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DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE RUKA DISC GOLF PARK

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<p>Quantitative study “Development plan for the Ruka Disc Golf Park” concentrated on developing the Ruka Disc Golf Park to fit its users’ needs better by offering additional services related to the sport and developing the existing services. The goal of this thesis was to make Ruka Disc Golf Park more appealing to players and increase the visitor amount at Ruka on summer season.</p> <p>There is a big difference in visitor amount in Ruka during the different seasons. As for now winter season is the high season but in order to have enough visitors throughout the year, other seasons must be developed.</p> <p>Developing Ruka Disc Golf Park is one method of increasing visitor amount during these three lower seasons. Organizing disc golf competitions at Ruka is thought to bring tourists all across Finland to visit Ruka, which will also lead to increased amount of expenditure in the area by the visitors.</p> <p>Planned additional services such as measuring the disc throwing velocity and distance, testing opportunities for different kind of discs in addition to the normal disc rental, disc throwing technique training, mini disc golf course for children and competitions are new means to increase the profitability of the track. This kind of additional services do not exist yet anywhere else and due to that a survey had to be conducted to see if the players are interested in such services or not.</p> <p>The results of the survey indicate the interest of disc golf players to visit Ruka and compete there. The results also show a preliminary indication of how much the visitor amount could increase by the disc golf players, how interested the players are in the additional services and how much the players would be ready to pay for them.</p>	
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PREFACE

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1 INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

Disc golf is currently one of the most rapidly growing sports worldwide and in Finland it has grown into a nationwide sports phenomenon. Finland has been utilizing its nature for the last few years and it is one of the leading countries in track development. At the moment there are 347 registered disc golf parks in Finland and the number is continuously growing (Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 a).

The sport is suitable for everyone regardless of sex, age or physical condition. The threshold for beginning to try out the sport is low due to most of the disc golf parks are free of charge to enter and the discs themselves are low cost as well and are available in nearly every store. (Yle 2012. Matilainen, V.).

Kuusamo and Ruka are one of Finland's most attractive areas in tourism perspective. Winter has been the dominating high season so far. However, in order to increase the attractiveness of spring, summer and autumn seasons the businesses of the area are willing to invest in new activities held on off seasons, such as disc golf (Rukan kävelykyläyhdistys 2013). The key factor to the success of these new activities is to offer the consumers and visitors the services they find worth spending money on, services that are not yet found anywhere else. The commissioning party, Rukan kävelykyläyhdistys ry, at the moment receives return of investment only from renting discs. The purpose of this thesis is to attract more visitors to use Ruka Disc Golf Park. The profit has to be made in order to maintain the track in good condition and only the additional services are chargeable; the usage of the park remains free of charge. Ruka has the opportunity to be the trend setter in making disc golf to a profitable business (Nordic Tourism, 2009, 226-229).

The nature of disc golf is to be free of charge and consequently in order to make profit additional features have to be implemented. To understand and discover these features a survey was conducted. The survey was sent to the majority of the disc golf clubs in Finland to gather information about the interest of their members towards Ruka Disc Golf Park and competing there. The survey also measured the preliminary interest towards additional disc golf activities and how much the players would be ready to pay for them. The results of the survey point out the most important services which the players want to be developed.

The perspective of the commissioning party, Rukan kävelykyläyhdistys ry, is to create and maintain services for the users of the track and visitors by implementing these plans to already existing services through cost efficiency. Rukan kävelykyläyhdistys ry does not have any existing visitor amount measurement system at the moment due to the fact that the track is completely free of charge for anybody to come and use. If an on-going weekly competition would be implemented the commissioning party would become able to monitor the visitor amount better. This method might not count every single visitor but at least it gives the commissioning party approximates about the visitor amounts.

This thesis has two main sections, the information and theory part and the research part. The information and theory section will give the reader enough knowledge to understand the purpose and the results of the research. In the first chapter the reader is introduced to the sport, disc golf itself. The second chapter is about Ruka and makes the reader understand the development of the area and the present problem with imbalanced seasons of the resort. The third chapter dives into seasonality and explains the seasonality of Finland, Ruka and disc golf in more detail. After creating a baseline for Ruka as an attraction the fourth chapter moves on to attraction management, which is one of the most important parts of the theory section. Also the planned additional services are introduced to the reader here. In the fifth chapter reader is introduced to the theories of event planning in order to understand the weekly disc golf competition. This chapter also includes the theory of experiences and their importance in our development plan.

The sixth chapter begins the research part of the thesis. Research problem and questions, introduction to the survey, survey results and the conclusion of the survey are all explained here. This naturally leads to the conclusion of the thesis in the end and justifies our development plans with the survey results.

2 DISC GOLF

Disc golf is similar to traditional golf. The point of the game for the player is to get the disc into the target with as few throws as possible. Instead of balls and clubs the player is using different variety of discs (Disc Golf Association 2013). Disc golf can be utilized to empower the summer season of Ruka and increase the visitor amount during the off-season.

2.1 PLAYER

Disc golf is widely popular, because it is suitable for nearly anyone. Disc golf can be played with a pace that is suitable for any player's physique. There are no gender or age restrictions or dress codes nor expensive fees. Anyone who can throw is able to play disc golf. (Suomen frisbeegolfliitto 2013 a)

2.2 EQUIPMENT

There are four main disc categories; putting discs, mid-range discs, fairway driver and long distance driver discs. Within these four main categories all the discs are different with large variety of flying attributes. (Innova Disc Golf 2013 a)

The four main flying attributes are speed, glide, turn and fade which are presented on the discs by corresponding numbers. These numbers are scaled and defined by every disc manufacturer. Speed is the ability of the disc to cut through the air. Discs with high numbers are faster. Glide describes the disc's ability to maintain loft during flight. Discs with more glide are the best for new players, and for producing maximum distance. High Speed Turn is the tendency of a disc to turn over or bank during the initial part of the flight. A disc with a + rating is most resistant to turning over, while a - rating will turn the most. Low Speed Fade is the disc's tendency to hook left at the end of the flight. A disc rated the lower number will finish straightest, while a disc rated with higher number will hook hard at the end of the flight. (Innova Disc Golf 2013 b)

There are also several different plastic types and weights of which the disc is made of. Plastic types range from soft to hard and affect the attributes of the disc such as: glide, grip, durability and colors. There are also discs that glow in the dark. Weight affects the discs' control in-flight; a lighter disc is more easily affected by the wind where a heavier disc is more stable. Lighter disc is used with a tailwind in order to maximize throwing distance. Heavier disc is used with a headwind in order to maximize disc control. (Innova Disc Golf 2013 c)

In addition to the discs, disc golf bags play also an essential role in disc golf. Bags are specially designed for the needs of the player. Smaller bags are designed for beginners with smaller amount of discs and bigger bags with various accessories to hold more discs which a professional player can utilize. (Innova Disc Golf 2013 d)

Disc golf targets are designed for either private or commercial use. Private targets are easy to set up and move and are light weight. Commercial targets are located in professional disc golf parks. They are heavy weight and made from durable materials. Targets are dug into the ground and cast into concrete stand. (Innova Disc Golf 2013 e)

Each disc golf hole begins from a tee. Tees can be natural or made from concrete or rubber (artificial grass). Natural tees are the least expensive but also the least durable. Natural tees require dry climate and sandy soils to work well. Rubber tees resist erosion better and have good grip in all conditions. Rubber tees are easy to install and can be relocated if needed. Concrete tees provide slip-free surface, which is essential for powerful drives. Concrete tees are also the most maintenance free and long lasting. (Innova Disc Golf 2013 f)

2.3 DISC GOLF PARKS IN FINLAND

There are 346 disc golf parks in Finland and approximately 35000 active players. The amount of disc golf parks and active players is continuously growing each year. The parks are classified into four main categories according to the level of difficulty and three main categories according to amenities. (Frisbeegolfradat.fi, 2013 b).

The figure 1 shows how the level of difficulty of the disc golf parks is classified. These ratings are used in Finland and have been developed by frisbeegolfradat.fi (frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 c).

Classification	AAA	AA	A	BB	B	C	D
Amount of targets	18+	18+	18+	9-17	9-17	7-17	< 6
Average length of one track (meters)	140+	100-140	< 100	100+	75-100	< 75	Not defined
Par	64+	58+	Not defined	At least one par 4	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined

(Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 c).

Figure 1. Disc golf parks' difficulty classification

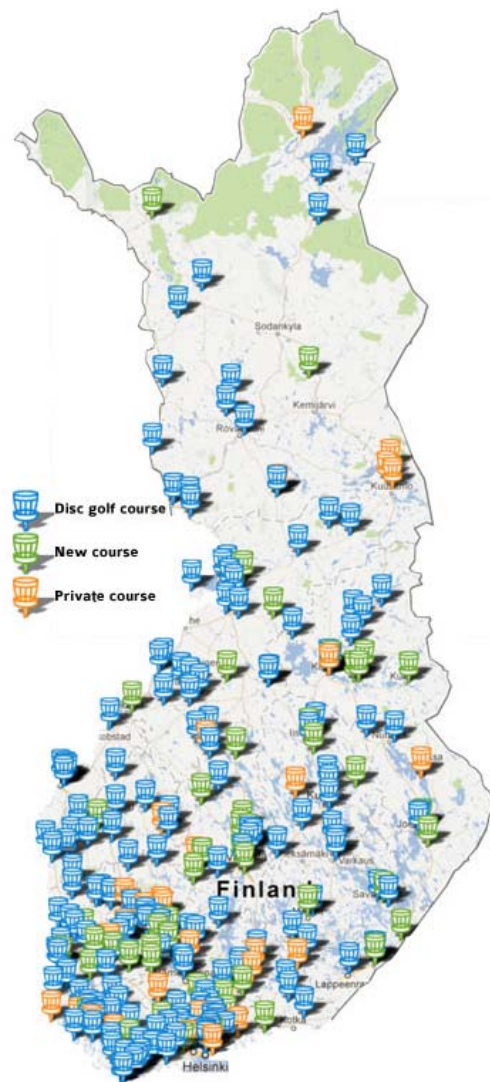
Main categories according to amenities:

Level 1: Indicates that the disc golf park is very well equipped. Park has official competition cards and signposts at each track. Signposts show the map of each track, distance, par, throwing line and additional information. Tees are made from concrete, plastic or artificial grass and the park is regularly maintained.

Level 2: Park is equipped with official disc golf targets and tees are marked with a signpost and are clearly defined on the ground.

Level 3: Park has either official disc targets or disc catchers. Tees are marked with at least a signpost.

Picture 1 illustrates the distribution of disc golf parks in Finland.



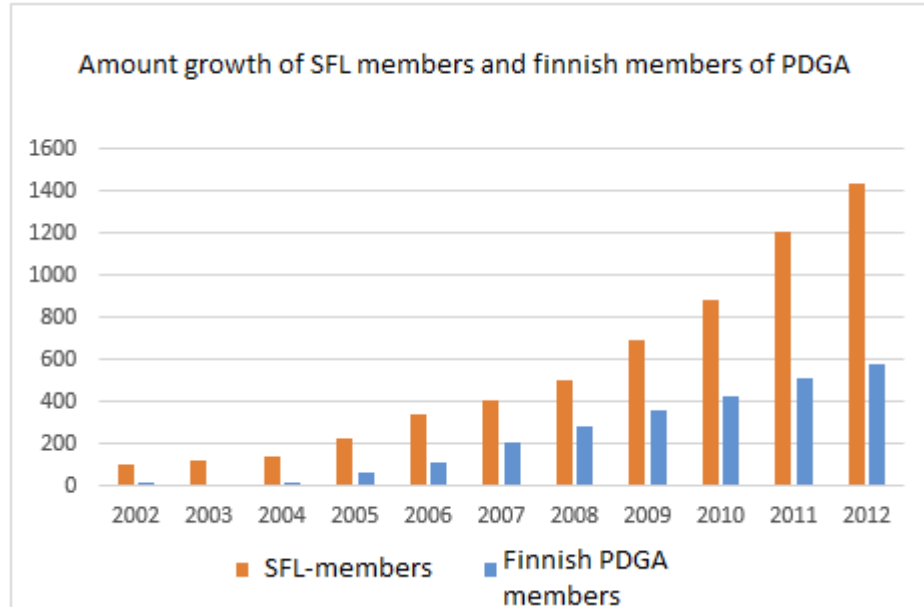
(Discgolfpark.net. 2013)

Picture 1. Map of disc golf parks in Finland

2.4 GROWTH OF DISC GOLF IN FINLAND

The player amount of disc golf has been growing tremendously during the past ten years. In year 2012 the official disc golf association of Finland (SFL) had over 1400 registered members and nearly 600 Finnish members had registered to the Professional disc golf association (PDGA) which is international. In year 2013 SFL has announced that there are

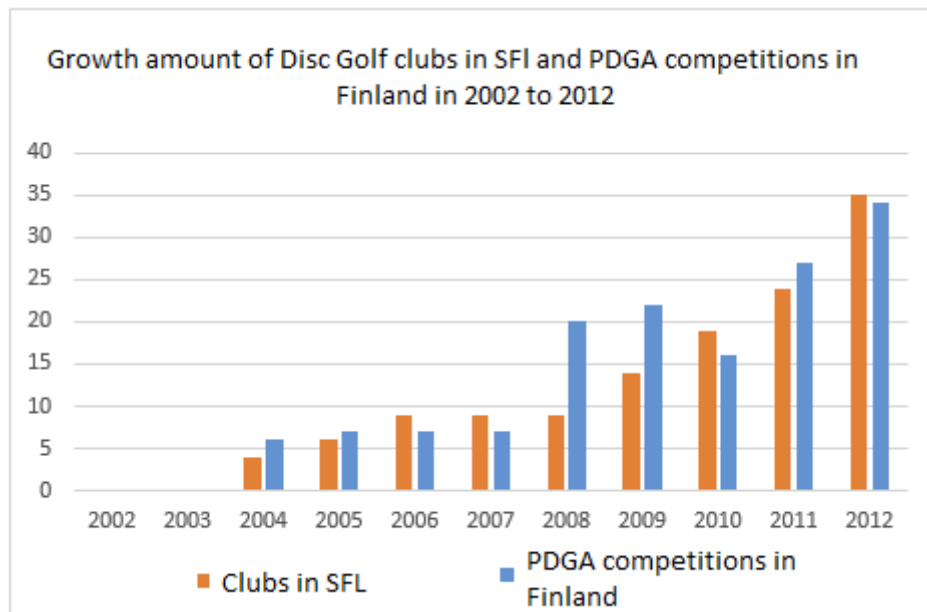
over 2000 registered members already but there is no statistics available yet. (Suomen frisbeegolfliitto. 2013 b).



(Suomen frisbeegolfliitto 2013 c).

Figure 2. Amount of growth of SFL members and Finnish members of PDGA

At the same time registered disc golf clubs have been emerging. In 2002 there were no clubs in Finland and by 2012 there were 35. SFL also hosts the national PDGA competitions. First competitions were held in 2004 and there were total of six. Amount of these competitions have been growing ever since and in 2012 there were 29 official PDGA competitions in Finland. (Suomen frisbeegolfliitto 2013 d).



(Suomen frisbeegolfliitto 2013 e).

Figure 3. Growth amount of Disc Golf clubs in SFI and PDGA competitions in Finland in 2002 to 2012

2.5 RUKA DISC GOLF PARK

Ruka Disc Golf Park has been built to the area of the ski slopes. It has 18 holes which make the player go uphill and downhill around the hill. Park has official disc golf targets, tees made of artificial grass and signpost at every track. The combined distance of all the tracks is over two kilometers. Ruka Disc Golf Park also has a disc rental service. Ruka Disc Golf Park is classified as AA1 and is suitable for professional competitions. (Frisbeegolfradat.fi. 2013 d).

The park has been divided into four different length tours. Anyone with good physical condition can play any tour, but the more demanding the tour is the longer it will take for players with less experience. (Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 d).

Family Tour: Tracks 1-3, 17-18. Good for families with children or players who are not familiar with the sport. (Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 d).

Mountain View: Tracks 4-8, offer a scenery tour from the top of the hill. This tour is suitable for advanced players and to those who enjoy a good view. (Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 d).

Bistro Tour: Tracks 9-16. Challenging landscape offers a difficult track which is suitable for advanced players and for those who enjoy a good workout. (Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 d).

Ironman: Full tour, tracks 1-18. For advanced players, approximate playing time two to three hours. (Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 d).



Picture 2. Map of Ruka Disc Golf Park (Frisbeegolfradat.fi 2013 e).

3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUKA FROM PERIPHERY TO CORE

In north eastern Finland lays the municipality of Kuusamo. In Kuusamo near the border of Finland and Russia is the Ruka tourist resort. Ruka is one of the most famous winter resorts in Finland, estimated one million annual tourist visits. (Hall, C. M., Muller, D. K., Saarinen, J. 2009, 226-229).

Ruka appears to follow Butler's (1980) resort life cycle model. Exploration stage of Ruka began in the 1880s. During the exploration stage only occasional visitors such as wanderers, writers and artists visited the area. The dominant season of Ruka at that time was summer and the main attraction was the nature itself. There were no actual tourist services and visitors integrated to the local community. At this time Ruka was not even found and the city of Kuusamo was the center of the activity. (Hall, C. M., Muller, D. K., Saarinen, J. 2009, 226-229).

After the Second World War Ruka entered the involvement stage. Changes in international politics and new border line with Russia led to the development and investments to the first skiing slope in the mid-1950s. Downhill skiing became the main reason for tourists to visit the area and around this the services grew to ski lifts, accommodation and catering. Means of transportation enabled shorter visits for the tourists in the area. (Hall, C. M., Muller, D. K., Saarinen, J. 2009, 226-229).

The actual development stage began in the 1970s when Rukakeskus Oy and Rantasipi Rukahovi (hotel) began to function on a national level. The development stage led to growth in the private and commercial accommodation sector, and Ruka started forming into a resort, particularly in the winter. Ruka became institutionalized during the 1980s. Ruka kept on growing their business to the 1990s. (Hall, C. M., Muller, D. K., Saarinen, J. 2009, 226-229).

The consolidation stage of Ruka lasted from 1990s to year 2000 which is largely because of the economic recession. During this time instead of growth in tourism and services related directly to it, structural changes happened in several lines of community development. This

can be seen as banks, hospitals, post offices and other supportive general services were being set up. (Hall, C. M., Muller, D. K., Saarinen, J. 2009, 226-229).

Ruka was well prepared for its rejuvenation stage at the beginning of 21st century. Ruka focuses on attracting both domestic and international guests on a larger scale. Transportation services allow large number of tourists to arrive from destinations such as the UK and the Netherlands and high value events such as skiing world cup.

At the moment Ruka aims to make its functions more versatile, developing it into an all year round resort. This is based on both internationalization and globalization of the former regional tourism industry. In order to even out the differences between dominating winter season and the secondary summer season, new tourism services and activities must be created and marketed for public. (Hall, C. M., Muller, D. K., Saarinen, J. 2009, 226-229).

4 SEASONALITY IN TOURISM

According to Butler (1994) the concept of tourism seasonality is defined as “a temporal imbalance in the phenomenon of tourism”. It can be expressed in the number of visitors, their expenditure, traffic on different modes of transportation, employment or entrance fees paid to attractions. (Butler, R.W. 1994, 1, 5).

Seasonality in tourism demand is one of the most frequently aggravating policy issues, especially in cold-climate environments. Tourism destinations in the Northern areas of the globe have made strategies and placed significant emphasis both on extending their existing high seasons and developing their off-seasons to attract more tourists with new activities. (Baum, T. & Lundtorp, S. 2001, 1, 1). Seasonality of Finland, Ruka and disc golf are explained in more detail in the next three chapters.

4.1 SEASONALITY IN FINLAND

As the official travel site of Finland states, Finland has four different seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. Spring is estimated to last 45-60 days, summer ~90 days, autumn 140-175 days and winter ~120 days. These estimations vary a lot every year which makes preparing for the seasons difficult. In addition to the four different seasons the ever-changing weather conditions are limiting tourism related activities. According to the official travel site of Finland the temperature during winter season might go down to -30 Celsius degrees which is too cold for tourists to take part in outdoor activities. During spring, summer and autumn the high probability of rain can cause difficulties to practice outdoor activities. (The Official Travel Site of Finland, 2013). ”It is not known with any certainty whether tourists travel in peak season because they want to, because they have to, or because they have been conditioned to.” Butler. 2001: 19 (Hinch, J. & Higham, J. 2011, 169)

4.2 SEASONALITY AT RUKA

Rukakeskus Oy has set a goal for the next skiing season to last 230 days. This means that the summer activities, such as disc golf, have a season of less than 135 days at Ruka. On the contrary midnight sun enables outdoor activities to be available for the customer nearly 24 hours a day. (Ruka 2013 a).

4.3 SEASONALITY OF DISC GOLF IN FINLAND

Disc golf can be played in Finland from spring until autumn, during the time period when there is no snow on the ground (Yle 2013. Salminen, R.). At Ruka this means a disc golf season of less than 135 days, as mentioned earlier. Disc golf holes are rarely equipped with lights so the activity needs to take place during the hours of day light. However, if the player is using fluorescent discs which glow in the dark the activity can take place after the hours of day light as well.

5 ATTRACTION MANAGEMENT

Before moving on to the applied part of the visitor attraction this thesis covers the basic theories about visitor attraction itself, the role of visitor attraction, visitor attraction classification and core of an attraction product.

5.1 VISITOR ATTRACTION

A visitor attraction is generally defined as a focus for recreational and increasingly educational activity, as an activity which is undertaken by both day and stay visitors. Frequently the activity is shared with the domestic resident population. (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 2, 16). For various tourist destinations around the world, their attractions regularly serve as the promoter for tourist visits (Cooper, C., Fletcher, J., Fyall, A., Gilbert, D., Wanhill, S. 2005, 10, 1). There would be no need for other tourism services if attractions did not exist (Swarbrooke, J. 2002, 1, 1). In this case of Ruka Disc Golf Park the activity is open for anyone, foreigners, domestic visitors as well as resident population, but the focus is on attracting stay visitors in order for the whole area to benefit from them.

5.2 ROLE OF VISITOR ATTRACTION

Visitor attractions play the key role in tourism industry and moreover crucial role in development and success of tourism destinations. They work as the motivators that make people want to take a trip in the first place. They do not necessarily always literally attract visitors but they certainly do provide a focus for a lot of tourist activity to take place in (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 1, 3). There are several different attractions at Ruka to motivate tourists to visit the area. Boosting and promoting any of the activities make it more likely for tourists to try any other activities during their stay. For example someone might visit Ruka in order to see the beautiful autumn colors and the divine views from the top of the hill or to practice mountain biking. However during their stay they might become attracted to play disc golf as well or vice versa.

Within the broader tourism product in a tourism destination, visitor attractions form only one part of the complex network of tourism service providers. Nevertheless, visitor attractions are often the key products in marketing activities. (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 1, 11).

5.3 VISITOR ATTRACTION CLASSIFICATION

“Visitor attractions comprise a complex sector of the tourism industry and are not well understood; yet they are one of the more important components of the industry (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 5, 84).”

Classifications of visitor attractions regularly focus on the pricing policy for access to the visitor attraction, whether there is an admission fee to be paid, or if it is free of charge to access. (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 1, 6). Quite often it can also be the combination of these two, and at Ruka Disc Golf Park it is. Going there and playing disc golf remains free of charge for everyone but if the visitor wants to try out the additional services or take part in a weekly competition there is a charge to be paid.

Goeldener, C.R. & Ritchie, B.J.R. (2009) classified attractions into five different categories by their purpose and characteristics: cultural, natural, events, recreation and entertainment attractions (see Figure 6). Ruka Disc Golf Park as an attraction is mainly recreational and takes place in nature. With weekly disc golf competitions, attraction spectrum would be widened to cover events as well. To some extent Ruka as a resort is involved with all the attraction types and the ones that the disc golf park does not cover is covered with other attractions.

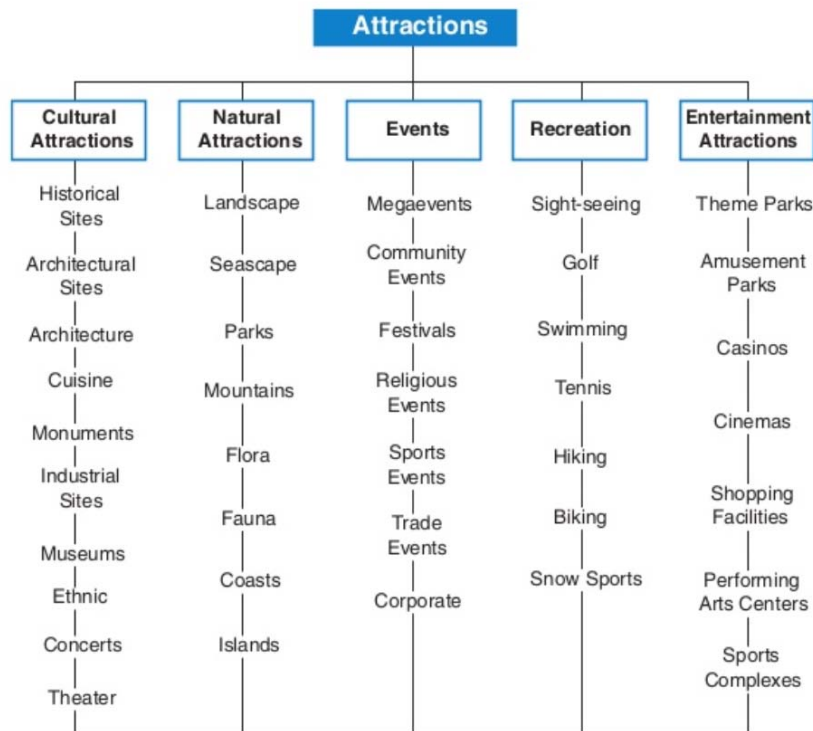


Figure 4. Overview of attractions
(Goeldener, C.R. & Ritchi, B.J.R. 2009, 8, 214).

5.4 CORE OF AN ATTRACTION PRODUCT

A very important feature of an attraction product is the encouragement for repeated visits. Repeated visits are necessary and required in order to have long term success. (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 2, 20). Ruka Disc Golf Park offers a unique and very challenging environment to practice disc golf and it is impossible to find another place just like it. After one visit the player has seen the park but due to its level of difficulty and incredible views, the visitor is most likely attracted to visit again in the future.

According to Martin and Mason there are three key elements in the successful operation of visitor attractions: how to draw new visitors, setting standards of performance and monitoring how the business is performing, and being prepared for future changes in visitor needs and expectations. (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 3, 40). The research part of this thesis measures the interest of disc golf players all across Finland to visit Ruka Disc Golf Park. Additional services are implemented to draw their interest and fitting

the visitors' needs better. On-going weekly competition enables the commissioning party to monitor the visitor amount and the popularity of the park better. According to the article at the webpages of Yle, Finnish disc golf players are in a need of a disc golf park which is set up indoors in order to practice the sport during winter as well. This far Finland does not have any indoor parks but it might become a future trend if investors are found (Yle 2013. Salminen, R.).

5.5 MANAGING VISITOR IMPACTS

Visitor impacts of attractions are generally categorized into five categories: overcrowding, wear and tear, traffic related problems, impacts on the local community and the impacts of visitor management itself on the authenticity of visitor attractions. (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 10, 167). In the case of Ruka Disc Golf Park overcrowding and traffic related problems can be ignored due to disc golf takes place during off-season as earlier mentioned in the seasonality chapter, and because Ruka has managed to avoid these problems on high-season as well.

Impact named as wear and tear is however present. Increasing amount of disc golf players leave their marks to the environment by walking up and down the hills and by leaving trash behind them. Improving the main walking paths would decrease wear and tear in the nature as well as regular field maintenance. Track is equipped with garbage cans but visitors should be reminded about the issue with polite signs occasionally. However some players will litter the track regardless of sign posts. In order to keep the track free of litter and pleasant to use an employee should go through the track and pick up the litter at least once a week. Disc golf is "a gentleman's sport" and all the players are responsible for their own litter, the very same way as in normal golf.

Preemptive actions to minimize man made harm to the environment have been found effective by Park, Manning, Marion, Lawson & Jacobi. Their research indicates that by appealing to visitors' moral the damage can be reduced. Signs telling what should not be done and why, worked the best in the Cadillac mountain national park, because the test subjects reported that they were afraid of social rejection from their peers. (Park, L.,

Manning, R., Marion, J., Lawson, S., Jacobi, C, 2008, 110.). The signs are expected to have a similar impact on the visitors at Ruka Disc Golf Park.

Impacts on the local community on the other hand are considered in this case mostly positive. Disc golf might work as a motivator for visitors to come to Ruka area, but in addition to only playing disc golf they will most likely use local restaurant services, accommodation services, other attractions, nearby shop, gas stations as well as the airport of Kuusamo. According to the website of Ruka community tourism industry offers working places for over 800 local residents (Ruka 2013 b).

As explained in the earlier chapter Ruka has developed from periphery to a resort and keeps on developing into an all-year-round resort. What are left from the authentic periphery are the gorgeous views and landscapes. The presence of disc golf has not changed the already transformed nature, since it takes place at the skiing slopes.

5.6 MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES

According to Storey human resource management is defined as a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and capable workforce (Storey, J. 2007, 1, 7). In the case of Ruka Disc Golf Park and accommodating the additional services to already existing ones, the association (Rukan kävelykyläyhdistys ry) would need at least two highly committed employees who are excellent in customer service and with the requirement of at least one of them being able to teach disc throwing techniques. In case a visitor would like to use additional services, one of the employees could stay in the customer service office while the other one goes outside with the customer. Both of the employees need to have updated knowledge about the sport and the equipment related to it in case the customers have any questions about disc golf in general or about the discs that they are renting. There is neither classification nor certificate needed to be a qualified instructor in disc golf. However, it would be preferred that the employee would be multilingual (especially with good Russian language skills) and able to host guided mountain biking tours, hiking tours, Nordic walking tours, games for children etc.

5.7 MANAGING TEMPORAL VARIATIONS

Imbalanced seasons are in the case of Ruka Disc Golf Park nearly impossible to overcome because natural resources form the base of the managed attraction. Disc golf is played when there is no snow on the ground and as earlier mentioned in the chapter of seasonality, at Ruka it means 135 days on average from the whole year. In the future the snowless season might become longer due to the global warming. The only way to totally overcome and manage temporal variations is to build an indoor disc golf track.

5.8 INTERPRETATION AND ATTRACTIONS

The interpretation of the attraction has two major roles to play. It is essential in order to create positive visitor experiences at the attraction as well as supporting the sustainability of the attraction. When interpretation is described and defined by listing the forms of interpretation, it is said that interpretation includes all the various ways in which attraction managers look for to communicate with their visitors and customers. (Fyall, A., Garrod, B., Leask, A., Wanhill, S. 2008, 14, 237). At Ruka this basically means that the workers involved with the visitors are professionals in customer service and know how to serve customers personally. It is also important that all the brochures, pamphlets, Internet pages and signs at the track are well made and adequately informative. In addition to the employees at Ruka Disc Golf Park the service received from the other local services affects the visitor experience.

According to Tilden (1977) interpretation is not only information, interpretation is exposure based upon information. Interpretation has been defined by Tilden as: “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.” (Tilden, F. 1977, 1, 8). At Ruka the information provided to the players about the track, the game and the environment should be in a simple and educative form, as clear as possible, so the message can only be interpreted in a way that it is intended to be interpreted by the manager.

5.9 PLANNED ADDITIONAL SERVICES FOR THE RUKA DISC GOLF PARK

As the authors of this thesis, we are enthusiastic disc golf players and the additional services planned for the commissioning party came from our own interests and hopes. It has been nearly impossible to find some of these additional services from anywhere and this thesis enabled us to measure the need and interest as well as plan the services for implementation for Ruka Disc Golf Park.

5.9.1 MEASURING THE DISC THROWING VELOCITY AND DISTANCE

Other sports such as: ice hockey, floor ball, baseball, golf, javelin throw, hammer throw, shot put etc. at least one of the factors are constantly being measured, either the velocity or the distance. Of course it is the main result for javelin throw, hammer throw and shot put but not for the other sports. For some reason it is just very interesting to know how fast you can put something into motion or how far it goes. In these sports where these factors do not even matter, there are competitions for these measurements. It is not known why there are no opportunities to measure these two things in disc golf. Arranging measurements for these two factors can be copied cost-efficiently from other sports.

5.9.2 MINI DISC GOLF TRACK FOR CHILDREN

Disc golf is a sport almost anyone is capable of doing. Nevertheless if there is a child under the age of ten, the normal tracks are too difficult and too long. Creating a fun little track for children with shorter distances and with disc catchers which are on a lower level would give another valid option for parents with small children to spend a day outside and have fun together. There are plenty of mini golf tracks, why not mini disc golf tracks as well?

5.9.3 DISC TESTING SERVICE

As it has been explained in the disc golf equipment section of this thesis, there is a huge amount of different kind of discs for consumers to buy. All these discs are different with their flying attributes and it is very difficult to find the best disc for your throwing style by theory crafting. If the customer would be able to tryout the discs before buying them the buying process would become a lot easier. This service could be combined with the disc rental service. At the moment if you want to play and you do not own your own discs, you will receive a standard starter set to play with, which includes three different discs. The only thing that needs to be developed in order to offer this service is to let the customers choose the discs they want to rent.

5.9.4 DISC THROWING TECHNIQUE TRAINING

So far the players of disc golf have been quite self-taught. YouTube videos from the professional players are being watched and tips are gained from other players. There is no “green card system” like in normal golf which would force the players to reach skill level high enough to play on the course. Anyone can play disc golf, even if they have not tried the sport ever before. A big amount of the tourists at Ruka are visiting the place for other reasons and want to try out the sport for the first time. Offering a technique training session before stepping on the real course would definitely improve the user experience of the park. Instructing others how to play disc golf does not require any certain licenses and player with sufficient amount of experience is able to do the instructing.

During the summer seasons Ruka offers its visitors a free weekly program. This program could include one hour once a week of introduction to the basics of disc golf. During this one hour session, participants would be introduced to the basic throwing techniques, the rules of the game and the etiquette how to behave in the park. This free of charge training session would serve as an inducement for participants to begin playing disc golf and to purchase discs and more advanced training sessions later. It would also raise the awareness of sustainability in the park and promote appropriate playing behavior.

6 EXPERIENCE PYRAMID

Experience is always unique to each individual. People are looking for experiences mainly because it is something new to them. It is a memory which cannot be taken away.

Experiences create an opportunity for tourism industry, because people understand the value of experiences and therefore they are willing to pay to gain new experiences. (Pine, J, B., Gilmore, J. 2011, x –xxii)

In order to offer experiences to visitors, one must understand what creates an experience. By reviewing and evaluating the various aspects related to experiences such as emotions and thoughts, the phenomenon can be better understood. Understanding an experience helps to create them in positive manner. (Morgan, M., Lugosi, P., Ritchie, J, R, B. 2010, 1, 3).

Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry defines experience as: “Experience is a multi-sensory, significant and an unforgettable event which can create a change in a person. Experience can enhance person’s self-awareness and can lead to a change in how a person views his own existence.” (LEO 2013 a). The following three chapters introduce the experience pyramid, levels of experience and elements of experience in more detail and apply the theory to the practice in Ruka.

To create successful experiences for visitors LEO (Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry) has devised a tool to help better understand of which parts an experience consists of. It is called the experience pyramid. Experience pyramid is a tool to analyze, understand and enhance the experience-based elements of a product. Tool has been successfully implemented at Ranua Wildlife Park and Santa Claus Office at Rovaniemi. (LEO 2013 a). Ruka Disc Golf Park is not a similar type of attraction like Santa Claus Office or Ranua wild life park. However, the customers seek the same kind of experience but within different type of environment. Therefore the experience pyramid can be applied to Ruka Disc Golf Park to serve the needs of the customers to maximize the attractiveness of the park.

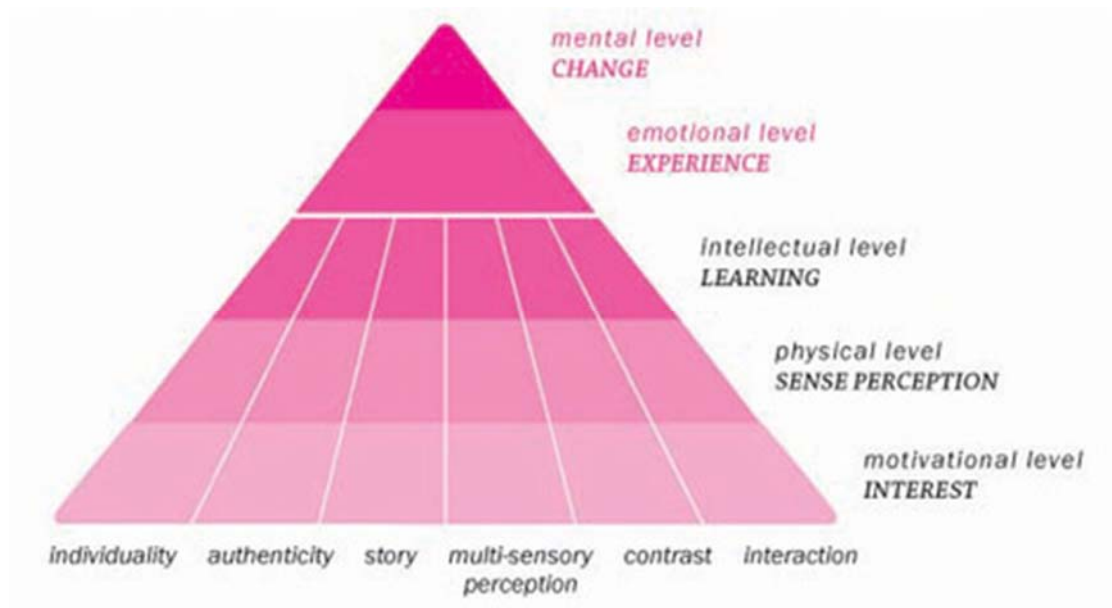


Figure 5. The Experience Pyramid by LEO
(Lapin elämysteollisuuden osaamiskeskus 2013 a.)

6.1 LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE

The Experience Pyramid approaches experience from the customer's side of view and from the product side of view. There are five different levels of experience for the customer, which have to be understood and applied to create a positive and powerful experience:

Motivational level which makes a person want to come and try out the product offered to him. Marketing of the product should cover as many elements of meaningful experience as the product itself. (LEO 2013 b). For the summer season of 2013 marketing of Ruka Disc Golf Park was very limited and for the coming seasons it should be used as one of the selling arguments for an off-season visitor.

Physical level is representing our realization of where we are, what is happening and what we are doing. We need to have our basic physical needs fulfilled and feel that the product is not creating harm to us. (LEO 2013 b). At Ruka the basic needs of players can be fulfilled without any problems and sport tourism does not need further development from physical

perspective. In practice at Ruka this means that the resort has toilets, restaurants, parking places, shops and grocery stores. Players can accommodate in hotels or cottages and public transportation is offered to and from the resort to the city of Kuusamo.

On a rational level, a person acts according to the stimuli from their surrounding environment. People think, learn, apply knowledge and form their own opinions. On an intellectual level, people make up their minds on whether they are satisfied or not with the product. A good product should bring something new for the client; they should learn or obtain information, either consciously or unconsciously. (LEO 2013 b). To make sure that players are satisfied and feel that Ruka Disc Golf Park offers something new a research has been conducted to discover development points for Ruka Disc Golf Park.

Emotional level is the core of the experience. When all the basic elements of the product are produced with quality and the impact on previous levels has been according to the plan, the emotional impact should be the one, which has been targeted. Joy, excitement, contentment, the pleasure of achievement and learning new skills, a sense of triumph, affection, something the individual regards significant defines the success of the emotional level. (LEO 2013 b). Ruka Disc Golf Park has been designed by professional (Jussi Meresmaa) and constructed with high quality of equipment. The same standard should be applied throughout the development process of the additional services.

On a mental level a reaction can be significant if a person finds the experience particularly powerful. It can lead to a personal change and bring modifications to one's physical being, state of mind or lifestyle. It can lead the person to adapt to a new hobby or finding new resources within oneself. (LEO 2013 b). Powerful positive experience attracts the visitor of Ruka Disc Golf Park to visit again in the future and positively market the attraction to others.

To be able to immerse into an experience the product needs to be constructed to support the reach of different levels of experience. LEO has divided the product into six meaningful pieces which help to create a product that leads to a successful and positive experience. (LEO 2013 a).

6.2 ELEMENTS OF MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE

Individuality is the uniqueness of the product. Individuality is also how flexible the product is for a customer, can it be personalized to reach the mental level of a person. (LEO 2013 a). Disc golf is played nation-wide, but the magnificent mountain views and the variety in the level of difficulty that Ruka offers cannot be copied anywhere else. Personalization has already been started at Ruka by dividing the track to various different parts by distance, difficulty and scenery.

Authenticity is ultimately determined by the user of the product. Product is authentic if the client can immerse himself in it. (LEO 2013 a). Immersion in disc golf requires a high quality track where the players can fully focus on playing the game.

Story is a part of authenticity. At its simplest form story is just to help the customer to understand why things are done in a certain order and a certain way. (LEO 2013 a). Disc golf does not have a story element to it any more than any other sport. Nevertheless, children are completely different type of target group compared to adults. A special mini disc golf park might require a theme that is produced in a form of a story in order to entertain the children better. For children Ruka has the brand of Rosa and Rudolf, a skiing reindeer and a bear to encourage children. These two characters could be implemented for summer activities to make it more appealing for a younger audience. (Ruka 2013 c). The disc golf track for children should be on a flat surface and easily accessed so it could be also used by visitors with reduced mobility (e.g. wheelchair etc.). The challenge on the track would not be so physical but instead technical. The track could include different kind of obstacles which the player needs to pass by throwing the disc under, above or around them. This kind of track would not need as much power from the player as the normal one and the track would be short, fast and fun. In order to make disc golf more appealing for adult beginners, the disc golf could be combined with guided hiking tours, where the participants would also learn about the history of Ruka, the nature and the sport itself. This would improve the meaningfulness of the authenticity and promote the story part as an element of experience.

Multi-sensory perception is the sensory reach of the product. It should be experienced

through as many senses as possible. Too much or too little sensory stimuli leave the experience unfinished or make it feel artificial. (LEO 2013 a). Disc golf involves the use of all senses and these noted in the development process. Ruka Disc Golf Park is physically challenging, it offers divine mountain views, sounds and smells of the nature and fresh air.

Contrast is the difference between everyday life and an experience. The participant should experience something out of the ordinary and exotic. Individuality of the product should be considered to create contrast to as many people as possible. (LEO 2013 a). In order to create contrast to other disc golf parks Ruka Disc Golf Park must offer services which are not found elsewhere. Ruka can use its already existing equipment to create such contrast between regular parks. Floodlights for winter skiing can be used to light up the track during autumn season and the disc catchers can be set up during winter to make a winter disc golf track.

Interaction happens between the experience and the one having the experience. This can mean that the player and the game, guide and the client and the personal interaction between the elements of the product are conveyed to the player. Experiencing in a social group makes the product socially acceptable and enhances the overall experience. (LEO 2013 a). At the moment there is no interaction between the players and the work force at Ruka Disc Golf Park, but implementing personalized additional services would create the needed interaction. Weekly competitions would make the sport more social and because Ruka Disc Golf Park is a professional track it can be also used for PDGA competitions.

To create a successful experience for visitors of Ruka Disc Golf Park the elements within experience need to be considered. Various types of visitors need to find the environment and the sport authentic and individual. The game of disc golf can be played nearly anywhere, but to modify it to a unique experience at Ruka creates a positive imprint for the visitors.

7 EVENT PLANNING

According to Watt (1998) event is defined as a “thing of significance that happens” (Watt, D. C. 1998, 1, 1). This is a very wide and vague definition, but since events can vary in numerous of ways, it covers the basis which applies to all events. Event has been defined further by Goldblatt (2002) as a “unique moment in time celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs” (Goldblatt, J. 2002, 1, 6). Goldblatt’s definition is elastic in order to suit diverse circumstances, but all the aspects of a special event need to be clearly planned and established before the event can take place.

World is full of different types of events. Events can be categorized by many ways, depending on the point of view. In the book *Events Management: an Integrated and Practical Approach*, the authors have chosen to observe the events from the perspective of people who go to events. In general events can be divided into ten major categories. (Raj, R., Paul, W., Tahir, R. 2009, 13 – 19)

Ten main categories of events are religious, cultural, musical, sports, personal and private, governmental and political, commercial and business, corporate, special and leisure events. One event can fit to several categories depending on its purpose. (Raj, R., Paul, W., Tahir, R. 2009, 13 – 19). For example if a company organizes a get together event for their major clients at Ruka and the event would include a disc golf competition, such an event could be fitted to commercial and business event categories as well as sports and leisure event categories.

To attract both players and non-players to Ruka, the event tourism built around the Disc Golf Park must raise interest of both parties. Raising the interest towards Ruka as a location is a key to gain more paying customers to the disc golf park as well. (Raj, R., Paul, W., Tahir, R. 2009, 13 – 19).

Ruka Disc Golf Park is mainly focused to host sporting events. These types of events are hosted to contest, challenge, or to compete. Often sporting events are in a form of championship, to see which of the competitors is the best at a certain skill or is the most powerful. Sporting events are not just focused on performing a sport, they are also about the

companionship between the participant themselves and with the audience. (Raj, R., Paul, W., Tahir, R. 2009, 13 – 19).

In the book *Event Planning Made Easy* by authors Paulette Wolf and Jodi Wolf it is stated that before an event is put together and produced five questions need to be considered, planned and answered. These five questions are: who, what, when, where, why and how? (Wolf, P. & Wolf, J. 2005, 1, 1-2). In the next chapter these five questions are applied to weekly disc golf event at Ruka Disc Golf Park.

7.1 THE FIVE W'S APPLIED TO WEEKLY DISC GOLF EVENT

Who is going to take part in your event? What is the amount of visitors that suits your event the best? (Wolf, P. & Wolf, J. 2005, 1, 3) In weekly disc golf competition the target group is disc golf players in Finland. The players are sent on their tour in groups of four, which defines the minimum number of participants (4). The groups are leaving the starting point in every 10 minutes and one full round takes approximately 3 hours. If the competition is set in a way that starting times are flexible, for example from 9 a.m. till 12 p.m., the maximum amount of groups is 18, which means the maximum of 72 players. With this method the prize-giving event should be determined in advance, for example 3:30 p.m., so all the players have enough time to finish their tour and the person responsible for organizing the competition does not have to work overtime. This schedule is also supported by the opening hours of the entire resort. Thus, the same persons can be employed to work as referees in the competition as well as serve other customers mean while competition is ongoing.

Another way of organizing the weekly disc golf competition is to have it on-going throughout the week. When the players arrive to the Ruka Disc Golf park they can purchase the scorecard and after they are done with their round they can leave it to the customer service office or the mailbox. After each week the results will be gone through and winners will be informed. If the competition event is organized in this way, fewer resources are needed by the organizer, which improves the cost-efficiency but reduced the attractiveness of what a larger disc golf event may have.

Answering to the question what is your event, defines the theme of the event (Wolf, P. & Wolf, J. 2005, 1, 8). In this case the event is disc golf competition, which means it is taking

place outdoors at the Ruka skiing slopes. The venue does not need to be decorated in any special way, but the disc golf park needs to be in a good condition and have regular maintenance. Since it is an outdoor event the weather plays essential role and cannot be ignored. Flexible schedule for the players allows them to wait for the weather to turn better.

When is your event? This relates to time of year, to the day of week, to the time of day and to the length of the event. (Wolf, P. & Wolf, J. 2005, 1, 10). This thesis is focusing on a weekly disc golf event, which defines the time of the event to take place once a week or throughout the week. Skiing season ends at Ruka during April and the resort shifts to summer season during May. At this time the disc golf park is also set up.

Summer activities start at the beginning of June and this is when the weekly event will also be organized for the first time. The competition can be held either once a week, on Saturdays for example when people have time to travel to Ruka and play, or the competition can be on-going throughout the whole week. Weekly competitions can be held until the end of September because the resort starts to prepare for winter activities in early October.

Where would you like to hold the event and where are you able to hold the event? (Wolf, P. & Wolf, J. 2005, 1, 13). The competition is taking place at the Ruka skiing slopes, which is a unique venue for the event. In addition to the challenges and level of difficulty the park offers the players also magnificent mountain views and other activities. There are plenty of disc golf parks located on the hills in Finland but the epic landscape, tracks and environment cannot be copied elsewhere.

Why is the event taking place? What is the purpose of the event? (Wolf, P. & Wolf, J. 2005, 1, 15). The purpose of the weekly disc golf competition is to bring more visitors to the whole Ruka area and to get more profit to the commissioning party, Rukan kävelykyläyhdistys ry.

Disc golf offers a wide variety of opportunities when it comes to events. The following chapter will apply some of the event planning theories to the case of Ruka Disc Golf Park, which are thought to suit Ruka's brand and its image well.

7.2 WEEKLY DISC GOLF EVENT AT RUKA

Disc golf event is an approach to attract more players to try the track and spend money. An event is also a great way to promote the park and its additional services as well as to get the merchants there to display their products. With relatively small investment costs events can create steady positive revenue. Income from events can be used to further improve the park and its attractiveness.

Different types of events to be hosted at Ruka Disc Golf Park can include a weekly disc golf competition, a private competition, a professional disc golf competition hosted by the professional disc golf association (PDGA). The Disc Golf Park can also be promoted for use of leisure time while other events are taking place at the resort, such as “Naurettavan pienet festivaalit” (comedy festival) or the midsummer festival.

A weekly competition at Ruka Disc Golf Park is planned in order to attract more visitors. To determine the need for the event a survey was sent to Finnish disc golf clubs in order to measure the demand of the competition. Disc golf events are generally organized by the same way as golf tournaments and it has been found to be efficient and easy. (Professional Disc Golf Association, 2013 a.)

Competitions in disc golf follow a set of easily understandable rules and regulations. Referees are only used in situations where a group of players do not agree on how to interpret the rules in special situations.

Disc golf games are played on a large area that is divided to smaller areas, holes. Players start from a predetermined hole and play through certain holes at the disc golf park. Most often the starting hole is the first one at the track and players play through all the holes of the disc golf park. In the case of Ruka Disc Golf Park there are 18 holes in total, which means the track is full length. (Professional Disc Golf Association, 2013 b.)

Participants play through the park in groups of three or four. Players do not keep score of their own game, but of another person in the same group. This reduces the possibility of cheating. Groups start their tour around the park between certain intervals to prevent having to wait for another group to finish a hole. This makes the overall event experience more fluent and enjoyable. (Professional Disc Golf Association, 2013 b.)

Players keep score on how many times they have to throw the disc on each hole before hitting the target. Each hole has a par number, which signifies the ideal number of throws for that specific hole. This number keeps the players focused and makes the game more interesting. Players mark plus or minus number of throws depending on how did they throw under the ideal amount (par score) or over it. All groups gather to the event prize giving ceremony after the last group has finished. The player with least amount of throws is the winner. (Professional Disc Golf Association, 2013 b.)

Rules and regulations are subject to change. Already there are many forms of different variations to rules, which increase the replay value of the game. By modifying the rules and regulations to what the players favor can extent the attractiveness of Ruka Disc Golf Park.

8 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH AND THE SURVEY

The research to study the opinions of the disc golf players in Finland about the planned additional services for the Ruka Disc Golf Park took place in November 2013. The survey was put online via Qualtrics survey platform on 4th of November. The target group had two weeks' time to answer the survey before it was closed. Using Qualtrics as the survey platform made answering to the survey stress-free and fast. The survey had all together 28 questions and completing the survey took only five minutes, when it was tested with a test audience. The Survey was written in Finnish due to the target audience was Finnish. Both, the Finnish version and the translated English version are found as appendices in the end of the thesis.

8.1 RESEARCH METHOD

Regularly research contains the collection, analysis and presentation of statistical information. The information can be either quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative information can usually be counted from gathered numbers of a certain topic and qualitative information is usually expressed with words. If the question measures qualitative information with a numerical value the information is both quantitative and qualitative. (Veal 2006; 40)

The quantitative approach as a research method is based on statistical analysis and is dependent on numerical evidence in order to draw conclusions. In order to be certain about the reliability of the results it is usually needed to gather and examine a large number of answers from a large crowd of people and let computers and programs analyze the gathered data. Most often the data is gathered with questionnaire surveys. (Veal 2006; 40)

The qualitative research method on the other hand is not dependent on number. The core of this method is to collect a lot of information from a smaller group of people. Usually the information collected is descriptive in words, not in numbers. For example it can be an interview from five different experts on a certain topic and their thoughts and opinions. (Veal 2006; 40)

The quantitative research method was chosen for the most user-friendly approach. This is because it is essential to know how interested the players are in general about the additional services, what the players are willing to pay for them and how to maximize the return of investment for the commissioning party.

8.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Do the disc golf players feel the planned additional services needed and useful or not, was our research problem. There were six research questions which the survey gathered responses to. The first question was: who are the disc golf players? The second question was: how active are these disc golf players with the sport? The third question was: how interested are the players about the Ruka Disc Golf Park. The fourth question was: how interested are the disc golf players in the planned additional services? The fifth question was: how much monetary value do the planned additional services have and how much would the disc golf players be ready to pay for them? The sixth question was: what are the key factors that make a disc golf park attractive and create a positive user experience? The fourth and the sixth part of the survey included open-ended questions, which enabled the players answer freely. These answers are gathered later in the suggestions of the players- section.

8.3 TARGET GROUP OF THE SURVEY

There are 53 listed disc golf clubs in Finland's official disc golf association (SFL) and altogether approximately 2000 members (Suomen frisbeegolf liitto, 2013). The survey was sent by e-mail to the contact persons of every single disc golf club in Finland and asked to be forwarded to their members in order to reach all the statistical units of the population because the aim was to conduct census. Sampling the population was not an option because the member lists of Finnish disc golf clubs are not public information. Three of the e-mails were not in use so in total the survey was delivered to 50 contact persons. However, some of the contact persons did not forward the survey e-mail to their members and a considerable part of the population remained unreachable. Instead of reaching all the 2000 respondents the survey only reached 379. Reason for this might be the fact that all of those who received the

questionnaire did not find it relevant for themselves and simply did not take the time to answer it. However, responses were gathered from over 100 different municipalities in Finland and all age groups. In order to make more sense out of the various places of residence for the analyses, they were divided to Finland's former Provinces. These former provinces in Finland used to be Lapland Province, Oulu Province, Province of Eastern Finland, Province of Western Finland and Province of Southern Finland. These Provinces are not in use anymore, but they still work as an effective tool to divide Finland to larger areas. In addition to this it was noticed that the members of disc golf clubs had been forwarding the survey e-mail to others who did not originally belong to the population, meaning disc golf players who are not members of any disc golf clubs. Due to this the target group evolved to be active disc golf players in Finland with no club membership restrictions.

The target group of research demographics was chosen in order to gain thorough empirical knowledge. Active disc golf players are familiar with the sport and make the best target group from which to ask how the sport should be developed. In order to increase the visitor amount and to make the disc golf park more attractive and more appealing the opinions of the players are essential.

9 ANALYZED SURVEY RESULTS

The survey had six sections and the results are analyzed in the following chapters. SPSS program was used to analyze statistical data, its frequencies and to draw cross tabulations between variables. In order to keep continuous layout in this thesis, figures were made with Microsoft Excel from SPSS results. Questions with open answers are analyzed in the suggestions of the players-section.

9.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

As it can be seen from figure 6, the most (91,3 %) of the respondents are male and only 8,7 % are female. Disc golf is without any argues a male dominated sport. This should be taken into consideration if Ruka Disc Golf Park would open a shop and begin selling accessories related to the sport. (Appendix 3/1).

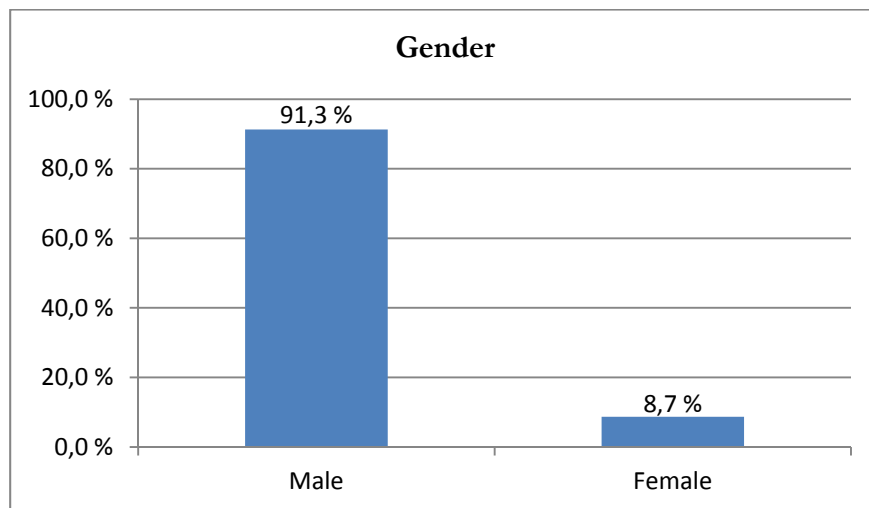


Figure 6. Gender of respondents

As the figure 7 shows, the most of the respondents are employed (70,2 %). There are also plenty of students and unemployed players as well as some retired players. 4,0 % of the respondents belong to the category called other and specifications include entrepreneurship, part time workers as well as gambling professionals. (Appendix 3/1).

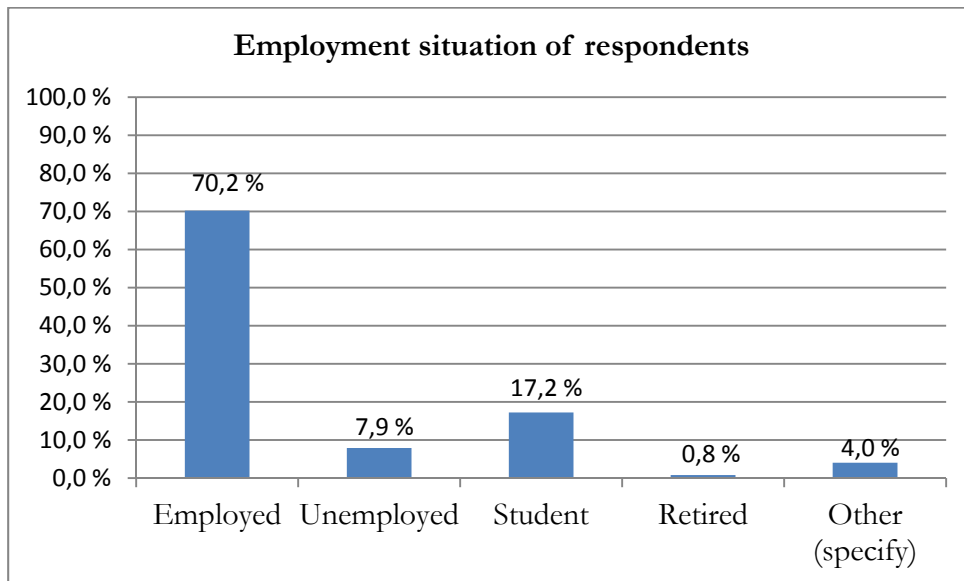


Figure 7. Employment situation of respondents

As shown in figure 8, only 28,8 % of the respondents have children under the age of 10. (Appendix 3/1).

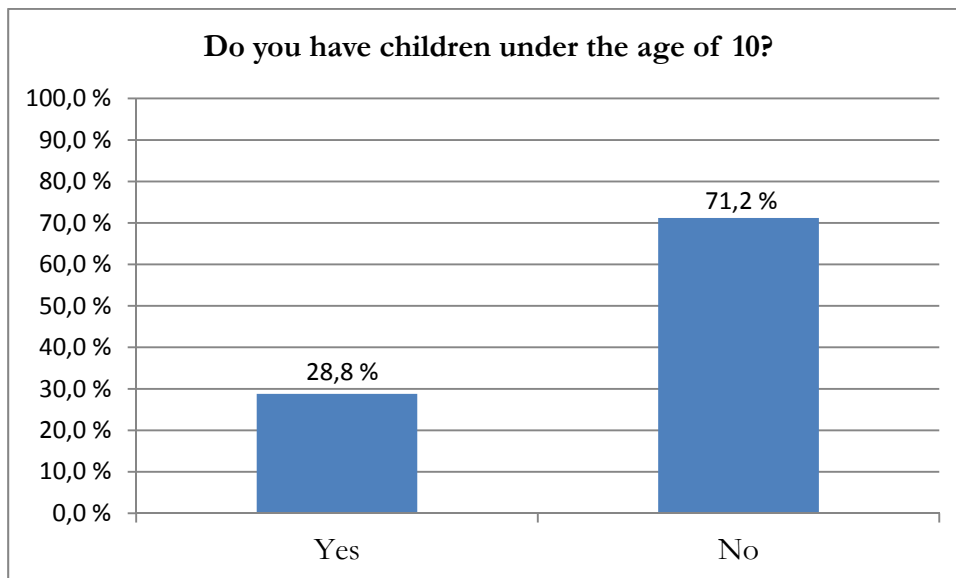


Figure 8. Do you have children under the age of 10?

The average age of the respondents is 31,5 years. The youngest respondent is 11 year-old and the oldest respondent is 56 year-old. As it is illustrated in the figure 9, over half of the respondents belong to the age category of 26-35 (51,1 %) year-olds. (Appendix 3/2).

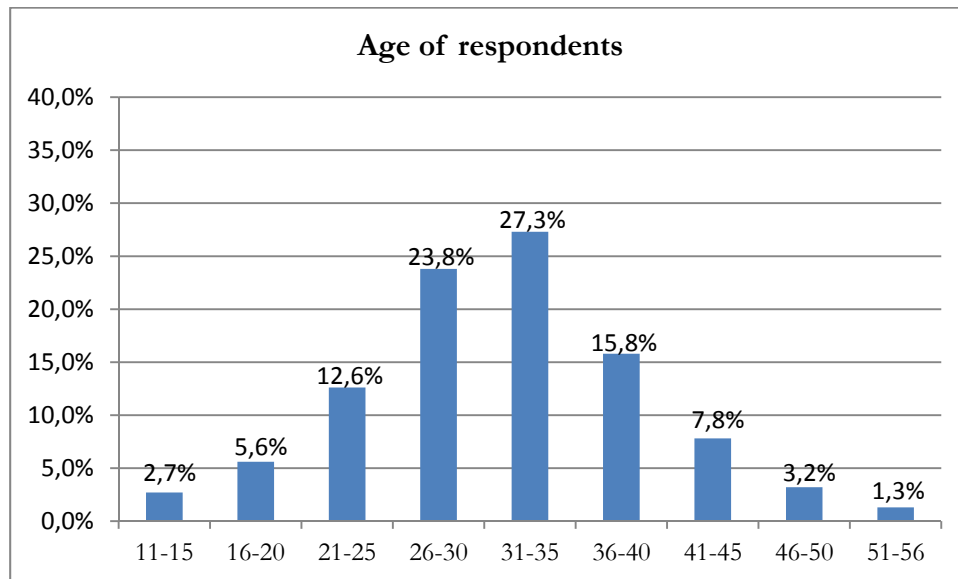
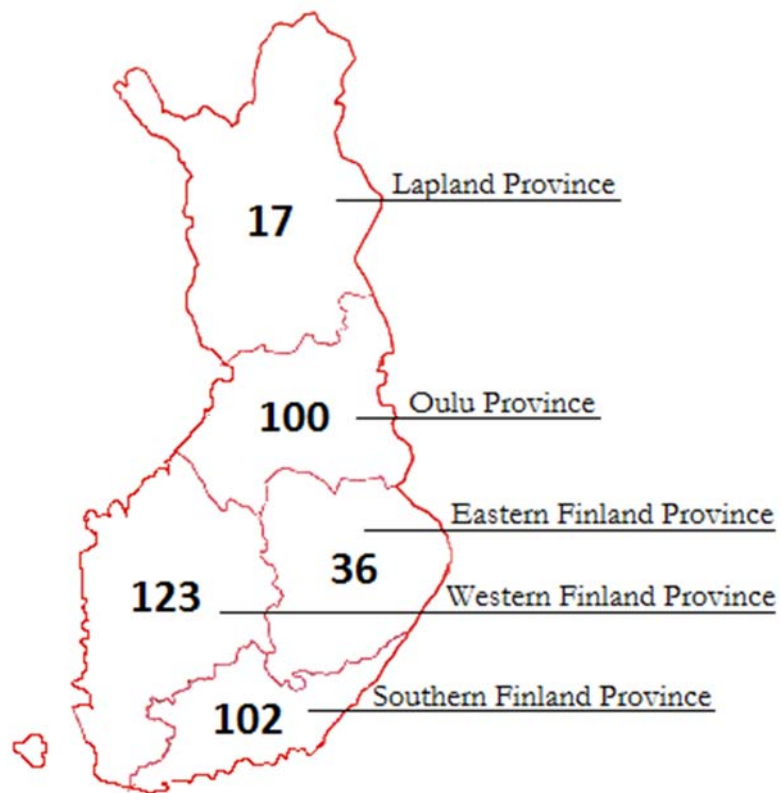


Figure 9. Age of respondents

Picture 3 illustrates how many responses the survey gathered from different former Provinces in Finland. In total the survey gathered 379 responses but one of them included unknown place of residence, therefore 378 valid responses were gathered. Survey was sent to the contact persons in all Finnish disc golf clubs in order to reach players from all the Finland's former Provinces. (Appendix 3/2).

Western Finland Province gathered 123 responses (32,4 %). Southern Finland Province gathered 102 responses (26,9 %). Oulu Province gathered 100 responses (26,4 %). Eastern Finland Province gathered 36 responses (9,5 %). Lapland Province gathered 17 responses (4,5 %). It can be seen from picture 3 that disc golf is played all around Finland but it also tells that the disc golf players from Southern Finland Province, Western Finland Province and Oulu Provinces replied the most. (Appendix 3/2).



Picture 3. Respondents divided in to Finland's former Provinces

9.2 ACTIVITY

As the figure 10 shows, from all the respondents 83,9 % have played disc 1-3 years or more. It can be said that in comparison to other sports disc golf is still relatively new for Finns. (Appendix 3/2).

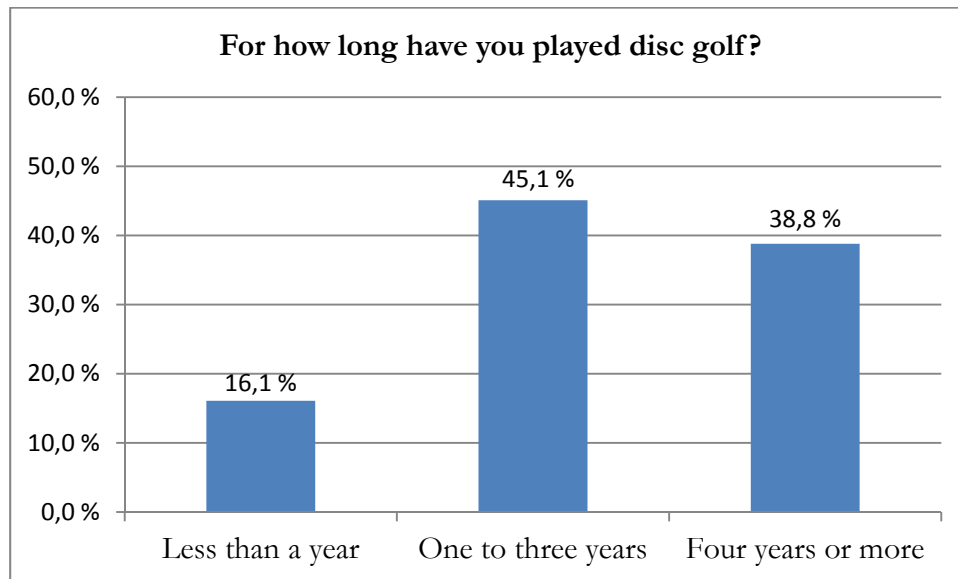


Figure 10. For how long have you played disc golf?

The purpose of the survey was to reach members of disc golf clubs who are expectedly active with the sport. Hence, Ruka Disc Golf Park could be developed in cohesion with the opinions of active players. However, as it can be seen from figure 11, the respondents were sharing the survey to other players bringing up 87 (23,0 %) responses from players who are not members of disc golf clubs. As the authors of this thesis we found these responses valid and took them into the analysis as well and the population evolved to be active disc golf players. (Appendix 3/2).

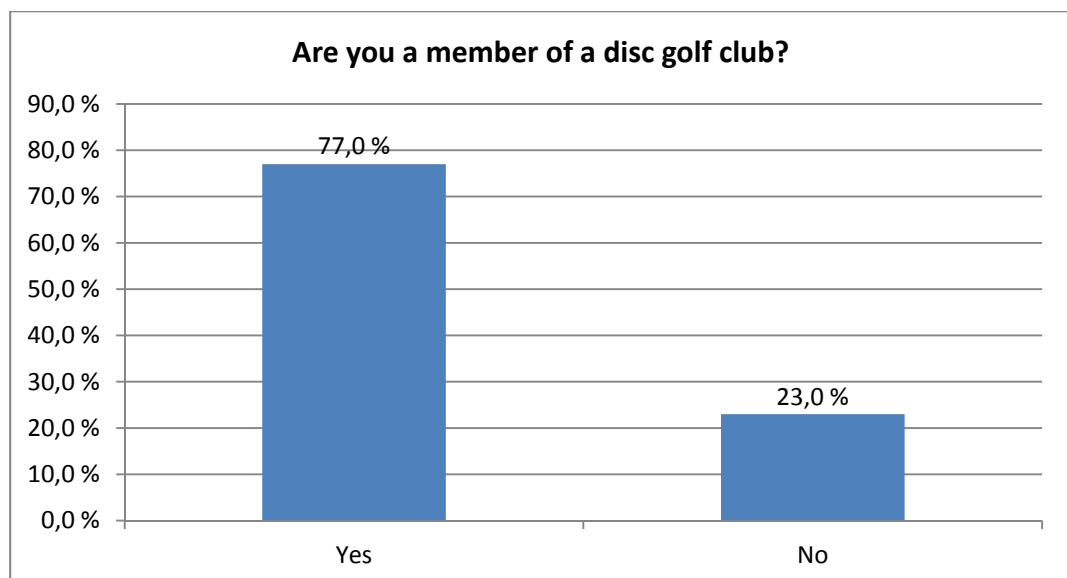


Figure 11. Are you a member of a disc golf club?

Disc golf is a fairly new sport in Finland. In the past 10 years Suomen Frisbeegolf Liitto (SFL) has grown its member amount twenty times larger (Suomen frisbeegolfliitto 2013 c). As the figure 12 shows, 92,8 % of disc golf club members have practiced the sport for 1-3 years or more. 82,8 % of players who are not members of disc golf clubs have practiced the sport for 1-3 years or less. As a conclusion it can be said that the members of disc golf clubs have played longer and are more experienced with the sport than the players who are not members of a disc golf club. (Appendix 3/3).

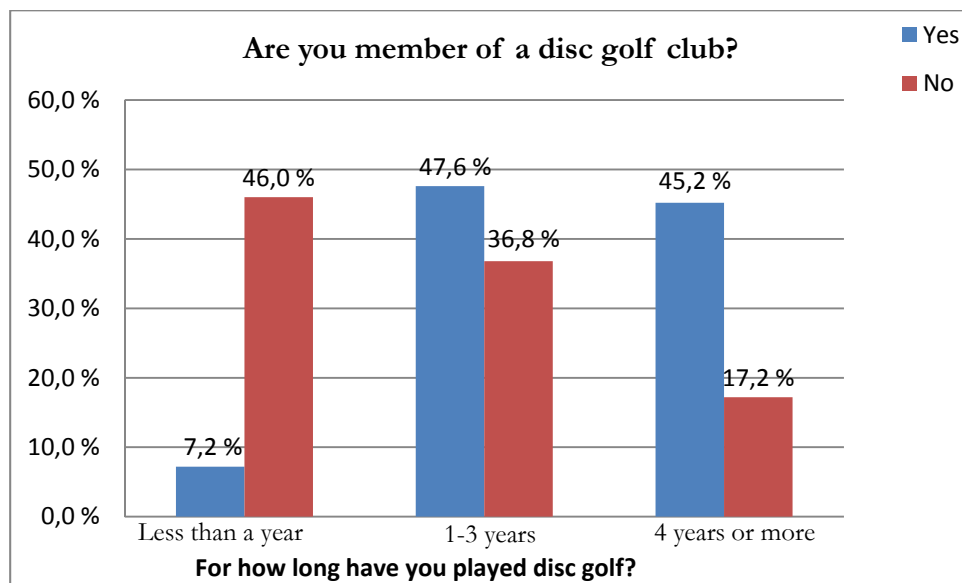


Figure 12. Are you a member of a disc golf club? * For how long have you played disc golf? Cross tabulation

As it can be seen from figure 13, the majority (66,8 %) of all the respondents play disc golf 3-7 times per week. 92,1 % of all respondents play disc golf weekly. Only 8,0 % of the respondents play less than once a week. It can be concluded that the survey reached mostly active disc golf players as it was purposed to do. (Appendix 3/3).

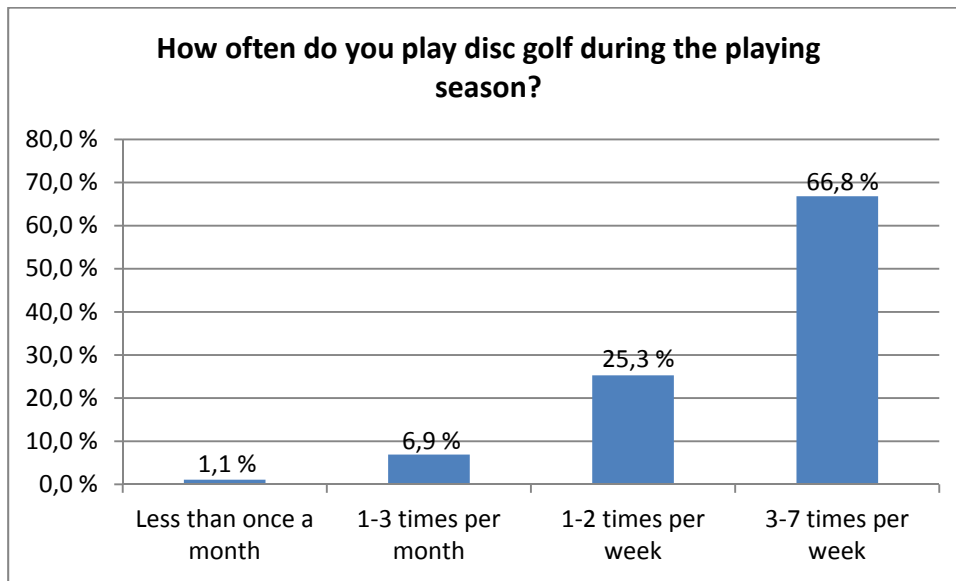


Figure 13. How often do you play disc golf during the playing season?

As the figure 14 shows, 78,1 % of total respondents have competed in disc golf and it is a valid target group from which to ask opinions about competitions. (Appendix 3/3).

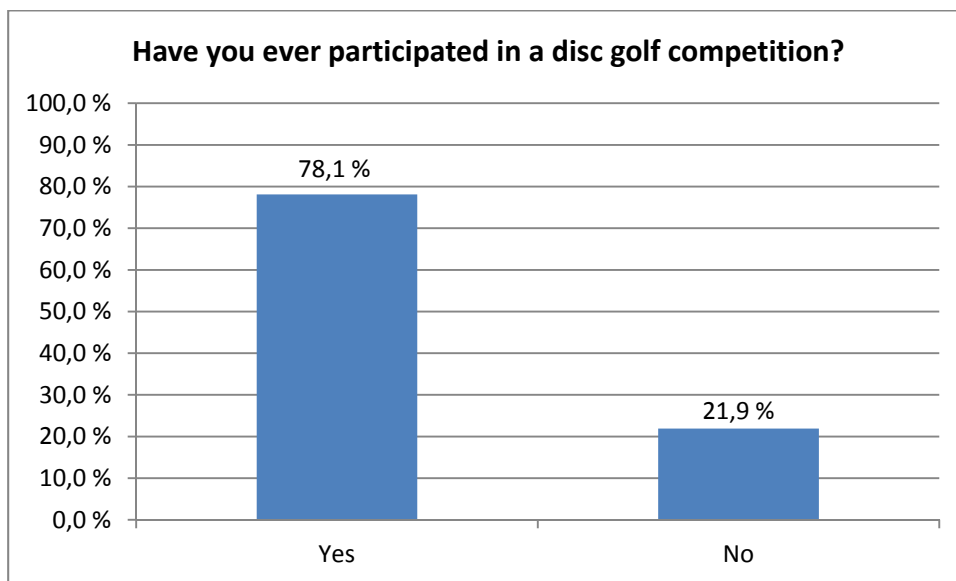


Figure 14. Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition?

As it is seen from the figure 15, the longer the player has practiced the sport, more likely the player is going to participate in a competition and therefore competitions should be marketed to the more experienced players. (Appendix 3/3).

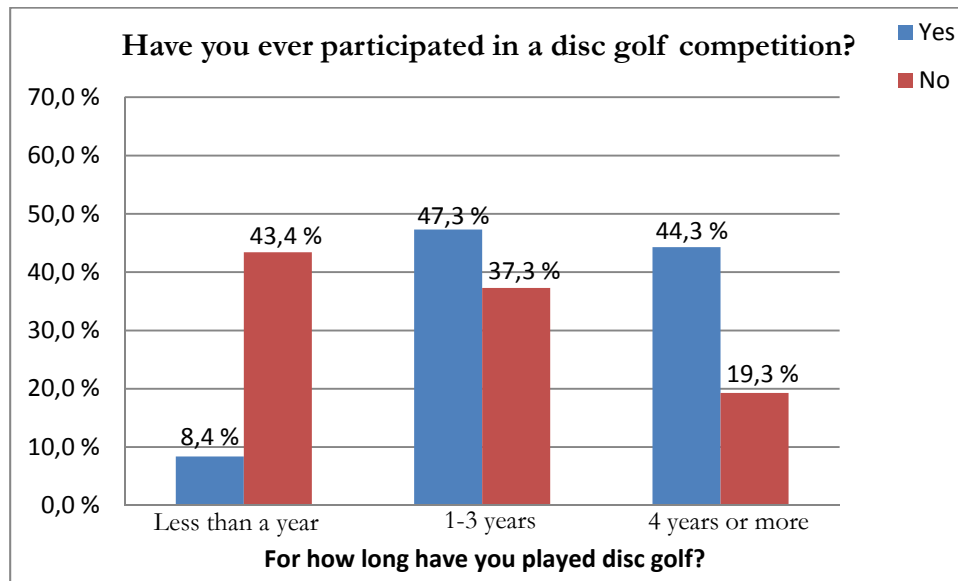


Figure 15. Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition? * For how long have you played disc golf? Cross tabulation

As the figure 16 shows, a member of a disc golf club is more likely to compete. 89,4 % of disc golf club members have competed, but only 40,2 % of players who are not members of disc golf clubs have competed. Therefore, if disc golf competitions are to be organized at Ruka Disc Golf Park, marketing should be aimed to disc golf clubs and associations. (Appendix 3/4).

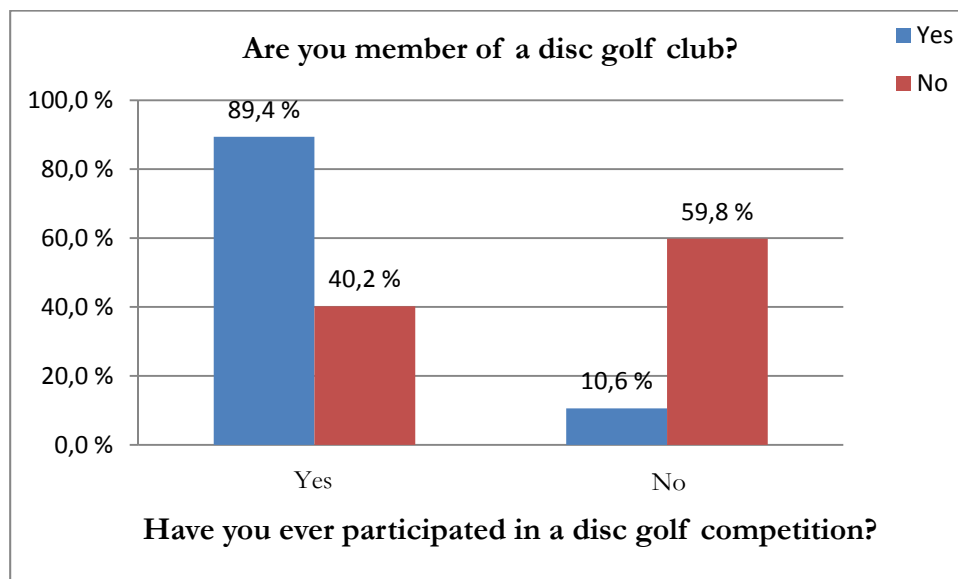


Figure 16. Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition? * Are you a member of a disc golf club? Cross tabulation

9.3 INTEREST TOWARDS RUKA DISC GOLF PARK

As it can be seen from figure 17, the majority (76,8 %) of the respondents know that Ruka Disc Golf Park existed even though it has only existed for five months (since the third of June 2013). (Appendix 3/4).

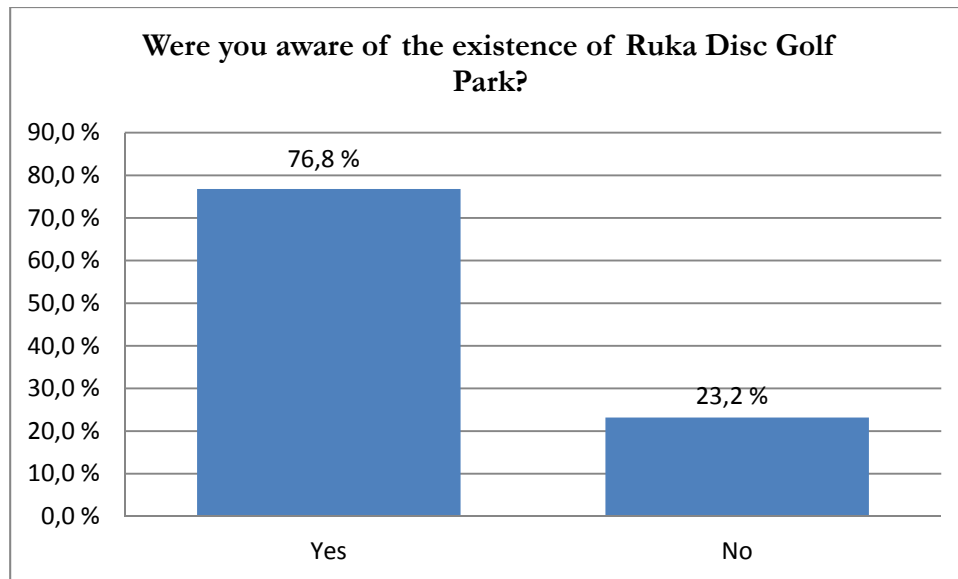


Figure 17. Were you aware of the existence of Ruka Disc Golf Park?

As the figure 17 shows, the majority (76,8 %) of all the respondents are aware of the existence of Ruka Disc Golf Park. Only 23,2 % had never heard about the park. In figure 18 the respondents who were not aware of the existence of Ruka Disc Golf Park have been categorized by the former Finnish Provinces. From the total of 88 respondents 38,6 % were from Southern Finland Province, 46,7 % from Western Finland Province, 10,2 % from Eastern Finland Province and 4,5 % from Oulu Province. Everybody from Lapland Province knows the park exists. Therefore it can be concluded that Ruka Disc Golf Park should be marketed better to Southern, Western and Eastern Province of Finland. (Appendix 3/4).

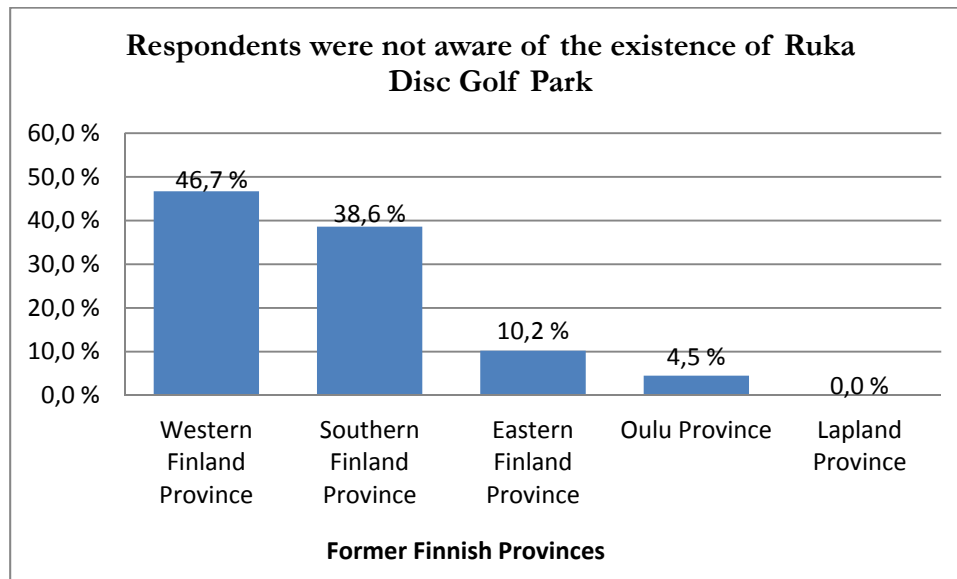


Figure 18. Respondents were not aware of the existence of Ruka Disc Golf Park? * Former Finnish Provinces

Even though the park is well recognized by the active disc golf players, figure 19 shows that only 15,8 % of all respondents have actually played there. (Appendix 3/4).

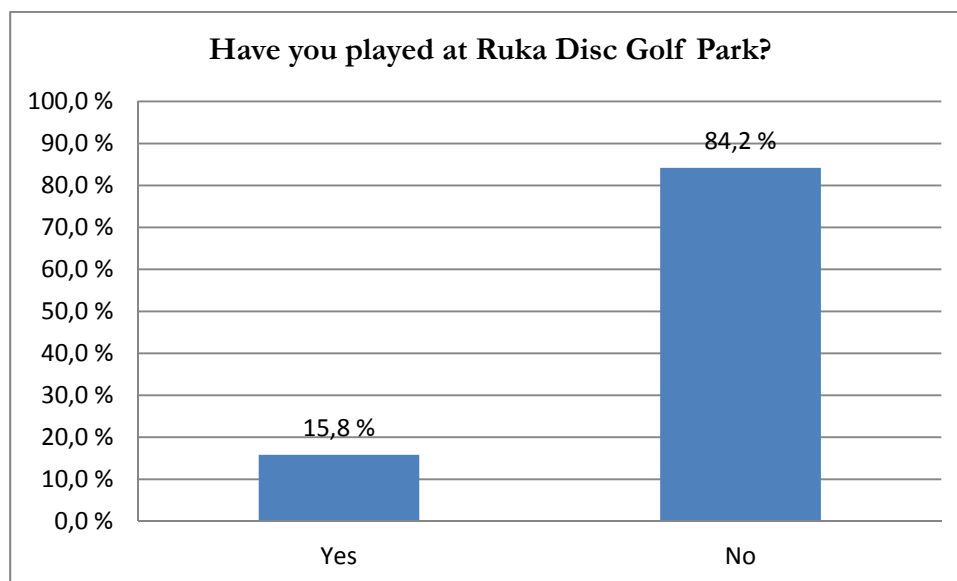


Figure 19. Have you played disc golf at Ruka Disc Golf Park?

As it can be seen from figure 20, players living closer to the park are more likely to play there and utilize its services. From the total of 59 players, who have played at Ruka Disc Golf Park, 16,9 % were from Western Finland Province, 8,5 % from Southern Finland Province, 50,9 % from Oulu Province, 5,1 % from Eastern Finland Province and 18,6 %

from Lapland Province. Majority (69,5 %) of the players were from Oulu and Lapland province. (Appendix 3/5).

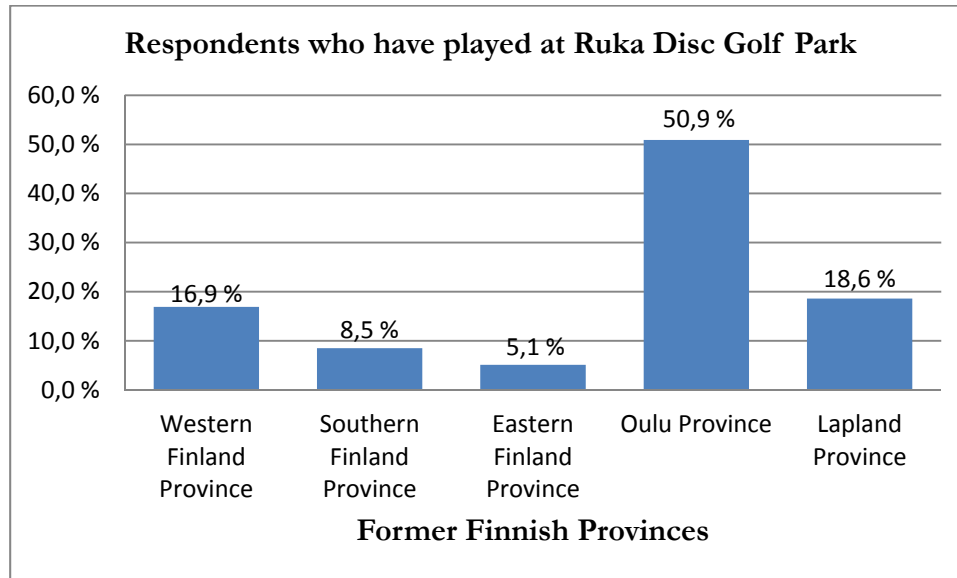


Figure 20. Respondents who have played at Ruka Disc Golf Park? * Former Finnish Provinces

Even though only 15,8 % (60 out of 379) of the players have played at Ruka Disc Golf Park (figure 20), it can be seen from figure 21 that 77,0 % would be interested to play there. Additional 22,2 % would possibly be interested to play there and only 0,8 % are not interested at all. It can be concluded from the statistics that Ruka Disc Golf Park has a lot of potential to grow and gain more visitors. (Appendix 3/5).

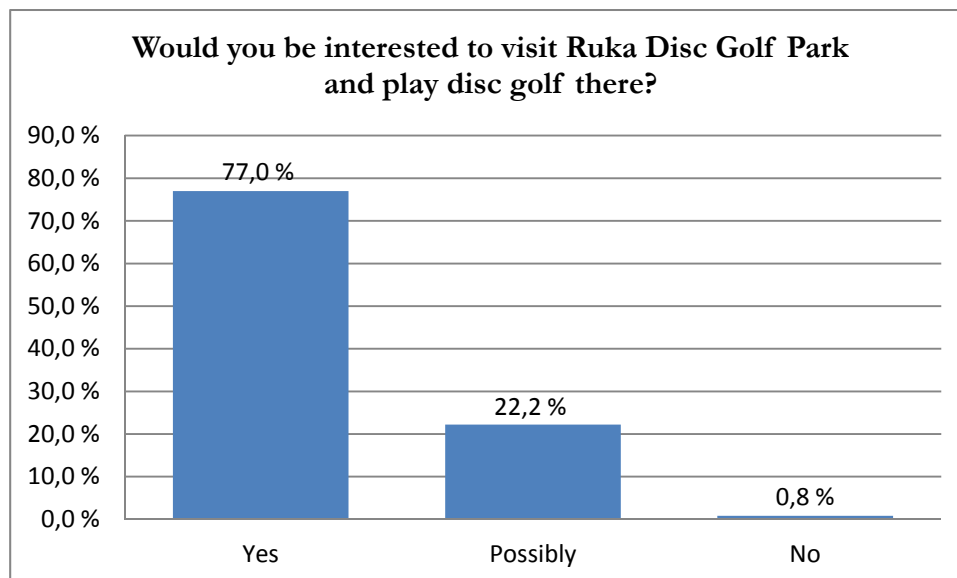


Figure 21. Would you be interested to visit Ruka Disc Golf Park and play disc golf there?

It can be seen from the figure 22 that only 11,6 % of the respondents are not interested to participate in a competition at Ruka Disc Golf Park. 40,4 % of the respondents are interested and additionally 48,0 % of the respondents are possibly interested to participate in a competition at Ruka Disc Golf Park. It can be concluded that hosting competitions at Ruka Disc Golf Park would work as an attractive activity and would lead to increased amount of visitors. (Appendix 3/5).

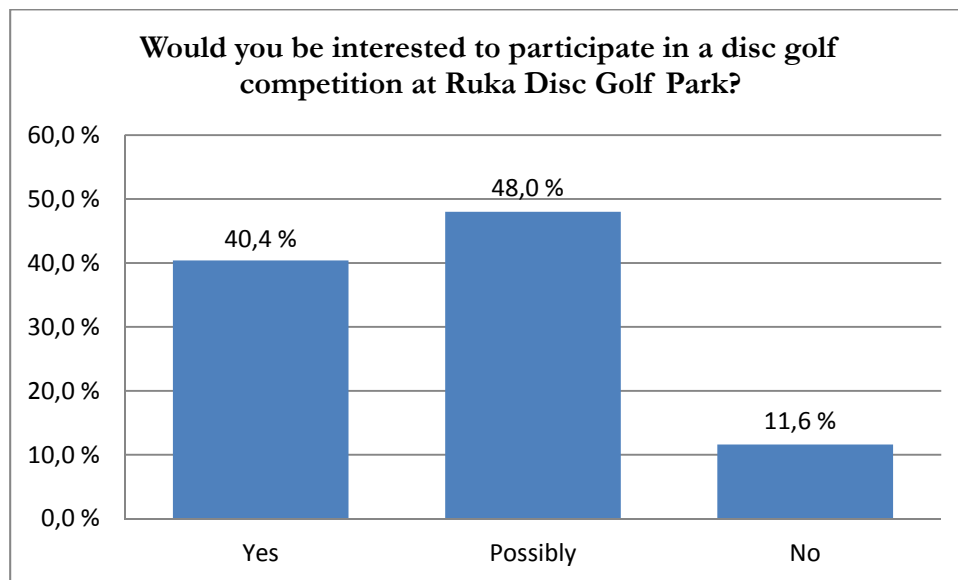


Figure 22. Would you be interested to participate in a disc golf competition at Ruka Disc Golf Park?

9.4 INTEREST TOWARDS ADDITIONAL SERVICES

As figure 23 shows, 49,9 % from respondents would most likely use or might use the services of disc rental place and shop. Furthermore 50,1 % of the respondents do not feel these kinds of services needed. It can be concluded that there is a need for disc rental place and a shop if every second visitor would use its services, taking into consideration that experienced players usually have their own discs with them and do not feel renting discs as necessary. (Appendix 3/6).

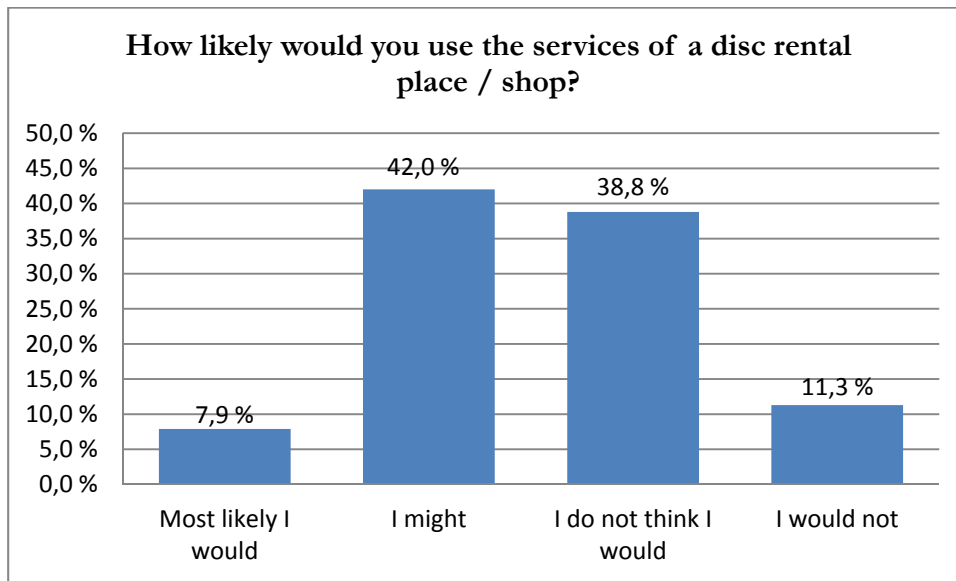


Figure 23. How likely would you use the services of a disc rental place / shop?

As figure 24 illustrates, 90,0 % of the respondents would most likely use or might use disc throwing velocity measurement service. High percentage implies that implementing this service to Ruka Disc Golf Park would make it a lot more appealing to visitors. (Appendix 3/6).

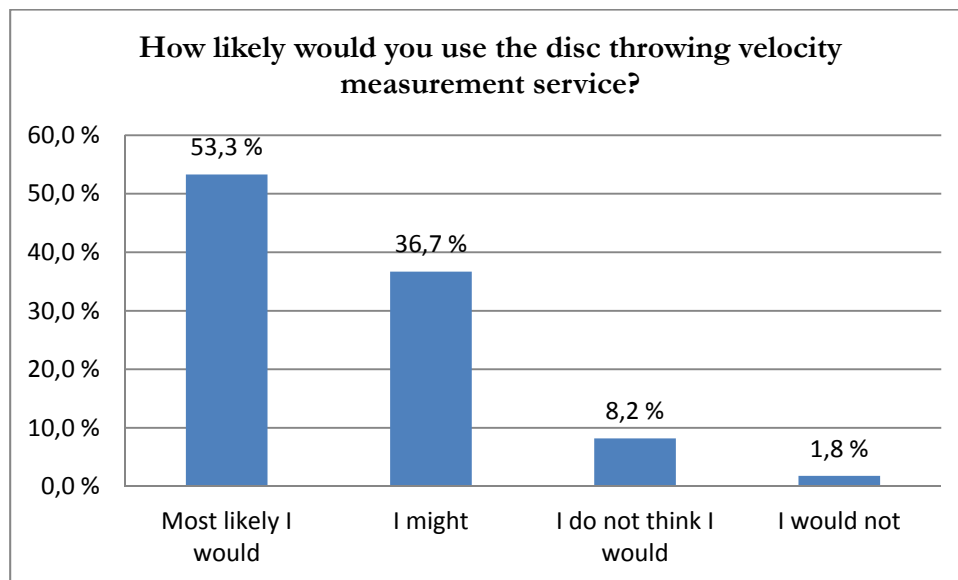


Figure 24. How likely would you use the disc throwing velocity measurement service?

As figure 25 shows, 93,2 % of the respondents would most likely use or might use disc throwing distance measurement service. High percentage implies that implementing this

service to Ruka Disc Golf Park would make it a lot more appealing to visitors. (Appendix 3/6).

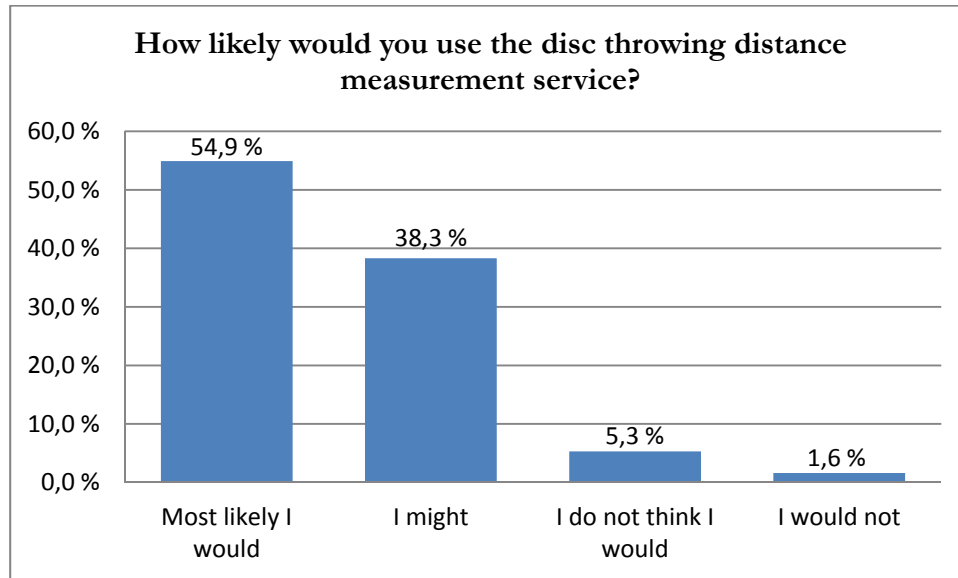


Figure 25. How likely would you use the disc throwing distance measurement service?

As it can be seen from figure 26, only 29,9 % of the respondents would most likely use or might use a mini disc golf park designed for children. (Appendix 3/6).

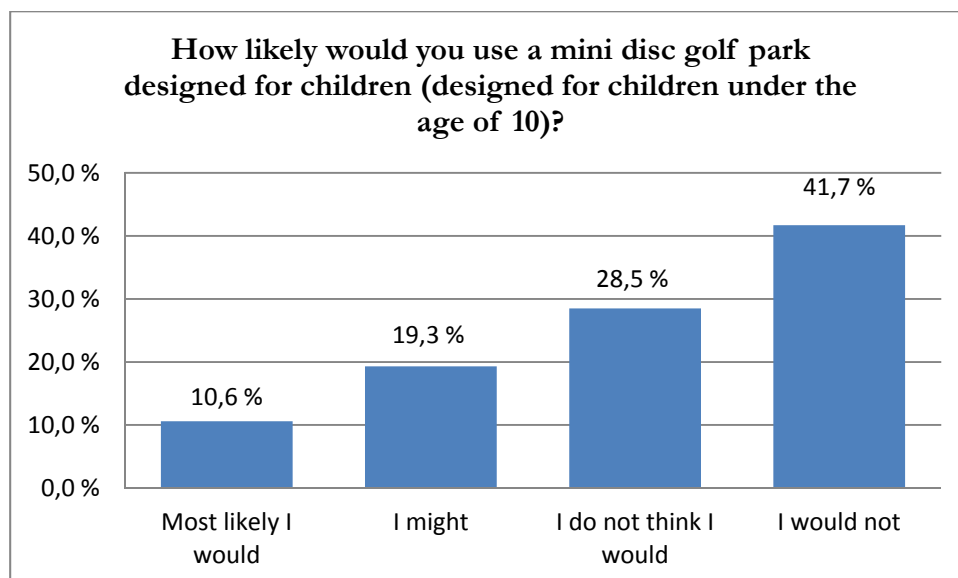


Figure 26. How likely would you use a mini disc golf park designed for children (designed for children under the age of 10)?

As figure 27 illustrates, 70,8 % (80 out of 113) respondents who would most likely use or might use a mini disc golf park designed for children have children under the age of 10 of their own. Thus, it can be concluded that the mini disc golf park would be mostly used by families and increase the value of the park for them. Nevertheless, some of the respondents without children are interested from the service as well. (Appendix 3/7).

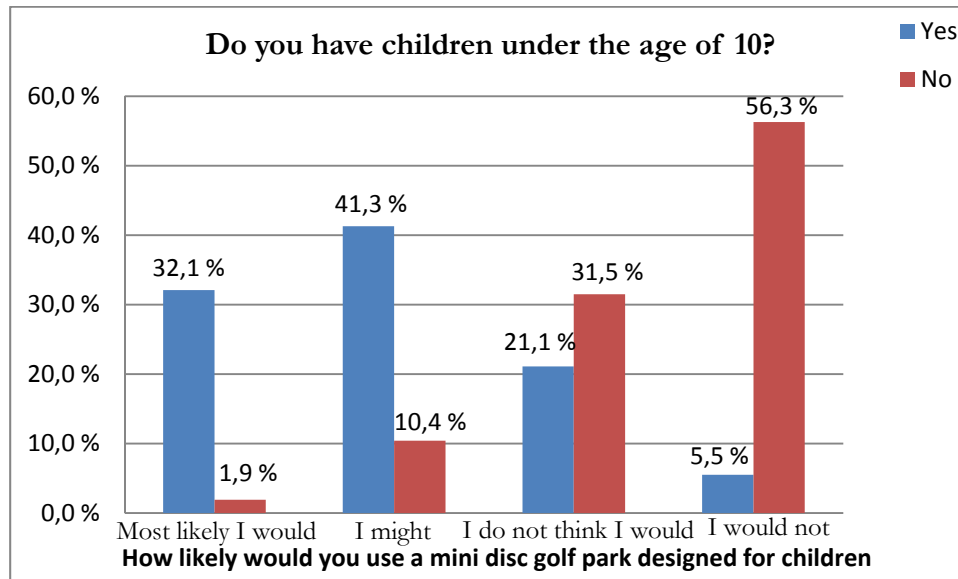


Figure 27. Do you have children under the age of 10? * How likely would you use a mini disc golf park designed for children (designed for children under the age of 10)? Cross tabulation.

As figure 28 shows, 88,1 % of the respondents would most likely use or might use disc testing service. The high percentage implies that if disc testing service would be available it would be used by the majority of the players. (Appendix 3/7).

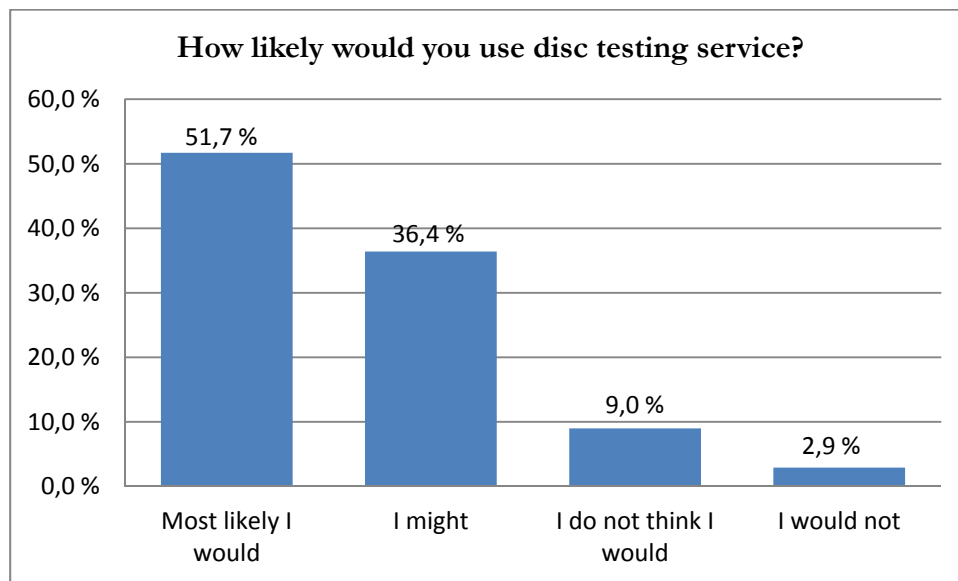


Figure 28. How likely would you use disc testing service?

As it can be seen from figure 29, more than half (56,0 %) of the active disc golf players would most likely participate or might participate to disc throwing technique training. Most of the players are self-taught and it can be concluded from figure 29 that even if you have practiced the sport for many years, getting taught by a professional would be utilized if available. (Appendix 3/7).

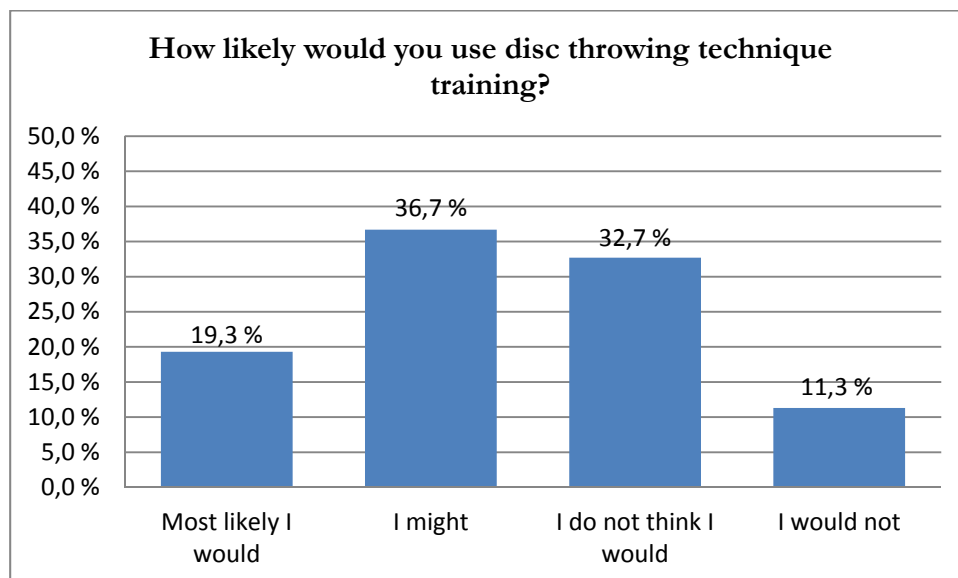


Figure 29. How likely would you use disc throwing technique training?

9.5 MONEY VALUE OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Disc golf is one of the least expensive forms of sports to practice but as figure 30 shows the majority of active disc golf players (67,5 %) spend more than 100 Euros to discs and bags annually. The price of the most common new discs vary from 8 Euros to 20 Euros and the average price is approximately 14 Euros (Innova Disc Golf. 2013 a). It can be concluded that the majority of active disc golf players purchase at least 7 new discs annually. Because of discs are not perishable goods it would be safe for Ruka Disc Golf Park to purchase discs for retail purposes. (Appendix 3/8).

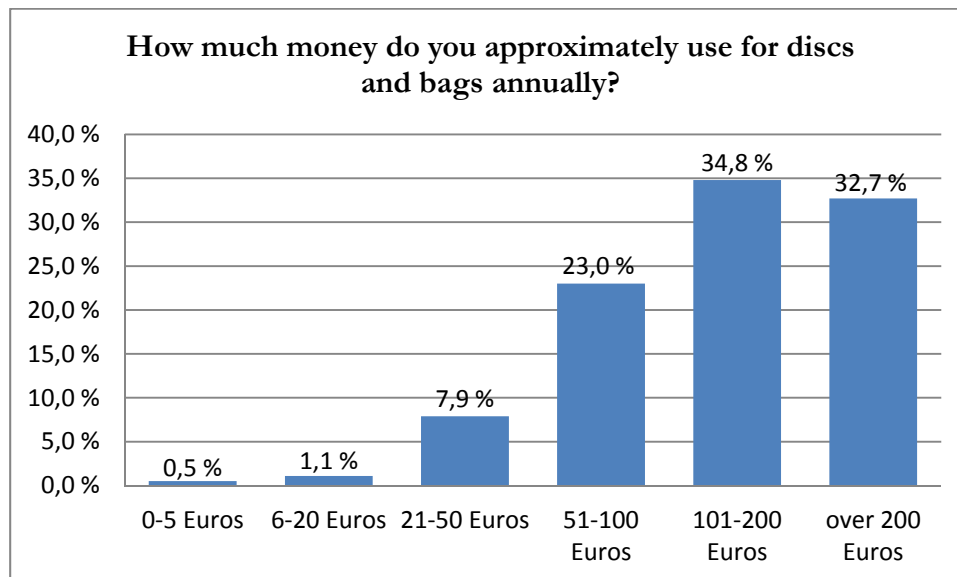


Figure 30. How much money do you approximately use for discs and bags annually?

As it can be seen from figure 31, the majority (58,3 %) of the respondents would be ready to pay over 10 Euros to take part into an organized disc golf competition with prizes. It can be concluded from the statistics that the organizer could ask more than 10 Euros of entry fee for the competition per player. Naturally higher entry fee would reflect on better prizes for the winners. However smaller entry fee for example 3-10 Euros would increase the possible amount of competitors. (Appendix 3/8).

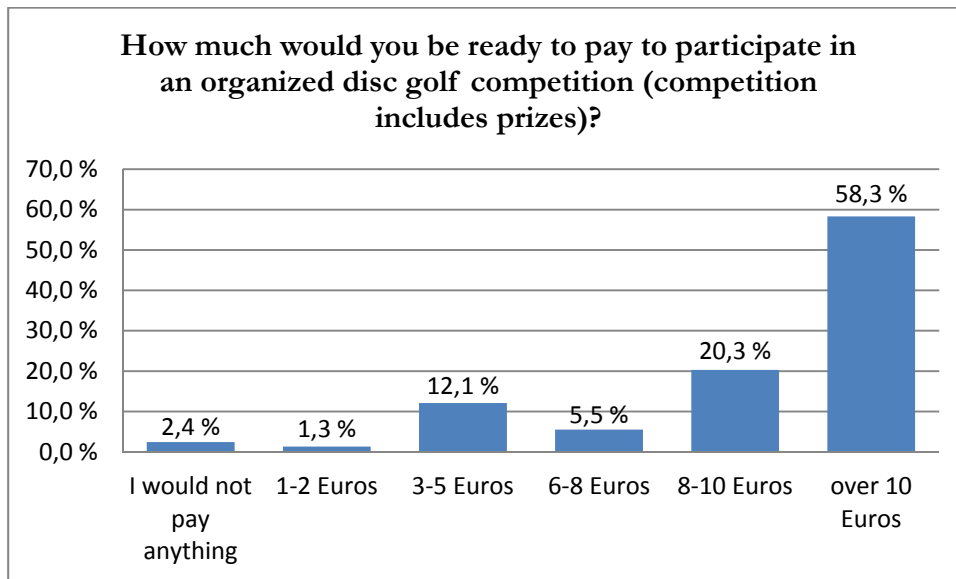


Figure 31. How much would you be ready to pay to participate in an organized disc golf competition (competition includes prizes)?

As figure 32 shows, the majority (83,1 %) of the respondents would be ready to pay 1-5 Euros to use disc throwing velocity measurement service. It can be concluded that 3 Euros would be suitable price for 10 throws. Only a fraction of respondents would be ready to pay more than 5 Euros (4,8 %). (Appendix 3/8).

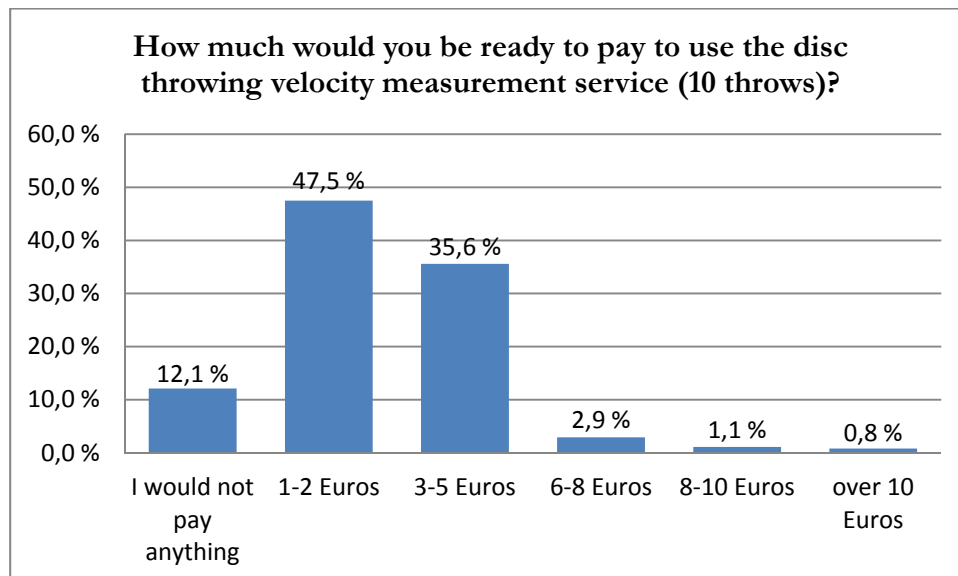


Figure 32. How much would you be ready to pay to use the disc throwing velocity measurement service (10 throws)?

As it can be seen from figure 33, the majority (50,4 %) would not pay anything to use disc throwing distance measurement service. The interest towards the service is high but it has only a little or no money value. Nevertheless, if it could be organized free of charge it would increase the attractiveness of the park. As figure 24 earlier showed, 93,2 % of the respondents would most likely use or might use the service. (Appendix 3/9).

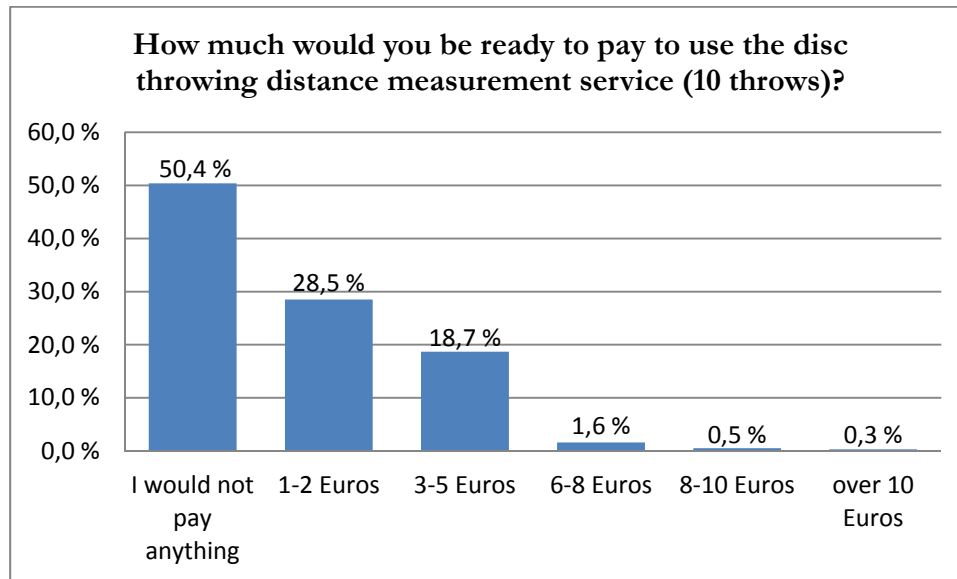


Figure 33. How much would you be ready to pay to use the disc throwing distance measurement service (10 throws)?

As figure 34 shows, the majority (56,5 %) of the respondents would be ready to pay 1-5 Euros to test five different discs of their choosing for four hours. According to the statistics the average 3 Euros would be generally acceptable price for the service. The result is surprising because the existing disc rental service at Ruka Disc Golf Park (3 predetermined discs for one whole tour) already costs 8 Euros and has been very popular amongst visitors. (Appendix 3/9).

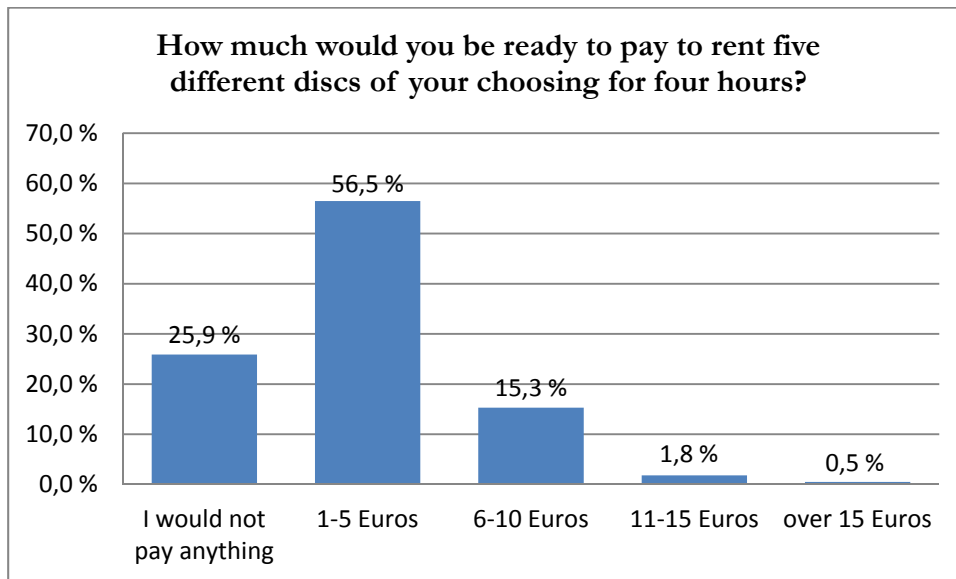


Figure 34. How much would you be ready to pay to rent five different discs of your choosing for four hours?

As figure 35 shows, 27,4 % of the respondents would be ready to pay 1-10 Euros, 41,4 % 11-20 Euros and additionally 9,8 % 21-30 Euros. It can be concluded that generally accepted price amongst active disc golf players would be approximately 15 Euros. (Appendix 3/9).

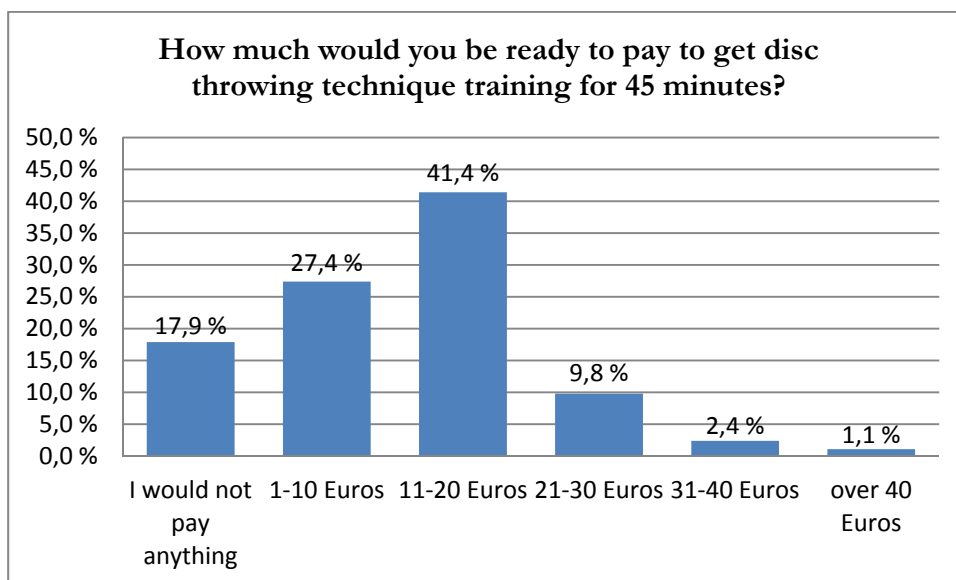


Figure 35. How much would you be ready to pay to get disc throwing technique training for 45 minutes?

9.7 FACTORS MAKING A DISC GOLF PARK ATTRACTIVE AND PLEASANT TO USE

#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
1	Variety of the track (up and downhill ratio, length differences of the tracks etc.).	201	107	49	18	2	1	1	1,7
2	The level of difficulty of the track.	93	121	85	52	23	2	3	2,5
3	How clean the track is (tees, walking tracks, guide signs, disc catchers etc.).	65	92	140	66	13	3	0	2,7
4	Regular maintenance on the tracks.	16	45	64	122	78	22	32	4
5	Scenery and views the track offers.	2	10	29	84	139	55	60	5
6	Additional services offered by the park (disc rental, shop, technique training, disc throwing velocity/distance measurement etc.)	1	3	7	19	82	176	91	5,8
7	Restaurants, shops, accommodations and other extra services located near the park.	1	1	5	18	42	120	192	6,2
	Total	379	379	379	379	379	379	379	

Table 31. Factors making a disc golf park attractive and pleasant to use.

It can be seen from table 31 how the respondents ranked factors affecting the user experience in the order of importance. Answer with most values in bracket 1 and the smallest average value is the most important and the answer with most values in bracket 7 and the highest average value is the least important.

The top three factors in order of importance are: variety of the track, the level of difficulty of the track and how clean the track is. These factors are directly linked to playing the game and experiences got from the park itself. The fourth most important factor is regular maintenance. This can be linked to the track being trash free, tees in good condition, well installed disc catchers and other factors which can affect to players' game and score. Even the scenery that the park offers is considered more important than the additional services or nearby restaurant, shops, and hotels etc. which are considered the two least important factors.

9.8 CONCLUSION OF THE SURVEY

As a conclusion of the demographic part of the survey it can be said that on average an active disc golf player is employed 26-36 year-old male with no children under the age of 10. However, the sport is suitable for anyone and as the survey also indicates there are players from all age groups and with various social statuses.

The survey which was sent to the contact persons of each Finnish disc golf club and asked to be forwarded to their members, gathered a lot of responses very quickly. It positively surprised the authors of the thesis. This signifies the activity of disc golf players and their community as well as the fact that the survey was forwarded by the players themselves to various forums and social media. Majority of the players have been active with the sport for 1-3 years and practice the sport on a weekly basis. The Majority of the players also attend to competitions.

As a conclusion for the interest towards Ruka Disc Golf Park section it can be said that within its five months of being open for public, majority of the players already recognize the existence of the park. However the majority of the players have never played there. Those who have played at Ruka Disc Golf Park come mainly from Oulu and Lapland provinces. Nevertheless, despite of three respondents, everyone is interested to visit Ruka Disc Golf Park in the future and play there. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents would like to compete there as well. Ruka Disc Golf Park has a lot of potential to increase its visitor amount in the future.

It can be concluded from the interest towards additional services section that all the suggested services would have high demand and interest. However the mini disc golf park designed for children was mainly preferred by people with children under the age of 10.

Annual expenditure for disc golf equipment of the majority of active players is more than 100 Euros, approximately every third player spends more than 200 Euros. This implies that the sport is still a low-cost hobby if compared to any other sport. Additional services with social component such as training with a professional or participating into a competition are services to which players are willing to spend the most money. Other planned additional services had 1-5 Euros or no money value.

As a conclusion of the question which factors are the most important regarding the user experience of the park it can be said that the players respect the characteristics of the park and the condition of the playing environment the most. Additional services bring a lot of extra value to the park but are not as important to the players as the park itself.

9.9 SUGGESTIONS OF THE PLAYERS

The open ended questions in the survey gathered all together 85 responses. In the following chapters the most frequently mentioned issues are analyzed.

10 out of 85 respondents mentioned the need for additional toilets. Players are worried if the toilet capacity of the park is sufficient. Currently Ruka Disc Golf Park has two toilets, one at the first tee and the second one approximately in the half way. The second toilet however is 150 meters away from the closest hole and there are no signs to inform the players about it. It is mentioned that parks which are liked by the players do not have enough toilets and Ruka Disc Golf Park should also increase the amount of them.

28 out of 85 respondents mentioned the need for extra disc catchers and warm-up/practice areas. According to the respondents a good disc golf park has a warm up area near the first tee. Many respondents also mention the importance of catchers to practice putting. Players also find a driving range with a net, which catches the disc, to warm up opening throws before the game important. Even though the park has 18-holes it does not have any extra disc catchers to warm-up and practice putting. Investing to these extra catchers and driving range would improve the user experience of Ruka Disc Golf Park.

18 out of 85 respondents mentioned the need for cafeterias, restaurants, kiosks, water tabs and other additional services. Many respondents mention that it would be important to have restaurants, a sports shop and cafeterias near to the starting area of the park as well as within the park. Ruka Disc Golf Park is located inside the Ruka Village and there are plenty of these types of services available near the starting area but visitors cannot buy any refreshments during their disc golf tour. If there would be a small cafeteria for example on the top of the hill its services would certainly be used by the players due to playing all 18 holes takes three to five hours. Another thing players feel important is to be able to fill their

water bottles during their round. It would increase the user experience of Ruka Disc Golf Park if there would be water tabs around the park.

Although the respondents did not rank additional services very high in the order of importance they mentioned that these services are a necessity in peripheral areas such as Ruka. For the players to find Ruka Disc Golf Park interesting and appealing the additional services must be marketed well and they must be clearly visible for the potential visitors. This is because the visitors have to make an effort to come and to stay at Ruka. Additional services are not so needed in the disc golf parks closer to their place of residence.

Due to the fact that many players have to travel long distances to take part in a disc golf competition at Ruka Disc Golf Park, they hoped that there would be a package including several services and products. The all-inclusive packages would include accommodation, meals, entry fee for competition and possible tickets for nearby shows or concerts. All-inclusive package deals and discounts for accommodation were mentioned by eight respondents.

Experienced and active players also hope that people new to the sport would be given an introduction to the sport before they go and play. Introduction should cover the very basic things of the game such as game etiquette, safety, rules and how to keep the park clean. Six respondents were worried that the etiquette of the game is disregarded by the new players.

The rest of the answers to the open ended questions were comments and opinions about the Ruka Disc Golf Park, the survey, the thesis and various other topics.

10 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The aim of this thesis was to discover relevant development points for Ruka Disc Golf Park in order to increase the attractiveness of the park and the visitor amount. In order to find out these development points it was necessary to understand the current state of the park, disc golf itself and issues related to the seasonality at Ruka better. In addition to this, deeper knowledge about attraction management, experiences and events had to be gained as well. An essential part of the thesis was to hear the opinions and thoughts of the active disc golf players themselves. To better understand what the active players appreciate and value in disc golf parks, quantitative research was conducted in a form of web-survey.

Survey proved that the disc golf players are very active and interested about the subjects related to the sport. Survey gathered over 200 replies within the first few days and 379 responses in total. In addition to the main questions the respondents had opportunities to share freely their improvement suggestions and other ideas how to develop the park further.

According to the survey results, the players appreciate and value the park and its characteristics the most but were also very interested about the planned additional services. Contribution of the respondents was so valuable that it shed light on some points, which were not even taken into consideration at first. For more details, please check the chapter 9.8 from the page 52.

The most significant improvement for the Ruka Disc Golf Park would be organizing events related to disc golf, mainly competitions. In which the visitors could take part in, compete against their rivals, socialize with each other and find alternative services and products related to the sport.

The phenomenon which is disc golf attracts and interests people from all age groups, with different social statuses and from all around the realm. The thing that they all have in common is the love for the sport. However, Ruka Disc Golf Park should evolve to accommodate the needs and wants of the various and rich player demographics with supportive additional services. Ruka has the potential to become the Finland's number one disc golf park.

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APPENDIX 1. SURVEY FORM, ORIGINAL FINNISH VERSION

Hyvä frisbeegolfseuran yhteyshenkilö!

Frisbeegolffin suosio jatkaa kasvuaan Suomessa ja laji kehittyy jatkuvasti.

Rukalle avattiin kesällä 2013 Ruka Disc Golf Park, jonka suuri suosio yllätti rataa ylläpitävän Rukan kävelykyläyhdistyksen. Rata on 18-väyläinen kilpatason (AA1) kokonaisuus ja hiihtokeskuksen jylhät korkeuserot tekevät pelielämyksestä raskaan, mutta nautinnollisen.

Ruka Disc Golf Parkkia halutaan kehittää yhteistyössä lajin harrastajien kanssa.

Kehitystoimien ja mahdollisten lisäpalveluiden kartoittamiseksi me (Jaakko Alasalmi & Teemu Apiainen) Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijoina, teemme opinnäytetyötä aiheeseen liittyen. Osana opinnäytetyötä on kyselytutkimus, jolla kartoitetaan frisbeegolffin harrastajien kiinnostuneisuutta ja näkemystä radalle suunniteltuihin kehitystöihin ja lisäpalveluihin.

Olisimme kiitollisia jos välittäisitte sähköpostimme tai alla olevan linkin kyselyyn seuranne jäsenille ja pyytäisitte heitä vastaamaan kyselyyn. Jokainen annettu vastaus auttaa Ruka Disc Golf Parkin kehittämisen lajin harrastajien haluamalla tavalla.

Kyselyssä on kuusi kategoriaa ja yhteensä 28 kysymystä. Kyselyyn vastaaminen vie noin 5-10 minuuttia.

Kysely löytyy osoitteesta: https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9nPxIQj1ZOaPxJP

Kysely on avoinna vastauksille 4.11.2013 – 18.11.2013 välisenä aikana eli vastausaikaa on kahden viikon verran.

Sähköposti on lähetetty kaikkien Suomen frisbeegolfliiton listaamien jäsenseurojen yhteyshenkilöille siinä toivossa, että tavoittaisimme mahdollisimman monta lajin harrastajaa.

Kiitos yhteistyöstänne ja kesää odotellessa!

OSA 1 – VASTAAJARAKENNE

Kysymyksillä halutaan kartoittaa frisbeegolfpelaajien demografista rakennetta.

Sukupuoli

Mies

Nainen

Ikä

Asuinpaikkakunta

Työllisyystilanne

Työssäkäyvä

Työtön

Opiskelija

Eläkkeellä

Muu (täsmennä)

Onko teillä alle 10-vuotiaita lapsia?

Kyllä

Ei

OSA 2 - HARRASTUNEISUUS

Kysymyksillä halutaan kartoittaa frisbeegolfpelaajien harrastuneisuutta.

Kuinka usein käytte harrastamassa frisbeegolfia harrastuskautena?

Harvemmin kuin kerran kuukaudessa

1-3 kertaa kuukaudessa

1-2 kertaa viikossa

3-7 kertaa viikossa

Kuinka kauan olette harrastaneet frisbeegolfia?

Alle vuoden

1-3 vuotta

4 vuotta tai enemmän

Kuulutteko frisbeegolfseuraan?

Kyllä

En

Oletteko osallistuneet frisbeegolfkilpailuun?

Kyllä

En

OSA 3 - RUKA DISC GOLF PARK

Kysymyksillä halutaan kartoittaa frisbeegolfpelaajien kiinnostusta Ruka Disc Golf Parkkia kohtaan.

Tiesittekö että Rukalla on frisbeegolfrata?

Kyllä

En

Oletteko käyneet Rukalla pelaamassa frisbeegolfia?

Kyllä

En

Olisitteko kiinnostuneita käymään Rukalla pelaamassa frisbeegolfia?

Kyllä

Mahdollisesti

En

Olisitteko kiinnostuneita osallistumaan frisbeegolfkilpailuihin Rukalla?

- Kyllä
- Mahdollisesti
- En

OSA 4 - LISÄPALVELUT FRISBEEGOLFRADALLA

Kysymyksillä halutaan kartoittaa frisbeegolfpelaajien kiinnostuneisuutta lisäpalveluja kohtaan.

Kuinka todennäköisesti käyttäisitte kiekkovuokraamon / myymälän palveluja?

- Käyttäisin erittäin todennäköisesti
- Käyttäisin todennäköisesti
- Todennäköisesti en käyttäisi
- En käyttäisi

Kuinka todennäköisesti käyttäisitte kiekon heittonopeuden mittauspaikkaa?

- Käyttäisin erittäin todennäköisesti
- Käyttäisin todennäköisesti
- Todennäköisesti en käyttäisi
- En käyttäisi

Kuinka todennäköisesti käyttäisitte kiekon heittopituuden mittauspaikkaa?

- Käyttäisin erittäin todennäköisesti
- Käyttäisin todennäköisesti
- Todennäköisesti en käyttäisi
- En käyttäisi

Kuinka todennäköisesti käyttäisitte lapsille suunniteltua minifrisbeegolfraata (suunniteltu alle 10 – vuotiaille)?

- Käyttäisin erittäin todennäköisesti
- Käyttäisin todennäköisesti
- Todennäköisesti en käyttäisi
- En käyttäisi

Kuinka todennäköisesti käyttäisitte erilaisten kiekkojen testausmahdollisuutta?

- Käyttäisin erittäin todennäköisesti
- Käyttäisin todennäköisesti
- Todennäköisesti en käyttäisi
- En käyttäisi

Kuinka todennäköisesti käyttäisitte frisbeegolfkiekon heittotekniikan opetusta?

- Käyttäisin erittäin todennäköisesti
- Käyttäisin todennäköisesti
- Todennäköisesti en käyttäisi
- En käyttäisi

Onko teillä ehdotuksia muille lisäpalveluille, joita ei ole tässä kyselyssä tullut esille?
(Kirjoittakaa ehdotuksenne alla olevaan tekstikenttään. Kysymys on vapaaehtoinen.)

OSA 5 - RAHANKÄYTTÖNNE FRISBEEGOLF HARRASTUKSEENNE

Kysymyksillä halutaan kartoittaa kuinka paljon frisbeegolfpelaajat sijoittavat rahaa harrastukseensa.

Paljonko suurinpiirtein käytätte frisbeegolf välineisiin (kiekot + bāgit) rahaa vuodessa?

- 0-5 Euroa
- 6-20 Euroa
- 21-50 Euroa
- 51-100 Euroa
- 101-200 Euroa
- yli 200 Euroa

Paljonko olisitte enimmillään valmis maksamaan järjestettyyn kilpailuun (palkinnollinen kilpailu) osallistumisesta?

- En mitään
- 1-2 Euroa
- 3-5 Euroa
- 6-8 Euroa
- 8-10 Euroa
- yli 10 Euroa

Paljonko olisitte enimmillään valmis maksamaan kiekon heitonopeuden mittauspaikan käytöstä (10 heittoa)?

- En mitään
- 1-2 Euroa
- 3-5 Euroa
- 6-8 Euroa
- 8-10 Euroa
- yli 10 Euroa

Paljonko olisitte enimmillään valmis maksamaan kiekon heittopituuden mittauspaikan käytöstä (10 heittoa)?

- En mitään
- 1-2 Euroa
- 3-5 Euroa
- 6-8 Euroa
- 8-10 Euroa
- yli 10 Euroa

Paljonko olisitte enimmillään valmis maksamaan erilaisten kiekkojen testausmahdollisuudesta (5 valitsemaasi kiekkoa neljäksi tunniksi)?

- En mitään
- 1-5 Euroa
- 6-10 Euroa
- 11-15 Euroa
- yli 15 Euroa

Paljonko olisitte enimmillään valmis maksamaan frisbeegolfkiekon heittotekniikan opetuksesta (45 minuuttia)?

- En mitään
- 1-10 Euroa
- 11-20 Euroa
- 21-30 Euroa
- 31-40 Euroa
- yli 40 Euroa

OSA 6 - FRISBEEGOLFRADAN KÄYTTÖKOKEMUSTEKIJÄT

Kysymyksillä halutaan kartoittaa frisbeegolfradan käyttökokemukseen tärkeimmin vaikuttavat tekijät.

Määrittäkää frisbeegolfradan käyttökokemukseen vaikuttavat tekijät tärkeysjärjestykseen (1 on tärkein ja 7 vähiten tärkeä). Voitte liikuttaa palkkeja ylös ja alas haluamaanne järjestykseen pitämällä niistä kiinni hiiren vasemmanpuoleisella painikkeella.

- Radan haastavuus.
- Radan monipuolisuus (korkeuserot, pituuserot yms.).
- Radan siisteys (heittopaikat, kulkutiet, opasteet, korit yms.).
- Radan tarjoamat maisemat ja näköalat.
- Radan tarjoamat lisäpalvelut (kiekkovuokraamo, myymälä, tekniikkaopetus, heitonopeuden/pituuden mittaus yms.)
- Radan lähellä sijaitsevat ravintolat, kaupat, majoitusmahdollisuudet yms.
- Säännölliset huoltotoimenpiteet radalla.

Onko muita tekijöitä, jotka tekevät radan käyttökokemuksesta paremman? (Kirjoittakaa ehdotuksenne alla olevaan tekstikenttään. Kysymys on vapaaehtoinen.)

APPENDIX 2. Survey form translated into English

Dear contact person of a disc golf club!

The popularity of disc golf in Finland keeps on growing and the sport is constantly evolving. Ruka Disc Golf Park was opened during summer 2013 and the popularity of the park positively surprised the managing party, Rukan kävelykyläyhdistys. The park has 18 holes and it has been classified as a professional (AA1) park. The magnificent altitude differences of the skiing center make the gaming experience challenging but enjoyable.

The managing party wants to develop the park in co-operation with the active disc golf players. In order to discover the relevant development points and possible additional services we (Jaakko Alasalmi & Teemu Apiainen) as students of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences are doing our thesis about the topic. As a part of this thesis there is a quantitative study and a questionnaire, which gathers interest and opinions of active disc golf players towards the development plan for Ruka Disc Golf Park.

We would be grateful if you could forward this e-mail or the link to the survey below to the members of your disc golf club and if you could ask them to answer the survey. Every response helps the development of Ruka Disc Golf Park in a way that the active players want.

There are six categories in the questionnaire and 28 questions in total. It takes approximately 5-10 minutes to answer. The questionnaire can be found from this address:

https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9nPxIQj1ZOaPxJP

The survey is open for responses during 04.11.2013 – 18.11.2013, response time being two weeks.

This e-mail has been sent to all contact persons of all Finnish disc golf clubs in the hope of getting as many responses as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation!

PART 1 – DEMOGRAPHICS

Answers define the demographic structure of the disc golf players

Gender

Male

Female

Age

Place of residence

Employment situation

Employed

Unemployed

Student

Retired

Other (please specify)

Do you have children under the age of 10?

Yes

No

PART 2 - ACTIVENESS

Answers will define how active the disc golf players are with their hobby.

How often do you play disc golf during the playing season?

Less than once a month

1-3 times per month

1-2 times per week

3-7 times per week

For how long have you played disc golf?

Less than a year

1-3 years

4 years or more

Are you a member of a disc golf club?

Yes

No

Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition?

Yes

No

PART 3 - RUKA DISC GOLF PARK

Answers will define the interest of disc golf players towards Ruka Disc Golf Park.

Were you aware of the existence of Ruka Disc Golf Park?

Yes

No

Have you played disc golf at Ruka Disc Golf Park?

Yes

No

Would you be interested to visit Ruka Disc Golf Park and play disc golf there?

Yes

Possibly

No

Would you be interested to participate in a disc golf competition at Ruka Disc Golf Park?

- Yes
- Possibly
- No

PART 4 – ADDITIONAL SERVICES AT A DISC GOLF PARK

Answers will define if the disc golf players are interested to use the additional services or not.

How likely would you use the services of a disc rental place / shop?

- Most likely I would
- I might
- I do not think I would
- I would not

How likely would you use the disc throwing velocity measurement service?

- Most likely I would
- I might
- I do not think I would
- I would not

How likely would you use the disc throwing distance measurement service?

- Most likely I would
- I might
- I do not think I would
- I would not

How likely would you use a mini disc golf park designed for children (designed for children under the age of 10)?

- Most likely I would
- I might
- I do not think I would
- I would not

How likely would you use the disc testing service?

- Most likely I would
- I might
- I do not think I would
- I would not

How likely would you use disc throwing technique training?

- Most likely I would
- I might
- I do not think I would
- I would not

Do you have any recommendations for other additional services which were not mentioned in this survey? (Please write your recommendation to the free text field below. Answering is optional.)

PART 5 – YOUR EXPENDITURE IN THE SPORT

Answers will define how much the disc golf players are ready to invest to their hobby.

How much money do you approximately use for discs and bags annually?

- 0-5 Euros
- 6-20 Euros
- 21-50 Euros
- 51-100 Euros
- 101-200 Euros
- Over 200 Euros

How much would you be ready to pay to participate in an organized disc golf competition (competition includes prizes)?

- I would not pay anything
- 1-2 Euros
- 3-5 Euros
- 6-8 Euros
- 8-10 Euros
- Over 10 Euros

How much would you be ready to pay to use the disc throwing velocity measurement service (10 throws)?

- I would not pay anything
- 1-2 Euros
- 3-5 Euros
- 6-8 Euros
- 8-10 Euros
- Over 10 Euros

How much would you be ready to pay to use the disc throwing distance measurement service (10 throws)?

- I would not pay anything
- 1-2 Euros
- 3-5 Euros
- 6-8 Euros
- 8-10 Euros
- Over 10 Euros

How much would you be ready to pay to rent five different discs of your choosing for four hours?

- I would not pay anything
- 1-5 Euros
- 6-10 Euros
- 11-15 Euros
- Over 15 Euros

How much would you be ready to pay to get disc throwing technique training for 45 minutes?

- I would not pay anything
- 1-10 Euros
- 11-20 Euros
- 21-30 Euros
- 31-40 Euros
- Over 40 Euros

PART 6 – FACTORS MAKING A DISC GOLF PARK ATTRACTIVE AND PLEASANT TO USE

Answers will define the key factors in the order of importance which make a disc golf park attractive and pleasant to use.

Which of the given factors affect the user experience the most? Please arrange the given factors in the order of importance (1 is the most important and is on the top, 7 is the least important and is on the bottom).

(You can move the factors up and down to the order you want them to be in by holding the left button of your mouse.)

- The level of difficulty of the track.
- Variety of the track (up and downhill ratio, length differences of the tracks etc.).
- How clean the track is (tees, walking tracks, guide signs, disc catchers etc.).
- Scenery and views the track offers.
- Additional services offered by the park (disc rental, shop, technique training, disc throwing velocity/distance measurement etc.).
- Restaurants, shops, accommodations and other extra services located near the park.
- Regular maintenance on the tracks.

Are there any other factors that make the user experience of a disc golf park more pleasant?
(Please write your recommendation to the free text field below. Answering is optional.)

APPENDIX 3. Survey statistics printed from SPSS

	Frequency	Percent
Male	346	91,3
Female	33	8,7
Total	379	100,0

Table 1. Gender of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Employed	266	70,2
Unemployed	30	7,9
Student	65	17,2
Retired	3	0,8
Other (specify)	15	4,0
Total	379	100,0

Table 2. Employment situation of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	109	28,8
No	270	71,2
Total	379	100,0

Table 3. Do you have children under the age of 10?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
11-15	10	2,6	2,7	2,6
16-20	21	5,5	5,6	8,3
21-25	47	12,4	12,6	20,9
26-30	89	23,5	23,8	44,7
31-35	102	26,9	27,3	72,0
36-40	59	15,6	15,8	87,8
41-45	29	7,7	7,8	95,6
46-50	12	3,2	3,2	98,8
51-56	5	1,3	1,3	100,0
Total	374	98,7	100,0	
Missing	5	1,3		
Total	379	100,0		

Table 4. Age of respondents divided into categories

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than a year	61	16,1	16,1
1-3 years	171	45,1	61,2
4 years or more	147	38,8	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 5. For how long have you played disc golf?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	292	77,0
No	87	23,0
Total	379	100,0

Table 6. Are you a member of a disc golf club?

		For how long have you played disc golf?			Total
		Less than a year	1-3 years	4 years or more	
Are you a member of a disc golf club?	Yes	21 (7,2 %)	139 (47,6 %)	132 (45,2 %)	292 (100,0 %)
	No	40 (46,0 %)	32 (36,8 %)	15 (17,2 %)	87 (100,0 %)
Total		61 (16,1 %)	171 (45,1 %)	147 (38,8 %)	379 (100,0 %)

Table 7. Are you a member of a disc golf club? * For how long have you played disc golf?

Cross tabulation

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than once a month	4	1,1	1,1
1-3 times per month	26	6,9	7,9
1-2 times per week	96	25,3	33,2
3-7 times per week	253	66,8	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 8. How often do you play disc golf during the playing season?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	296	78,1
No	83	21,9
Total	379	100,0

Table 9. Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition?

		For how long have you played disc golf?			Total
		Less than a year	1-3 years	4 years or more	
Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition?	Yes	25 (8,4 %)	140 (47,3 %)	131 (44,3 %)	296 (100,0 %)
	No	36 (43,4 %)	31 (37,3 %)	16 (19,3 %)	83 (100,0 %)
Total		61 (16,1 %)	171 (45,1 %)	147 (38,8 %)	379 (100,0 %)

Table 10. Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition? * For how long have you played disc golf? Cross tabulation

		Are you a member of a disc golf club?		Total
		Yes	No	
Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition?	Yes	261 (88,2 %)	35 (11,8 %)	296 (100,0 %)
	No	31 (37,3 %)	52 (62,7 %)	83 (100,0 %)
Total		292	87	379 (100,0 %)

Table 11. Have you ever participated in a disc golf competition? * Are you a member of a disc golf club? Cross tabulation

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	291	76,8
No	88	23,2
Total	379	100,0

Table 12. Were you aware of the existence of Ruka Disc Golf Park?

	Frequency	Percent
Western Finland Province	41	46,7
Southern Finland Province	34	38,6
Eastern Finland Province	9	10,2
Oulu Province	4	4,5
Lapland Province	0	0,0
Total	88	100,0

Table 13. Respondents were not aware of the existence of Ruka Disc Golf Park? * Finnish Provinces

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	60	15,8
No	319	84,2
Total	379	100,0

Table 14. Have you played disc golf at Ruka Disc Golf Park?

	Frequency	Percent
Western Finland Province	10	16,9
Southern Finland Province	5	8,5
Eastern Finland Province	3	5,1
Oulu Province	30	50,9
Lapland Province	11	18,6
Total	59	100,0

Table 15. Respondents who have played at Ruka Disc Golf Park? * Finnish Provinces

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	292	77,0	77,0
Possibly	84	22,2	99,2
No	3	0,8	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 16. Would you be interested to visit Ruka Disc Golf Park and play disc golf there?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	153	40,4	40,4
Possibly	182	48,0	88,4
No	44	11,6	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 17. Would you be interested to participate in a disc golf competition at Ruka Disc Golf Park?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Most likely I would	30	7,9	7,9
I might	159	42,0	49,9
I do not think I would	147	38,8	88,7
I would not	43	11,3	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 18. How likely would you use the services of a disc rental place / shop?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Most likely I would	202	53,3	53,3
I might	139	36,7	90,0
I do not think I would	31	8,2	98,2
I would not	7	1,8	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 19. How likely would you use the disc throwing velocity measurement service?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Most likely I would	208	54,9	54,9
I might	145	38,3	93,1
I do not think I would	20	5,3	98,4
I would not	6	1,6	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 20. How likely would you use the disc throwing distance measurement service?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Most likely I would	40	10,6	10,6
I might	73	19,3	29,8
I do not think I would	108	28,5	58,3
I would not	158	41,7	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 21. How likely would you use a mini disc golf park designed for children (designed for children under the age of 10)?

		How likely would you use a mini disc golf park designed for children (designed for children under the age of 10)?				Total
		Most likely I would	I might	I do not think I would	I would not	
Do you have children under the age of 10?	Yes	35 (32,1 %)	45 (41,3 %)	23 (21,1 %)	6 (5,5 %)	109
	No	5 (1,9 %)	28 (10,4 %)	85 (31,5 %)	152 (56,3 %)	270
Total		40 (10,6 %)	73 (19,3 %)	108 (28,5 %)	158 (41,7 %)	379

Table 22. Do you have children under the age of 10? * How likely would you use a mini disc golf park designed for children (designed for children under the age of 10)? Cross tabulation.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Most likely I would	196	51,7	51,7
I might	138	36,4	88,1
I do not think I would	34	9,0	97,1
I would not	11	2,9	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 23. How likely would you use disc testing service?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Most likely I would	73	19,3	19,3
I might	139	36,7	55,9
I do not think I would	124	32,7	88,7
I would not	43	11,3	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 24. How likely would you use disc throwing technique training?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-5 Euros	2	0,5	0,5
6-20 Euros	4	1,1	1,6
21-50 Euros	30	7,9	9,5
51-100 Euros	87	23,0	32,5
101-200 Euros	132	34,8	67,3
over 200 Euros	124	32,7	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 25. How much money do you approximately use for discs and bags annually?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
I would not pay anything	9	2,4	2,4
1-2 Euros	5	1,3	3,7
3-5 Euros	46	12,1	15,8
6-8 Euros	21	5,5	21,4
8-10 Euros	77	20,3	41,7
over 10 Euros	221	58,3	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 26. How much would you be ready to pay to participate in an organized disc golf competition (competition includes prizes)?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
I would not pay anything	46	12,1	12,1
1-2 Euros	180	47,5	59,6
3-5 Euros	135	35,6	95,3
6-8 Euros	11	2,9	98,2
8-10 Euros	4	1,1	99,2
over 10 Euros	3	0,8	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 27. How much would you be ready to pay to use the disc throwing velocity measurement service (10 throws)?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
I would not pay anything	191	50,4	50,4
1-2 Euros	108	28,5	78,9
3-5 Euros	71	18,7	97,6
6-8 Euros	6	1,6	99,2
8-10 Euros	2	0,5	99,7
over 10 Euros	1	0,3	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 28. How much would you be ready to pay to use the disc throwing distance measurement service (10 throws)?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
I would not pay anything	98	25,9	25,9
1-5 Euros	214	56,5	82,3
6-10 Euros	58	15,3	97,6
11-15 Euros	7	1,8	99,5
over 15 Euros	2	0,5	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 29. How much would you be ready to pay to rent five different discs of your choosing for four hours?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
I would not pay anything	68	17,9	17,9
1-10 Euros	104	27,4	45,4
11-20 Euros	157	41,4	86,8
21-30 Euros	37	9,8	96,6
31-40 Euros	9	2,4	98,9
over 40 Euros	4	1,1	100,0
Total	379	100,0	

Table 30. How much would you be ready to pay to get disc throwing technique training for 45 minutes?