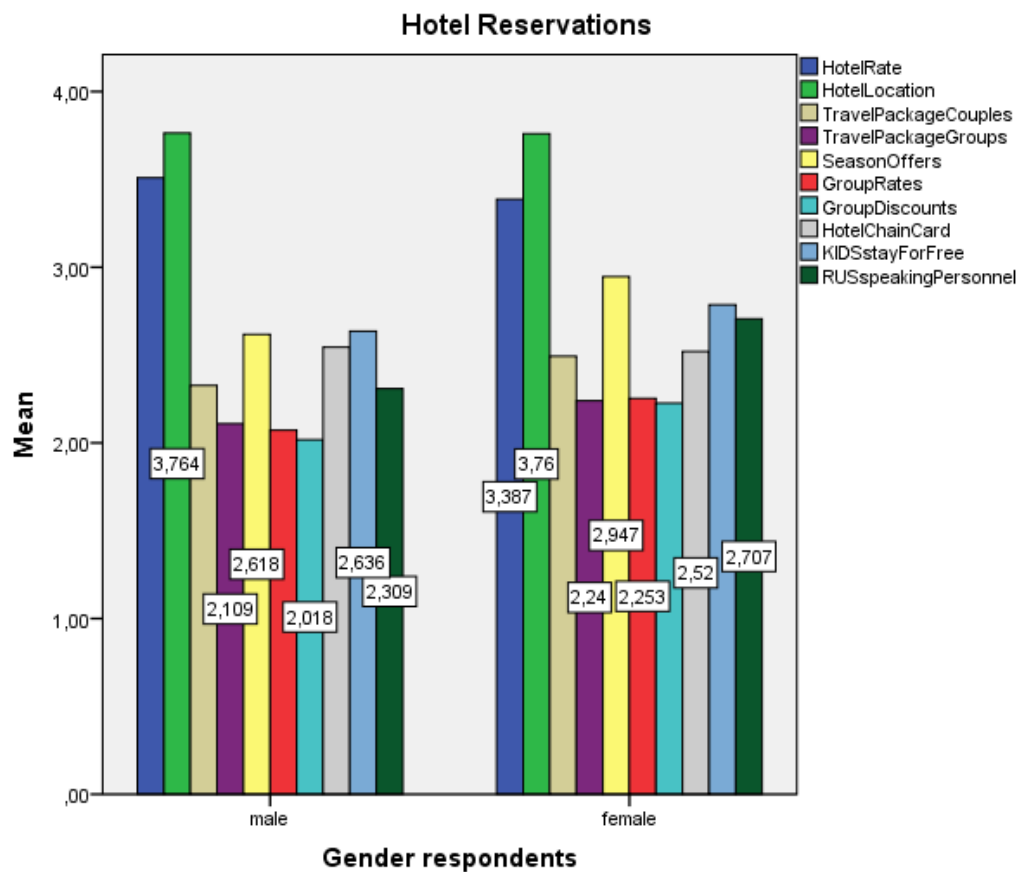
Graph 10 Hotel bookings (Source: Statistical support data)

Same as in previous graph the results showed most issues related to hospitality and hotel services are having the means over 2.51 on scale that is considered as important or highly important.

The standard deviation table showed a variance of given results. Due to high standard deviation (more than 1) in most variables, it can be said that most of respondents have a high variance in their opinions. High deviation rate means that respondents' opinions regarding to these issues were disagree with each other.

Basic statistics of the Hotel Reservations

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hotel Rate	247	1,00	4,00	3,4980	,63036
Hotel Location	251	1,00	4,00	3,8127	,44810
Travel Package Couples	180	1,00	4,00	2,6167	1,12501
Travel Package Groups	158	1,00	4,00	2,3354	1,18166
Season Offers	183	1,00	4,00	2,9727	1,08147
Group Rates	158	1,00	4,00	2,2785	1,20442
Menu Group Discounts	154	1,00	4,00	2,1753	1,17786
Hotel Chain Card	162	1,00	4,00	2,6358	1,18875
KIDS stay for Free	168	1,00	4,00	2,9048	1,27734
RUS Speaking Personnel	213	1,00	4,00	2,6526	1,15801
Valid N (listwise)	130				

Table 6 (Source: Statistical support data)

Case Summary of the Hotel Reservations

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Hotel Rate	247	92,5%	20	7,5%	267	100,0%
Hotel Location	251	94,0%	16	6,0%	267	100,0%
Travel Package Couples	180	67,4%	87	32,6%	267	100,0%
Travel Package Groups	158	59,2%	109	40,8%	267	100,0%
Season Offers	183	68,5%	84	31,5%	267	100,0%
Group Rates	158	59,2%	109	40,8%	267	100,0%
Group Discounts	154	57,7%	113	42,3%	267	100,0%
Hotel Chain Card	162	60,7%	105	39,3%	267	100,0%
KIDS stay for Free	168	62,9%	99	37,1%	267	100,0%
RUS Speaking Personnel	213	79,8%	54	20,2%	267	100,0%

Table 7 (Source: Statistical support data)

Only two variables "Hotel rate – 92.5%" and "Hotel location – 94%" have less standard deviation meaning that respondents have more unity in opinions. This means that respondents have less scatter value in their opinions. Besides all of variables have a high mean and, in general, these attributes either important or highly important.

The mean observation showed the attitude towards hospitality services. According to the table above, one also finds that "Hotel location" is the most significant criteria for

choosing hotel. It has the highest mean equal to 3.81. The second largest mean has "Hotel rate" that is 3.49.

"Season offers – 68.5%" was seen rather important with a mean value of 2.97 in travelling. As well as winter and summer activities could part of local touring offering at every season.

"Kids under 12 stay for free" gained portion of 62.9% with mean value 2.9 simply means that children under 12 stay for free in the same room with their parents. Maybe even better not to have age limitations, and if the hotel runs such advertising campaign night be better to simplify to "Kids stay for free". Such campaign targeting family market by offering tangible, concrete value. Keep simple for customers is much more important to succeed.

Attribute "Russian speaking personnel – 79.8%" in the hotels got the mean value of 2.65 which conceived important by respondents. The respondents were considered customer services as well as tourist information in Russian language to best meet their needs and they will appreciate more emphasis to be put on customer friendly hotel solutions.

"Hotel chain card" gained a portion of 60.7% and mean value 2.65. At certain point the respondents valued having frequent guest card with possible discounts of loyalty card. Many hotel chains use a member card to promote a number of items clipped to on-going program. The hotel guests can take an advantage of services at different price range and discounts; loyal customer recognition as a frequent user; exclusive services available to members only etc. Hotels should have club concepts well planned and organised as part of marketing programs.

"Travel packages for couples" has been considered by 67.4% of respondents, got the mean value of 2.61. The impression of promoting packages for couples had quite positive image among the respondents. Perhaps one of the simplest forms for couples could be weekend, honeymoon or holiday package. Package includes some extra tourism product or service at one single price.

Other types of travel packages were not examined in the study. In general in the region packages can be created to appeal tourist's special interests: sport activities, recreational activities, attractions, events, cultural events with dinner, entertainment, transporting, and admission tickets all included in one price.

The rest variables have lower means less than 2.51, they regarded as less important factors. The "Travel packages for groups" got share of 59.2% with mean value of 2.33. The attribute "Group rates" has a portion of 59.2% with mean of 2.27. In this particular study the results showed that mostly leisure travellers were not highly interested in booking pace for groups and sales for group rates. The respondents preferred to make reservations at individual rates instead of corporate rates for groups. For instance, menu group discounts – 57,7% "2,17" were considered to be less attractive. By making comparison of the mean values of these three attributes they retained some importance (between less important and important) among the respondents' opinions.

Perhaps for leisure tourists' group special rates are less important than for business travellers. Here is possible to conclude that business travellers are likely to take an advantage of special corporate fares and at the same time leisure travellers generally have interest to get group rate. People typically travel individually, with family and friends, in couples, in smaller or bigger groups. For instance some leisure travellers book the trips thru travel agency who organised all the trip arrangements for a large group. The principles of price strategy of the hotel services should effectively develop deals for individual reservations and group benefits as well.

To sum up leading factors such as "Hotel location" and "Hotel rate" are essentially important for respondents and rest with lowest mean "Menu group discounts" regarded as less important attributes.

4.4 Reliabilty and Validity

Research result is trustworthy or not, it entirely depends on the research validity. In order to conclude in which extent information provided by researchers is valuable, it is essential to access how the research was conducted and where responses were collected.

The research of Russian tourists' media preferences was executed by quantitative method. Questionnaire design especially focused on the research questions and commissioner's points of view. The research has a high reliability. The respondents were native Russians those asked in local environment. These people who have visited country with tourist purposes during their visits or re-visits. Overall, this survey is a collection of valuable opinions based on trustworthy questionnaire agreed with commissioner.

The respondents were formed into 6 age groups, so that the most active sample population were people between 25-45 years old, but other groups were also well defined. Thus responds from various targets and opinions from different point of views are gained. This leads to the point that analysis can be flexible, since there are many perspectives to compare and advance the outcomes. The commissioner could make analysis of primary data based on concrete needs or consider these findings as well to identify the issues more clearly, or make another in-depth research or case study.

As media choices were defined in its perspective, considering all the facts discussed in the theoretical part which led to make the research itself comparatively reliable. Practically it can be mentioned that define best media has much in common with the measuring effectiveness of channels drawn in theory and proven in the empirics. In support, all the major components media mix, and especially digital media favoured by respondents were marked significantly important for all matters regarding holiday and trip arrangements. For instance bookings, attractions, outdoor activities, cultural events, sales clearance and promotional events, entertainments, sport activities were essential factors when planning the trips, and this is exact information what people search from different sources. Certainly Internet is indispensible and immediate resources for browsing or queries. Besides online sources the findings show applicability and usage of traditional media. It is also possible relied on below the line word of mouth and grass roots marketing campaigns.

One of the approaches for claiming validity is establishing a clear chain of evidence to enable the reader to follow how the researcher went from research questions to conclusions. (J.D. Farquhar, 2012, p. 101)

This survey can be considered as valid because the research has basically gained to the stated goals. The findings meet the goals by creating relevant questionnaire, appropriate data gathering, sufficient sample group and basic statistical analysis of the results. Validity also showed the relationship between variables using statistics such as correlations between variables and differences between the means.

Each question of the questionnaire concerns a different aspect of reliability. So, the results in question 6 are not reliable at all as most of the answers were missing. It can be said that respondents skip this question as they are not widely use relocation applications yet. Also in questions 1-5 analysed by Excel it was difficult to measure number of missing answers that effected their reliability. Although in questions 1-5 were not that many missing answers but without statistical evidence this is just general statement. Totally obtained data can be considered relatively reliable as it represents each variable extensively, except question 6, with large percentage opinions out of sample group.

For the most part the findings are rather reliable and fairly represent the current situation with media channels. Questionnaire is provided with the basis of what meant to know for this research. It was possible to conclude the preferable media sources, pulling factors, customer satisfaction in the hotel services; they are together provide the advertising content to be delivered and places for ads in the aspect of marketing destination.

Reliability refers to the absence of random error so if the research was repeated, researcher would arrive at the same insights. From a broader perspective, it is an assessment of whether the evidence is consistent and stable. (J.D. Farquhar, 2012, p. 102)

In this aspect such advertising effectiveness research could not come to the same conclusions if it would be repeated again. Concerning reliability each time new facts under the same issues would reveal. The research issues might change less or more significantly with market trends, life changes, and technology based factors that are external reasons. For example, with developing "new media" e-marketing was born and digital advertising is created. Similar things happen to e-marketing in tourism. As a consequence of "online trend", tourism businesses are willing to adverse and to sell more

online. Technology is affecting peoples' behaviour patterns. Indeed, new generation of smartphones, tablets have made life become easier as people can do whatever, whenever and wherever they want. As a result, such research is reliable within a certain period of time.

5 Findings

Arguably, advertising effectiveness study can even be considered as relevant for the challenges and opportunities that every business faces. Commercial channels are timely theme for any business, including promotional of tourisms services on local and international markets. This advertising research investigated the media effectiveness and media choices among the Russian tourists, thereby responding the research questions. The annual growth of Russian tourists coming to Finland is observed. Therefore, data actuality is highly relevant to the market situation. So far this advertising research has met forecasting and marketing plans of the agency. Particular this and similar studies contributed to the development of local tourism in the region.

This study was an extensive survey concerning the commercial channels, types of advertising and media mix. The results of the survey revealed the preferences of the Russian tourists, push factors for visiting the region (destination branding), priority of leisure activities that are prime factors of promotion planning and advertising campaigns. The images and peoples' travel experiences in mass media create attitude, motivation for visiting the place.

The results were thoroughly analysed and conclusions are made, therefore, the commissioner can applied the findings in practice. The study analysed a range of channels, advertising response effect, where Internet sources considered as the most popular and cost-effective in terms of media analysis. As it was stated in the theory part online channels and e-marketing is the most potential strategy in today tourism industry. In tourism business interactive media is widely used for immediate bookings and reservations, establishing virtual and real B-to-B business contacts, medium of exchange information and experiences that is why it has also great potential for the area of application marketing and netvertising.

According to respondents, the best choice of channels also depends on nature of information. The research proved what kind of tourist information Russian tourists seeking from the internet prior/on visit. In accord to the majority of respondents, Internet has the most efficient information resource role. Searching for attractions, itinerates, road maps, transport timetable, leisure activities, restaurants, local online news in Russian language as well as clearance sales in the shopping centres were the most requisites during the trip. On-line sources were extensively used by majority of respondents for trip arrangements and booking hotels. The leading place was taken by Booking.com for hotel reservations, VKontakte for searching tourist information. It might be good to increase attention and place ads targets on Booking.com in order to extend knowledge about the company. For online visibility could more advertising done thru VKontakte community. The commissioner could take an advantage of up-grading homepage, increase the number of links from other websites directed users to the homepage.

Other appropriate modes for trip arrangements were travel company, word of mouth, travel blog testimonials, travel brochure and guide information. Quite a few respondents used travel company and travel guides together with blogs and travelogues.

Other contributing factors increasing attractiveness of destination were revealed location, purity of nature and another pulling factors (why to come) for choosing destination. According to respondents, the attractiveness of the region can be viewed through location, sport activities, visiting aqua parks and SPA, outdoor leisure, staying in cottages, spending festive occasions, interest towards Finnish cultural life and good possibilities for budget travelling. They are all important factors admitted by respondents for visits or re-visits. Also tourist traffic flow is constantly increasing over the last years.

Some of those attributes interfere and inter cross with season time, some are not. Practically, it means what services are to be included and how to advertise them to the end consumer. In this sense package solution was one of the economic choices for the customer and beneficial for service provider. Target advertising of package solutions might attract more customers to visit the region. Especially advertising of outdoor recreational activities and sport activities at any season as "Nature" was defined as the

most decisive factor for coming to Finland. Nature environment affects the choice of destination pretty much and traditionally has been seen as excellent tourism resource. Tourists were also choosing destination for seeing particular attractions. In this sense marketing sightseeing's should be connected with personal experience that becomes meaningful place for the visitor. Values connected to a holiday experience with seeing attractions seemed to appeal to the targets.

Special offering sometimes in tandem with different types of package solutions are a part of the overall regional revenue from tourism. Therefore it is integral part influencing people minds' for bookings in destination. People would like to make trips on special price offering or buying package "3 in 1" at one single price. The factor of hospitality quality of services was also ranked highly which deals with customer oriented approach. Customer oriented approach and creation of extra services or package solutions will increase tourist flow in the region. Thus, in practice, Russian tourists would appreciate more communication channels and knowledge about local tourism companies to define the better choice of services and possible alternatives.

The study has revealed level of importance of each of the contributing factors for choosing communication channels choice and pull factors for visiting destination. Besides, such elements as family activities, kids stay for free, group rates, language skills in hospitality services, cultural events, entertainments has been admitted by the majority of respondents as essential factors.

Most of the criteria given in questionnaire were answer with the same trends regardless gender, age group showing that tourists from Russian westbound, they still tend be have the same approach regarding pulling factors for visits. However, there are some contractions found in the research which tend to be opinions regarding special season offering, group rates, package solutions for couples or groups, language skills in hospitality and Russian speaking personnel in the hotels. Also people have different opinion about having hotel chain loyalty cards, some of them care less some of them do care more. Group rates, special offering, language skills in hospitality have some contradictions in respondents" opinions that is also appears realistic considering. Group rate is a competitive rate mostly used to attract groups or business travellers. The option Kids less than 12 y.o. stay for free was reasonably more important for families and less important for youngsters. Above mentioned distinguishes tend found in the research in-

dicating people who does have concern in some context of their consideration, on the other hand same criteria likely to be comparatively lower among those who gave grade 1 or 2 to the issue.

In open-ended question the respondents brought to the light individual comments and more general feedback issue of relevance. The idea behind this question was to discover what kind of information tourists has experienced shortage. Summary of key points about the hospitality services in the region and also suggestions on improvements are presented in Attachment 3.

6 Suggestions for on-line marketing:

Once again pointed out at range of advertising channels the results were not surprising at all. Obviously digital media is creative advertising space, probably the strongest to attract different audiences. That's why the agency could more emphasize on E-marketing to experiment and to search a new audience. In this chapter these specific cluster suggestions were proposed because the survey results proved that online channels enjoyed the popularity among the respondents. They are followed by sub-chapter where additional general statements are given.

From the company's point of view the ultimate goal of advertising is having visitor trial or contact form to request additional information. To the customers, the goal is getting a great deal or other attractive offering. By placing different types of messages across several mediums motivated potential buyer to act. By testing diverse calls to action is a way to see what is most effective to targets. The main target for this research was mostly leisure travellers. Every new customer considers being important for the business, as well as treating well existing ones and creating positive attitude.

Home page: With message across landing pages of and having different pages on the site might earn ranking based on search words. With link to and from other popular web-sites, the home page will weighing higher and ranked higher on search engine rankings. For instance, perhaps it is good idea of placing link or banner advertising on

highly popular Multitran.ru dictionary that is widely used by people from different walks of life.

Basically company's web-site is like a hub where the visitors come in flocks. Homepage is like adding in addition to house same like home design. It should be updated on regular basis with fresh content, having links to seasonal deals or special offering. Organising slide show of photo gallery yearly (or seasonally) updated, as well refreshing postings, events calendar, improving attractiveness of web-site content, dynamic slogans and having data uniqueness (special customer-made offering possibly distinctive from competitors) continuously to capture attention of targets. Web-site is available in four languages: Finnish, Swedish, English and Russian.

Content update, fresh images that reflects current events, renewals always keep pace with direction where business moves. To make it come happened web-site tools must have the following features:

- WYSIWYG editor (what you see is what you get)
- HTML editor for more complex changes
  - Support for cascading style sheet (CSS) classes, which ensure the design element of the site are maintained (font styles, text sizes, colours, and other parameters for different categories content)
- Ability to rollback changes to previous version
- Ability to create new pages from existing templates
  - Ability to link to files (documents, video) uploaded. These tools assist a lot to provide well-contented site at ease. (P. VanRysdam, 2010, p.65).

It would be good enough to attach newness on the website that will give new dimensions in consumers' view. At the moment customers can leave recalls on feedback form, seach and see the comments from TripAdvisor and internal blog community "From Savonlinna with love". Homepage repackage should be simple and clear as possible for users and it will generate enough traffic for bookings and feedbacks.

Search Engine Optimisation: Spending advertising budget to support search engine optimisation is worth of doing. There is no point to trouble the readers with technical details how to make it works optimally but good content is half of the way to succeed.

This fresh content will score big points with the search engines, resulting in higher ranking under related search terms and items. (P. VanRysdam, 2010, p.65).

A high ranking is contingent on not just relevant, keyword-laden content but also on fresh, up-to-date content. Every time search engine analyses, or "spiders" web-site, it takes note of any changes. New content tells the spider may be more than sites with older information on topic. (P. VanRysdam, 2010, p.54).

Search engine optimisation by using key words is to provide the most relevant results to the users. In case of the agency search engine (marketing) optimization thru yandex.ru, google.com might be substantial part of web visibility. That's why adding new content to the web make search engine "spiders" notice these changes that will maximise search ranking.

Blog: One of the best ways to push fresh content on a web is through blog. Mostly blog engines are free and keep a blog (travelogue) might be extra good source to communicate. It is also a strong tool to build a community of followers (experienced customers) and getting new customers on trials. Postings in travelogues, blog posts that are extra good points for getting name awareness, interaction with people interested, running a group, and leaving feedbacks.

Link building: Another thing improving the image of the agency in the internet is getting to Booking.com top web-site in industry. It might be good to have adverts on Booking.com as it has extremely popular strong image among the respondents (same assume to the internet audience generally) giving enough emphasis and effort, and audience attention might intensify. Collaboration with Booking.com on partnership can be gaining more benefits that e-marketing methods offer in growing leisure and business travel sector. The site linked to Booking.com would be shown in search engine rankings and so Savonlinna travel agency will more appear in rankings. Link building is very important part of online channel communication. The agency might expand netversing presence by using above mentioned sources that will improve marketing performance.

Vkontakte and other social media: The commissioner is planning to create "Visit Savonlinna" group Vkontakte that is the most popular social network in Russia. Vkontakte can be utilised in many ways: a private page, a blog, a discussion forum, group of

followers, along with individual expression to create new venues for online socializing. To be a user of Vkontakte or another popular social media means not only to be in touch with the friends but also to keep a track of events going on in the world. Most of young people are on-line on the site all day long because it is convenient to use it even by means of a cell phone. Side by side with other social media has boomed in Russia and it is only person's matter of taste which media to prefer. Mostly people are using them for spending their time and getting to know new things, talking to people on any topic, socializing, and creating communities of interest. Flow of communication thru social media is a source of entertainment and information across wider access to different subjects and columns.

6.1 More development suggestions

As seen in the findings commercial channels and media combination are important to reach the targets and their minds. They provided a statistically handled data that defines the most and less visible media channels that would serve for the agency further marketing plans. It is merely confirmed the range of advertising platforms enable to deliver message to the targets. Thus, recommendations for further studies would be:

Marketing of destination (branding) as a whole region is selling factor call for more visits. Developing co-projects, novelty ideas of tourism offering could increase competitiveness of the region. Consequently active cooperation between different co-partners is needed. Increasing competitiveness of destination is possible by giving competitive price (or price attractiveness) for provided services. Importance of price factor for the customer should be taken aboard. Therefore, all amendments to the marketing strategies should be analysed. Thus clear marketing strategy towards optimal value for money or increasing popularity of tourism product and services, or cooperation with local partners and in Russia could be recommended. Providing a complete range of tourisms services by the agency could increase visitors' interest. Besides, Russian customers might appreciate dealing with direct tour operator provider.

On a regular basis customer feedback and experiences could be collected more on specific issues, for instance, social media marketing or advertising thru local broadcast media in North-Western region. As service experience impressions change rapidly with

the time, it should be collected periodically during the stay. Results should be examined in combination customer profile (business or leisure, single or family, age etc.)

In CRM programmes or new account development (primary clients) each customer should feel importance of his/her choices influencing interaction between ordinary customers and agency. The agency should provide more possibilities to communicate direct with customers and leave feedback meaning listen to them.

Pricing is incredibly important for profit opportunities that are often bent to marketing efforts. Perhaps diversity in price range allows selling up and down offerings. Also flexibility to discount when it needed and maximize when demand is grow. Pricing categories from basic to exotic offering to experience excitement activities and increase occupancy would be attractive attention factor. In general exotic offering might be less demanding for mass tourists while cost factor is very important to consider meeting the consumer needs. Price is the greater decisive factor for purchasing in tourism industry. Marketing of things to do at desired destination even with personal touch and experiences has selling role but not the actual purchase decision.

Occasionally it is good to make meaningful researches. For instance, one more quantitative research might become precise or even evaluative one. This should be done to find the explanation to "what" digital channels provide max exposure or what local media or non-media modes spend marketing budget. To produce unique content and valuable data more creative questions are recommended in the next study. This is the only way to find new and valuable data. By conducting further research on these and related issues the findings could be tested once more and getting new survey results could be beneficial for agency marketing efforts in the North-Western region market access.

Based on this piloting advertising research (advertising analysis) the commissioner could do more in-depth or narrow focused research on the following aspects: digital advertising, multimedia campaign, advertising effectiveness study, spot advertising campaigns (target market) or even DAGMAR marketing. (Defining advertising goals for measured advertising result, R. Colley).

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Attachment 1 Summary of key points for the hotels

Below are summarised personal opinions and experiences from respondents, their comments and suggestions on service improvements:

There were frequently mentioned such points as shortage of city traffic flow, promotion events, public catering, fishing, ranking of restaurants, shopping centres opening hours, opening hours and location of museums. Also commonly encountered were table of events including exhibitions, concerts, fairs, local events and tours in the region. Some respondents have a high demand for additional information about family activities and recreation including children's programs.
Also the respondents mentioned winter activities and desire to have more information about rent of snowmobiles, quad bikes with service pricing. One recall was about having route map for driving snowmobile around of Savonlinna city.

Besides, one respondent commented that he would like to have information about mobile communication services while staying in the region, during the short breaks.

Further on one feedback was regarding local newspaper "Savo" on more frequently publications; and having its Russian version.
Another respondent mentioned about more inviting festive atmosphere in Helsinki city Christmas time, it would be nice to have more entertainment events!

One respondent remarked about unexpected issues such as getting information about housing rents, rental apartments, future residential development offerings, sales of dwelling completions.
Out of total score of responds 9 persons remarked on delivering excellent and remarkable customer service. (9 positive wishes out 267)

Modes of delivering tourist information prior/after and on visit:

The most common ways of getting tourist information were marked: by email, newspapers, auditory ads in metro, online travelogues, social media such as "Classmates", "Yellow Pages in Russian language". Travel company has a significance for some re-

spondents as well as having more travel brochures and maps available at public places. The majority of respondents preferred to get information from the hotel reception, cottage owners. Some respondents stated that getting road and city maps at the border would be beneficial for them. One opinion was about having more outdoor billboards with city maps and historical background on the streets.

Leasehold of laptops in the hotel rooms with Internet access. The most common opinion was getting tourist information from the Internet, hotel reception and shopping centres.

Some individual feedback and observations from respondents in each specific case:

Best Western Spa Hotel Casino –Two respondents mentioned better quality of housekeeping. Few respondents marked that Russian language skills should be better. One feedback was regarding hotel pricing that it is extremely high; hotel rates are more expensive than in Europe.

Sokos Hotel Presidentti – Such information as list of restaurants, entertainment places, travel brochures, city tours, and attractions should be distributed in the hotel reception. Preferably to have Russian speaking personnel at reception. Few respondents stated possibility to watch more Russian channel (more than one), information about nightlife entertainments, ordering round-trips and excursions from the hotel. Better service in swimming pool and sauna – short of towels.

Hotel Crown Plaza – The respondents mentioned similar wishes like time table of city traffic, how to get to city attractions, list of local of restaurants, museums, shops. One guest feedback was about tour operator Danko travel. The transfer was not provided from the airport to the hotel although the service was paid. He has found little information about excursions in Russian language, draw some information from the city map in the hotel.

Hotel Herttua in Kerimaki – One quest recalled for more vivid and eye-catching advertising and gave suggestion to use social media VKontakte, webportal Fontanka.fi. In

general the respondents wanted to get more travel brochures, guide-books, price-lists of hotel services, and restaurants/cafés menu in Russian and English languages.

Scandic Patria – The quests remarked same points: to increase the quantity of Russian language brochures in the hotels, more information about hotel animation and services. Commonly mentioned opinion is getting more information from hotel reception: attractions, city maps, regional maps, city traffic, excursions, and cultural events in the region. One guest considered a good possibility to book hotel from Scandic hotel website.

Hotel Cumulus in Lappeenranta – One quest asked for offering season or special hotel rates to send by email: mirnat66@ mail.ru. One feedback was that room services should include availability of tea-kettle, bathrobe. Also the guests would like to get tourist information from reception about catering, attractions, city map with main routes, opening hours of shopping centres. More information about family activities, walking tours around city attractions as well as round-up articles about sightseeings.The hotel should provide free wi-fi connection.
One guest pointed out that water temperature in a swimming pools should be warmer, under-floor heating in a spa zone.
Also some respondents interested of getting information about seasons and special rates from the internet.
One respondent suggested that city maps should be distributed at railway/bus stations, in the hotels, shopping centres, as well as having Russian speaking personnel at these places.

Hotel Cumulus in Imatra – more internet information in English about cities in Finland. One feedback requested to specify the water temperature in the swimming pools.

Hotel Cumulus in Helsinki – russian speaking personnel at reception. One quest noticeed that room temperature of air conditioner adjust between 19-22°, quite cold inside during winter time.

Hotel Rantasipi Imatran Valtionhotelli – to have russian speaking personnel. Getting tourist information (besides general infromation also about fishing trips, sport activities, Russian language tours) in Russian/English language from reception. Big thank to the hotel staff. Road signs duplicate in Russian.

Hellsten Hotel Apartments – to get more information (routes, menus, attractions) in Russian language from hotel reception. Any hotel special rates for re-visits. High-speed wi-fi in hotel premises. One repeat guest feedback that clinking good board and lodging, favorably disposed hotel personnel.

Hotel Scandic Continental – hotel homepage make available in Russian language. Availability of Russian language TV channels. One guest mentioned about having slippers in the room.

Hotel Vaakuna Mikkeli – more possibilities for sport activities, getting more tourist information from online sources and hotel reception.

Hotel Helka – shortage information about restaurants, cafes, bars and their opening hours. There are some contradiction, scheldure conflicts in travel guides. Shortage information what does hotel rate include, also list of services free and chargeable services, to have a printed list of services at reception. It would be nice to have an extra room service such as city map take-one.

Additional files in the attachments:

Attachement 2 (Questionnaire English vesrsion)

Attachement 3 (Questionnaire Russian version)

Attachment 4 (Cover letter in Russian language used in this survey)