



Bachelor Thesis

Exploring the travel purchase behaviour of Chinese traveller in Bali for ICS Travel Group

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Exploring the travel purchase behaviour of Chinese traveller in Bali for ICS Travel Group

Bachelor in Business Administration in Tourism Management

(Quick scan retake with adjustments in the content: Chapter 1 – Introduction, Chapter 2 – Theoretical framework, Chapter 5 – Conclusion, Chapter 6 – Reliability and validity, Chapter 7 – Advice, Afterword)

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Preface

Dear reader,

This thesis assignment was written to conclude my Bachelor in Tourism Management at Saxion University of Applied Science in Deventer. The client for this project is ICS Travel Group office based in Bali, Indonesia. ICS Travel Group is a destination management organization that is mainly focused on inbound travellers. Special thanks go to my client, Marc de Swart, for giving me an opportunity to write my final assignment for ICS travel group, based in Bali.

The reason for this report is to provide the reader insights of Chinese travelling in Bali, and a concept of the travel purchase behaviour, which will formulate the advice for a suitable communications concept to raise the amount of potential travellers using travel services of ICS travel group.

Special thanks also to my mom Estela, for always hearing my stories, sometimes frustrations, about the long process that I have been through. Moreover, I want to express my gratitude to my first examiner, Inge Hermann, for always giving me a valuable feedback and tips and bringing me on the right track, even though I am 7 time zones away from Deventer. Marc de Swart, thank you for giving me an opportunity to write my thesis for the ICS company in Bali and explore a different tourism market. Also, Rienk van Marle, thank you for advising me on the research part when I needed it the most. Without you all, I would not be able to be where I am now.

Thank you all,

Mindaugas Gluchovskis

Bali, Indonesia

January, 2017

Summary

As tourism is a rapidly developing process, tour operators need to be dynamic, in order to meet traveller's expectations. The client of the thesis is Mr. Marc de Swart, General Director of ICS travel group office in Bali, Indonesia. This research assignment was conducted for the ICS travel group, which was founded in 1994. The company is operated by headquarters based in Bangkok, Thailand and specializes in combining tailor-made programs to Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia and India.

This assignment focuses on growing the Chinese market in Bali, and the potential that this target group offers. In order to analyse the reasons behind an expanding market and to create a good reason for Chinese travellers to choose ICS as a tour operator, this report explores the travel purchase behaviour of the target market. The central research question was formulated as follows: 'What is the travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali Island?' When the data from the research have been collected, the next question focuses on advisory part for the company: 'What changes in ICS communication concept will help to attract independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali?'

This report explores a complex decision making process, which is related to travel purchase behaviour process. The findings indicate a number of interests that are based on travel group set up and their personal characteristics amongst the independent Chinese travellers exploring the differences in their travel behaviour. Collection of the information was gathered based on triangulation methods, which consist of recent literature and field research. Quantitative field research based on survey method collected 122 fully completed questionnaires of independent Chinese travellers in Bali. The questionnaires were translated into Mandarin, in order to eliminate the language barrier and to gain an overall view of the target group. The findings from the field research presented trends within the target market and the most important aspect that the travellers are usually encountered when making a travel purchase decision.

Following the literature and field research, the analysis has derived several alternatives that ICS could use to build their communication concept. Subjected to the criteria, namely time, money and resources, three alternatives were developed. The first alternative 'Adventurer's escape to Bali' was determined as the best fitting to the target market in Bali. The alternative was elaborated in the form of a communication concept, which is focused on influencing travel behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers. When applied correctly, the concept should lead to the outcome of more independent Chinese travellers choosing the ICS travel group for combining their tailor-made program in Bali.

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1. Introduction

The number of international overnight travellers in 2015 has reached a total of 1186 million worldwide, a 56 million increase from 2014 (UNWTO, 2016). Tourism business will be one of the major businesses worldwide due to the fact that world's population ages and travelling becomes faster and more convenient on a daily basis (Tsotsos & Ratten, 2010). Therefore, to promote a travel destination efficiently, destination management organizations (DMO) and tourism stakeholders must understand travel behaviour that leads to a specific travel purchase decision (Buhalis, 2000).

China's tourism is becoming the largest outbound tourism market worldwide (Gerth, 2011). In total 120 million of Chinese tourists have travelled abroad in 2015, which is a 19.5% increase from 2014 (Xinhua, 2016). China's tourism in general can be described as a recent phenomenon, which has begun in 1980s (Gerth, 2011). The phenomenon started when the government addressed an open-door policy, through which outbound tourism grew from citizens visiting friends and relatives (VFR) to unprecedented growth in number of travellers (Andreu, Claver and Quer, 2014). Besides that, income growth and an expansion of the Chinese middle class contributed to the rise of sophisticated travellers who are looking for less dependent travel experience (Future of Chinese Traveller, 2014). Out of the vast number of Chinese travellers, independent Chinese travellers are being recognized as a rapidly increasing group of travellers. Mostly young, wealthy and educated Chinese travellers who demand personalized travel experiences are gaining the attention of various tourism stakeholders worldwide. Bali is one of the destinations that have received great attention of this particular target group within recent years.

Bali is the dominant tourism destination across Indonesian archipelago, which hosts a majority of international tourists and infrastructure (Badan Pusan Statistik, 2014). Bali is expected to become one of the top destinations for Chinese travellers by 2023, among global cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Milan, Tokyo, Bangkok, and other (Future of Chinese Traveller, 2014). The visualized diagram can be found in *Appendix A*. In 2015, Bali has received a 642 thousand Chinese travellers, an increase of 19% from 2014 has contributed to launching direct flights from Shanghai in China with Denpasar in Bali (Garuda Indonesia, 2016). This report investigated independent Chinese travel behaviour for one of the tourism stakeholders in Bali to help identify their particular needs and stimulus for travel and present it in a coherent way of communication.

1.1 The Client

The company ICS Travel group, founded in 1994, is a destination management organization (DMO), which provides a range of travel services within the Asia region. With the headquarter based in Bangkok, Thailand, the company specializes in combining tailor-made programs to Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia and India. Throughout the region, ICS travel group operates in total 15 operation offices, which work with leisure clients as well as niche travellers, developing itineraries for individual or group requirements. It includes cruises, trekking, wedding

packages, special interest tours and incentive events. Other 11 sales offices are based in United States, Cambodia, Brazil, Germany, Australia, Italy, India, Portugal and Spain.

The contact person for ICS Indonesia is Mr. Marc de Swart, the general director of ICS operation office based in Bali. The operation office located in Bali specializes in nature, adventure and culture tourism, luxury accommodation offers, handling multi-national incentive groups and conferences, variety of transportation services, guides and tour leader's services. ICS travel group mission is 'Create tour itineraries with attention to detail, providing flexible, personal exclusive events on route and to focus on the cultural and historic reality of the destination, ensuring the clients a unique and insightful local experience' (ICS Travel group, 2014).

ICS Travel Group vision is 'We strive to become the defining standard in delivering tailor made tour services and uphold our reputation for consistent high quality of service.' (ICS Travel Group, 2014).

Currently, there are 60 employees working in the ICS office based in Bali. The office consists of two departments. The operation office mainly focuses on developing tour packages and supporting the travellers during their stay in Bali, whereas the sales office focuses on promoting travel related product and services. Bali represents one of the biggest ICS tourism portfolio's overseas, which generated approximately USD 90 million dollar turnover in 2015 (Marc de Swart, personal communication, 1 October, 2016). The office specializes in business to business (b2b) activities as well as in selling round-trip to multiple islands, including day-trips for optional tours. Top source markets are: India, USA and Europe. Besides that, ICS Bali in 2015 has signed the contract with 'Rovia' organization, one of the leading travel service providers worldwide. The new partnership introduced ICS with a relatively new Chinese traveller outbound market, where ICS task is to supervise various leisure package travellers coming mainly from China. Recently established ties with an upcoming Chinese travel market have encouraged ICS in Bali to attract more independent leisure travellers by including a new target market. With the background information of ICS travel group presented, the management problem is further described.

1.2 Management Problem

ICS office has a lack of knowledge about how they can attract a rapidly growing number of Chinese travellers in Bali. ICS wishes to become a well-known tour operator amongst Chinese outbound travellers. However, relatively low knowledge about appropriate marketing communication towards the target group is limiting company's potential of reaching more customers. The current communication concept is too broad, without a particular attention towards the specific target market. Furthermore, different means of promotion are mainly focusing on incentive groups or B2B activities. Thus, the company strives to adjust their marketing communication strategy by implementing the necessary knowledge about the target group.

Meanwhile, by 2023 Bali Island is estimated to become one of the top destinations for Chinese travellers, thus ICS foresees a business opportunity. By knowing what are the travel needs of outbound Chinese travellers, ICS will be able to build an effective communication strategy, directed

towards independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali. This will increase the awareness of ICS and help to become a well-known tour operator amongst potential Chinese outbound travellers.

In order to compile such a communication concept, further investigation is required. Answers need to be given on what influence potential travellers to choose a certain tour operator, and how can ICS implement that knowledge in their marketing communication strategy towards Chinese travellers. Thus, a management problem can be described as a lack of knowledge about emerging travel market. Research strives to understand the Chinese traveller, to gain more knowledge regarding various elements involved in their travel behaviour that lead to a specific travel purchase decision. Management question was formulated: *How can ICS Travel Group adjust its communication strategy that would influence Chinese traveller purchase decision to choose ICS as their tour operator?*

1.3 Objectives and research questions

Derived from the management problem, a suitable marketing communication strategy towards the potential traveller is identified as a desired outcome for formulating the advice for the client. By setting the objectives, advice is provided on necessary adjustments in communication strategy that would attract a potential Chinese traveller. Before the advice can be issued, determination of the Chinese travel behaviour is required by conducting a research.

Following the management question, objective of this thesis is to advise ICS travel group how to adjust their **marketing communication strategy** that will **make ICS more well-known as a tour operator** in Chinese outbound travel market by gaining an insight into the **travel purchase behaviour (TPB) process** of independent Chinese travellers.

The research seeks to gain the knowledge about understanding a complex travel decision making, also known as travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers. Obtained knowledge when applied in marketing communication strategy can induce target group behaviour, which as a result, will lure more potential Chinese travellers to choose ICS travel group as a tour operator, further expanding their business. In order to determine TPB process of Chinese travellers in Bali, theory combined with field research is required.

The central research question including the advisory question was defined to guide the research. The advisory question is contributing in translating these findings into a valid and reliable advice for ICS. The central research question including sub-questions that needs to be answered within the thesis assignment:

- ❖ CQ1: What is travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali Island?
- SQ1: What is the definition of travel purchase behaviour process?
- SQ2: What are the different elements of travel purchase behaviour?
- SQ3: What are the characteristics of an independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali?
- SQ4: What are the most important elements of travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers in Bali that influences them to choose a tour operator?

By answering these sub-questions, a theoretical framework will be formulated, which will ensure that the core concepts are correctly defined, and serve as a proper foundation for this research. The answers to these questions will also provide a description of the core concept as a starting point. The process of research methods will be thoroughly described in Chapter 3: Methodological Framework. Advisory questions including sub-questions to be answered within the thesis assignment:

❖ CQ2: What changes in ICS marketing communication concept will help to attract independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali?

SQ1: What is the definition of communication concept in a tourism context?

SQ2: What type of information sources is mostly used amongst independent Chinese travellers in Bali?

SQ3: Which communication tools need to be included regarding the communication concept in order to apply the knowledge gained about marketing communications and travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers in Bali?

The advisory questions will help to define a suitable communication concept in a tourism context, establishing the link with the findings gathered within the 1st central question. It will help to connect both of the concepts when formulating solid advice for necessary changes in ICS communication concept.

1.5 Reading guide

The following chapter 2 describes the theoretical framework of this assignment, in which the core concept of TPB of China's outbound travellers in Bali and communication strategies will be explored. The literature review will present search methods, used for operationalization of the chosen concept. The methodological framework part will be defined in Chapter 3, first by an overview of the research questions, research strategy, sampling plan, chosen methods of data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 will present the field research results while Chapter 5 present the conclusions based on the results. Chapter 6 discusses validity and reliability of this research. Chapter 7 elaborates on evaluation of the alternatives and presents the advice, including the financial implications. A planning of this thesis can be found in *Appendix S*.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework selected for this thesis is build up by various researches, ensuring that all existing theory is credible and derived from the three core concepts that are discussed further in this chapter. Within the core concepts, definitions are explored, providing literature review on each of the definitions. The theoretical framework will build a foundation for the following Chapter 3: Methodological Framework, where the research part of this assignment will be discussed.

In addition to that, literature review will help to structure the issue behind the project, guiding the reader to the relevant topics (Ghuri & Grønhaug, 2005). Search methods, used for literature review can be found in *Appendix B*. Various search sources were utilized, such as Ebsco and ScienceDirect databases, accessed through saxionbibliotheek.saxion.nl, as well as Google Scholar. Snowball-method helped to find more relevant sources by analysing reference list of the articles (Wohlin, 2014). AAOC (authority, accuracy, objectivity, currency and coverage) one of the most used criteria to evaluate sources author, will ensure that all the information is credible (Wohlin, 2014). Evaluated sources can be found in *Appendix C*.

2.1.1 Core concept 1: Travel purchase decision-making process

First of all, when defining a theoretical framework of travel purchase behaviour (TPB), it becomes clear that the phenomena is highly related to different theories of a customer decision making process, found in the marketing literature. Definitions can be found in *Appendix D*.

In the context of leisure travel, Woodside, MacDonald, & Burford, (2004) highlight decision making as a description of flows of thoughts, decisions, events that are taken prior to the travel purchase. All the variables that are considered in the process determine the background for selection, when encountered with several alternatives (Kurniawan, Au, Zeng & Tseng, 2002). A traveller critically assesses the selected criteria that eliminate uncertainty, which in turn evokes a particular behaviour during that process.

Both authors, Schmoll (1977) and Woodside et al., (2004) agree that the traveller is facing various outcomes of different internal or external factors that can have a major influence when framing the choice, yet their opinions disagree on whether the traveller is a rational decision maker. Many years after Shmoll's leisure travel theory, along with the other developed theories, Woodside et al., (2004) have concluded that influence towards the final decision can be highly affected by interactions of travel members, and various other situational variables, which is presented in the theory. In addition to that, Sirakaya and Woodside (2004) conclude that the TPB process cannot be explained in the theory, since a decision most often tends to be made based on subjective criteria, where choices are not always rational and different motivations, inspirations and interactions intervene in the process.

A different way of seeing the interactions between the variables involved in the decision-making process is identified in various theories. For example, Woodside et al., (2004) argues that different variables involved in the process are more interactive rather than linear, whereas definition by Solomon (2010) aim for straightforward marketing-focused stages. According to Solomon (2010)

consumer behaviour, applied in context of tourism, is ‘the process involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires’(p. 27). The term of ‘travel behaviour’ is typically used to describe this particular field of inquiry. Solomon (2010) in his definition highlighted that tourism is a consumption activity, since the evoked needs and desires are interpreted as the nature of people.

For the purpose of this research, the following paragraph will look at the most applied decision making models in tourism context, which will give insights to consumer needs and clarify the common actions being taken by a traveller prior to the travel purchase.

2.1.2 Travel purchase behaviour process

Researchers from various social science focus on how consumers behave before, during and after the purchase stages. First models, referred to as a ‘classical models’, related to decision making process were developed by Engel, Kollat and Blakwell (1968) half a century ago. However, the fundamentals of these models are still being widely used today (as cited by Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders, 2008).

Different theories tried to indicate how purchase can evoke a complex behaviour process, since different customer undertakes different course of actions through the process between need recognition and final the purchase (Kotler et al. 2008).The classical models derived from the foundation of the study are cited by Kotler et al. (2008) in more recent literature. The model indicates 5 stages: need recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase behaviour, can be found in *Figure 2.1.2*. The classical theories were focused mainly on tangible, manufactured products, while decision-making theory pioneers Schmoll (1977), Um and Crompton (1992) were the first to apply these theories in the tourism context.

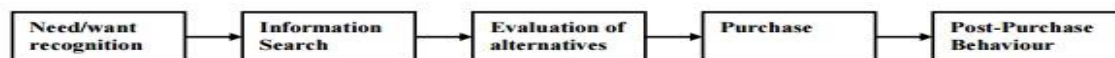


Figure 2.1.2: Classical purchase making process. Adapted from Bulter and Peppard, 1998

2.1.3 Looking at travel purchase behavior stages

Various decision theories, when used together, describe TPB in a broader context. One of the first travel models, concerning travel purchase behaviour was built by Schmoll (1977) called ‘The travel decision making model’, which can be found in *Appendix E*. The model was designed to help research to better understand what happens when travellers make a decision, in order to indicate where marketers could make an influence. The model is divided into four sections of variables, which are more environmental and personal interactions between ‘travel stimuli’, ‘personal and social determinants of travel behaviour’, ‘external variables’ and ‘characteristics and features of service distribution’. All of these sections of variables are linked to the decision stages, indicated in the classical purchase behaviour model, adapted from Butler and Peppard (1998). However, a classical model has established five general components of decision making process and lacks other

important factors, as cited by Sirakaya and Woodside, 'a unique circumstances of tourism' (2004). Unique circumstances confirm to socio-economic status or personality features as described by Schmoll's 'personal and social determinants', where segmentation between the types of traveller, their motivations and their needs occurs.

With regards to the importance of internal factors, more recent TPB literature describes that emotions and feelings play a vital role in the processing of information, while most of the TPB sequential models have ignored it (Woodside, MacDonald & Burford, 2004). For this reason, the model by Schmoll (1977) is more precise in terms of attention to internal influences and constraints, therefore can be in use when gathering in-depth insights. Additionally, the model is helpful when exploring correlations between the components. For instance, potential traveller's personal and social determinants, suggest which sources of information had the most influence for the particular type of traveller and what other alternatives were considered.

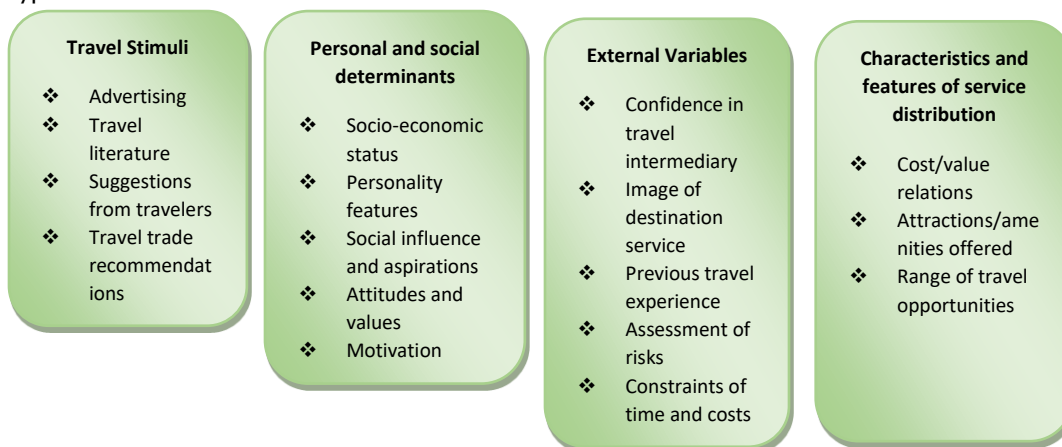


Figure 2.1.3.1 *Travel decision-making model*. Source: Schmoll, 1977

Structural models such as Schmoll's 'Travel decision-making' model are common when analysing leisure TPB process, due to simple description of variables involved, and simplicity for conducting empirical studies. The downside of this model is that characteristics of services distribution lacks a classification of services and are difficult to define operationally or to measure. Additionally, certain sequence of different variable impact in the model is absent.

Regarding more recent TPB theories development, the theory developed by Woodside et al. (2004), 'Leisure travel' process model specializes in traveller's thought processes during the planning and travel phases (See *Appendix E*). This process model differs from a structural model by focusing on the psychological behaviour that determine decision making. Even though all of the components taken from Schmoll's model are present in this model as described in Figure 2.3, unlike in Schmoll's (1977), Woodside et al. (2004) takes it one step further by mapping of thoughts and helping to interpret different experiences. Additionally, the theory by Woodside et al. (2004), takes into account that decision-making of the chosen destination and activities does not stop after a purchase

was made. Also, 'leisure travel' model add highly interrelated variables that were overlooked in Schmoll's and other TPB models:

- Demographics – clearly associated with personal and social determinants variable such as socio-economic status, social influence, attitudes and values as well as motivation factors as mentioned earlier described by Swarbrooke and Horner (1999).
- Pre-framing – shows a link with travel stimuli of information collection such as different type of advertisement.
- External influences –Woodside et al. (2004) has realized importance of friends and relatives' experiences, thoughts, influence of opinions as well as other situational factors.

All of these three categories classify mental process among considerations towards framing leisure choices. Additionally, leisure choices are measured by cost and value relations, quality and quantity of travel information, variety of attractions, type of travel arrangements, and a range of travel opportunities.

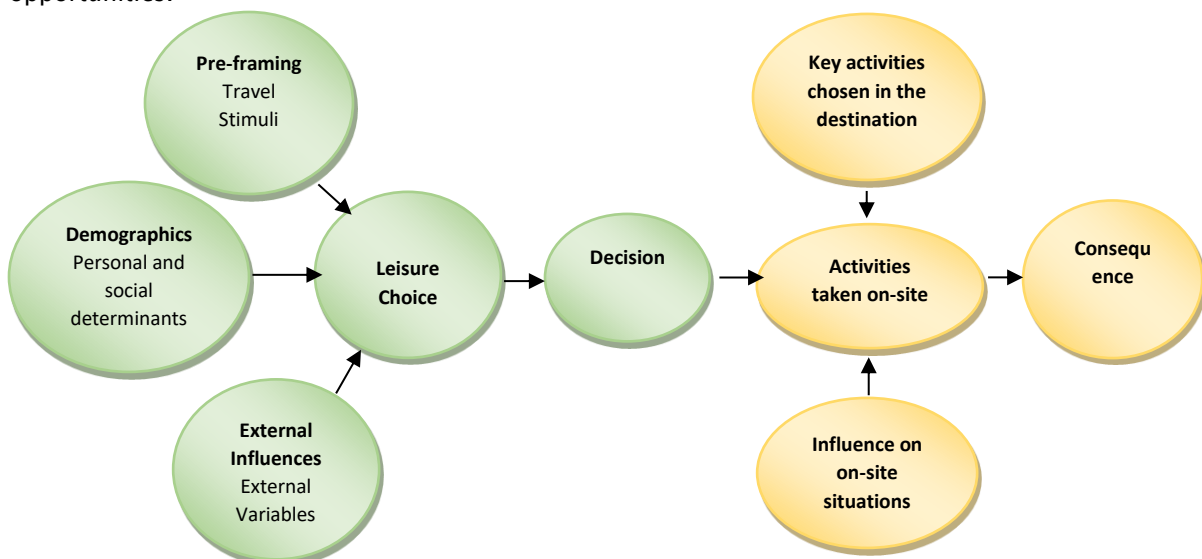


Figure 2.1.3.2 *Leisure travel model*. Source: Woodside, MacDonald & Burford, 2004

In contrast to Schmoll's (1977) theory, where decision terminate the TPB process (Figure 2.3, green colour), Woodside's et al. (2004) theory (orange colour) explains that prior to unknown activities and events on-site often triggers later purchase that was not considered. The unplanned experience can either enhance or neglect the overall experience, falling under 'unplanned-done' activity. This valuable information could add necessary knowledge on how to strengthen 'travel stimuli' recognizing the need for certain situations or events. The 'Leisure travel' model provides correlations between the variables in a meaningful way, however rather lacks of a measurable characteristics within each variable. The theory by Woodside et al. (2004) qualitative method is used as a primary providing in-depth knowledge. Nevertheless, when applied in a large-scale survey, it can assist in generalizing findings to the populations.

Even though the models have a different name for the phases in the process, each corresponds to the time frame of 'classical model' mentioned earlier and time frame of: need recognition, search of information, evaluation of alternatives and purchase (Bulter & Peppard, 1998). This research will take these models into close consideration, further exploring TPB process of independent Chinese travellers.

2.2.1 Core concept 2: Independent Chinese traveller profile

A literature about Chinese traveller profile and growth in Bali can be found in *Appendix G*.

Several tourism development reports examine types of Chinese travellers that are increasing in overseas travelling. General comparison of several definition regarding independent travellers can be found in *Appendix D*.

According to a comparison of the definitions, the expanding segment of independent Chinese traveller can be explained by a change in traveller's understanding and the perception about tourism, when new attributes like flexibility or meaning of experience are being discovered. The most complete definition used for this research is by Swarbrooke and Horner (1999), who argues that the independent traveller is experiencing the destination rather than just visiting, by deeply engaging with local culture in 'off the beaten tourist tracks'. Although the findings might vary, common characteristics of independent Chinese traveller have been explored and identified.

A significant number of young travellers, aged between 25 and 44 are representing 65% of the total Chinese outbound tourism segment (The state of Chinese Outbound travel, 2014). According to Trivett (2013) nearly 83% of independent Chinese travellers are highly educated, compared to the older generation, holding at least a bachelor degree.

Additional research conducted on China's outbound tourism have discovered that travellers are increasingly demanding a personalized travel experience, which percentage wise is at 44% and expected to further increase to 50% in the coming years (Hernandez, Bahut, Wang, & Garcia, 2015). Timetric (2014) in their report on China's outbound tourism have defined Chinese independent traveller profile into 6 categories. For the details, please see *Appendix F*.

The knowledge is directly in-line with Schmoll model's (1977) 'Personal and social determinants of travel behaviour' factor, where he argues about social influence, values, motivations, and socio-economic status. This process can be evoked due to reasons like price, level of risk, less frequently purchased and relation to self-expressiveness (Kotler et al., 2008).

Hernandez et al. (2015) in the report for McKinsey & Company group, indicate that a range between EUR714 to EUR1, 142 reflects middle class, while EUR1, 142 to EUR2, 148 was suggested as an upper middle class income. Along with the 'seize the day' particular mind-set and economic circumstances, young Chinese people want to be recognized as a global, independent and wealthy traveller. Secondary information about Chinese outbound traveller can be found in *Appendix G*. For the purpose of this assignment, linking the findings in this chapter with ICS travel group mission described in Chapter 1: Introduction, paragraph 1.2, this particular segment was selected as a potential ICS customer, which will be further investigated in the assignment.

2.2.2 Travel purchase behavior of independent Chinese travelers

TPB of Chinese traveller begins with a need recognition or inspiration for a trip. Guo (2007) suggests that it could be connected with a desire to escape the routine of everyday lives. Besides high season in summer, Chinese travel during the last week in January, April, May and first week of October (CITM, 2016). According to Chan and Couper (2014) 54% of Chinese travel with a partner and children, 46% with other family member, which are the most popular companions during the trip (CITM, 2016).

According to CITM (2016, p.27) 19% of Chinese travellers tend to plan the trip more than 3 months beforehand, 38% 2 to 3 months beforehand, 33% one month beforehand, and 10% less than 1 month beforehand. Lo and Lam (2004) have conducted a research on Chinese outbound travellers and found out that the more experienced travellers are the more likely they are an active type of traveller and less rely on structural planning. Previous research concludes that satisfaction of the traveller is highly influenced by expertise and quality of the information provided, which lead to different information sources (Lo & Lam, 2004). When choosing the destination, Chinese travellers tend to do the research consulting with 5 or more different sources (Chan & Couper, 2014).

According to a statistics of Chinese outbound travellers: 44% browse online travel websites, 44% talk with friends and colleagues, 43% refer to travel guides, 42% use travel agents, 32% use social media and 38% use mobile app search (CITM, 2016). An overview of mostly used digital media amongst Chinese travellers can be found in *Appendix H*. Online travel agents (OTA) are particularly in high use due to their ability to organize the trip on a short notice. According to CITM (2016, p.28) nearly 74% Chinese travellers prefer using OTAs for booking a trip, followed by 16% using hotel websites and 10% booking via travel agencies (Chan & Couper, 2014). The biggest market share OTAs within China's market can be found in *Appendix N*. According to literature, when evaluating the alternatives, Chinese travellers highlight priority for safety, services and facilities (Kim, Guo & Agrusa, 2005).

Digital marketing for travel companies is of high importance, where a brand has to be presented appealing for the customer via various digital media sources. Key opinion leader (KOL) plays an important role within social media, which is powerful word-of-mouth tool. It includes internet-word-of-mouth (IWOM), where Chinese travellers pay great attention to what experienced travellers have to share about specific products or services. According to Global web index (2015) 64% of total internet user in China use Wechat and Weixin platforms to communicate, 54% use Weibo and 54% Qzone compared to a relatively small 14% users of twitter and 15% of Facebook. Further study indicates that 61% from active users would share about positive experiences, whereas 53% would share a negative experience (Global web index, 2015). It shows a high importance for the company remaining a positive image in social network environment.

Further information of independent Chinese travellers in Bali will be discovered through the field research, in order to compare the information and to provide missing insights about the target group.

2.3.1 Core concept 3: Marketing communication strategy

A communication concept is a part of marketing strategy, which companies utilize to a great extent, in order to influence consumer purchase behaviour by delivering various promotional messages to its target market (Esu & Ebitu, 2010). Discovering the communication ways that would have the most influence on consumer's behaviour is a part of marketing communication activities. Whab, Crompton, and Rothfields (1976) have recognized the importance of how firms affect tourist's behaviour, whereas the consumer in return, affects how firms make a marketing communication related decisions. Halloway (2004) in more recent literature agrees by stating that creating or changing the communication strategy in the first step is necessary to have the knowledge about the customer of interest.

In order to have an influence on the target market, an organization first needs to acquire the knowledge about the market (Low, 2005). In the context of this research, ICS travel group wants to better understand the consumer and apply the most efficient marketing communication tools that could have a beneficial influence on the current TPB of independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali Island. (Detailed description of communication mix can be found in *Appendix H*).

The communication mix consists of advertising, personal selling, discounts and promotions, public relations, direct marketing, event sponsorship, digital marketing (Low, 2005). Different elements of the communication mix work better in a different context (Low, 2005). In the context of this assignment, the communication mix will be delivered as a guideline towards setting the right communication concept for ICS travel group, in this way enhancing the advice to a strategic level. In this case TPB provides a wide scope of information that can be applied in a communication plan. Detailed planning of the marketing communications can be found in *Appendix I*.

2.4 Relation between the concepts

As we have discovered in this chapter, independent middle-upper class Chinese travellers when purchasing travel products presumably one way or another encounter a complex purchase behaviour process. While there is a wide range of different TPB process theories, the research will take into close consideration models of 'Leisure Travel' by Woodside et al. (2004), 'Travel decision-making' by Schmoll (1977) 'Classical decision making model' by Bulter and Peppard, (1998) to define TPB process of independent Chinese travellers in Bali. The gathered knowledge of potential traveller's TPB process will serve as a foundation for defining the most suitable communication concept plan for the purpose of solving the management problem. The models of TPB and the other core concepts were operationalized to a model of this research in order to visualize the connection. Visualized connection within the core concepts can be found in *Appendix J*. Following the connection within the models, operationalized TPB process with the explanation underneath, can be found in *Appendix K*.

3. Methodological Framework

The following chapter will present the summary of research strategy, empirical research design, research method, sampling plan, chosen methods of data collection and analysis. An elaborated methodological framework can be found in *Appendix T*.

3.1 Research Methodology

According to Brotherton (2008), descriptive research investigates the group of people by providing a clear context of the situation and clarifying a sequence in set of stages. The purpose of this assignment was to define the TPB process of independent Chinese travellers in Bali; therefore the research is descriptive in nature. Quantitative research aims to collect measurable data for statistical analysis, while qualitative research aims to provide an in-depth knowledge of certain situations (Brotherton, 2008). When exploring different variables and the influence of different factors at large-scale, quantitative research is applicable (Reid, 2014). For this reason, the researcher has selected descriptive quantitative research strategy.

The chosen research strategy as mentioned previously was descriptive in nature and aims for quantifiable data. As Rubin and Babbie (2010) argue, quantitative research includes methods such as experiment or survey, gathering numerical information. Brotherton (2008) argues for survey research that this method allows statistical manipulation of outcome, which can alternatively make comparison of the results easier to achieve. The selected method eventually aims for general data, which is unlikely to be achieved with the case study, since it is rather limited to a small scope (Brotherton, 2008). The descriptive survey was considered the most appropriate for this study due to its purpose of recording the facts such as characteristics of the sample and relating it to their preferences in each decision-making stage. Cross-sectional basis was the most realistic for this study, due to limited amount of time and resources for this project. Nevertheless, Brotherton (2008) argues that the survey method may limit the respondent by providing standardized guidelines of the questions limiting the freedom for the answers, therefore raising the concern of overall data validity.

In order to measure the complexity of study from different point of view and increase overall validity, triangulation method was used (Cohen & Manion, 2000). Secondary research by means of literature review, ensured that valuable knowledge regarding TPB process and important characteristics of independent Chinese traveller were defined (Brotherton, 2008). The questionnaire with help of former Saxion student, Taoran Feng, who is native Chinese, who helped translate the questionnaire to Mandarin language and was pre-tested with another native Chinese student. In order to avoid errors, the researcher ensured that the questionnaire is mutually exclusive, exhaustive, specific and clear before utilizing it on the field research (Reid, 2014; Brotherton, 2008).

As face-to-face data collection method was chosen for this research, a semi-structured questionnaire was set up. The questionnaire was established on 'Qualtrics' online survey tool, where respondents were requested to fill in the answers on a provided tablet device.

Due to absence of an administrative record about independent Chinese travellers in Bali, no sampling frame could be applied. Therefore, the participants were selected by using non-probability convenience sample to collect primary data, due to relevance for the project (Brotherton, 2008). There are few steps that can minimize data bias when using convenience sampling, namely, using more data, diversifying, and aiming for sample representativeness (Skowronek & Duerr, 2009). In terms of diversity, a selection of the potential locations to conduct the research was made, which can be found in *Appendix L*. Considering the location for the field research, Ms. Angelika Pangemanan was consulted, who is a local tour guide, working in the field in Bali for 18 years and has an experience working with Chinese leisure travellers. According to the total of positive scores, Marriot hotel was selected as option 1, theme park 'Bali Safari Marine' as option 2, 'Golden Lotus' restaurant as option 3. With regards to diversity of the sample, all of the 3 locations mentioned earlier were considered as potential places for collecting the data to avoid the constraints of one time and one place. Verhoeven (2015) argues that certain selection principals for reaching target population needs to be established. Therefore, 5 selection questions were set as selection questions, which can be found in *Appendix M*. Furthermore, aiming for quota chance of selection of 50 percent male and 50 percent female, the participants were kindly asked on a voluntary basis to fill in the questionnaire, by explaining the purpose of the research. Applying the quota, 114 male and 114 female who matched the predetermined criteria considered to be a representative sample size of the targeted population. However, due to availability of the tour guide, only 140 questionnaires were collected. Extended field research would mean high risk in external validity, which might cause bias of the respondents due to incapability communicate on my own in Mandarin language (Brotherton, 2008).

The collected data was compared to the variables such as preferred leisure activities within different composition of travel group, motivation involvement in the decision, expenditures, and usage of different information sources, prior and during the trip. This type of analysis is referred as bivariate analysis (Brotherton, 2008). The insights then are compared with existing data in the literature, which will draw compatible conclusions for necessary changes in the communication strategy. Most popular large data comparison software SPSS was applied in order to gather the insights from the obtained results (Brotherton, 2008). After the data was collected, the researcher evaluated a 5-point Likert scale outcome from different answers (Brotherton, 2008). The Likert scale allowed a range of answers that can truly reflect respondents' opinions, instead of limiting the respondent to an 'agree' or 'disagree' answer regarding the issue (Brotherton, 2008).

4. Results

This chapter will be discussing the data gathered from the field research. A comparison of the results between literature and field research will be presented. The questionnaires, which were used to collect the data, can be found in *Appendix M*. Additional interesting insights of the results to give more precise advice can be found in *Appendix P*.

4.1 Selection questionnaire

In total 145 respondents were asked to participate in the research. In order to determine a representative sample of the population, a selection of questionnaire helped to identify independent Chinese travellers in Bali required for this research. After completing the first five questions that meet preconditions of the desired respondent, Qualtrics software allowed the respondent to proceed with further questions. In case of any unsuitable answers, the respondent was directly thanked for participating, denying further proceeding in the survey, which saved valuable time for the researcher. After eliminating the answers of the participants who did not complete the questionnaire, or were not qualified for the research sample, the researcher has analysed the remaining data of 122 questionnaires.

4.2 Demographics

Due to a predetermined quota sample for gender, 48% of male and 52% of female proportion represent the total sample. The respondent's ages range from 25 to 44 years old, with the average age of 29 years old.

Findings show that most travellers are accompanied by a partner (27%), friends (25%), spouse with child or children (18%) and relatives (17%). The target group of Chinese travellers are less likely to travel single or with colleagues. As a result, travellers with a partner, and travellers with spouse and children make a total of 45%, which is less than found in previous studies (See chapter 2.2.2). Due to most frequent group of travellers, further results will analyse independent Chinese, travelling to Bali with a partner, spouse with child or children, other relatives and friends.

Furthermore, the data analysis shows that 41% of the respondents have travelled abroad 3 times within the last 12 months, followed by 25% who travelled 2 times and 17% who travelled 1 time, 10% who travelled 4 times or more and 7% who have not travelled at all. Figure 4.2.3 represents these frequencies within last 12 months of various travel groups. Particularly, the graph shows that travellers with spouse and children are most likely to go abroad 1 time per year, whereas travellers with friends can be seen as the most frequent travellers abroad. The information corresponds to Lo and Lam (2004) theory, which is mentioned in the chapter 2.2.2. They state that more experienced travellers are more likely to be an active type of traveller and rely less on structural planning. Thus, it is important for the ICS to take these frequencies into account in order to be accurate when referring to a potential customer in their communication concept.

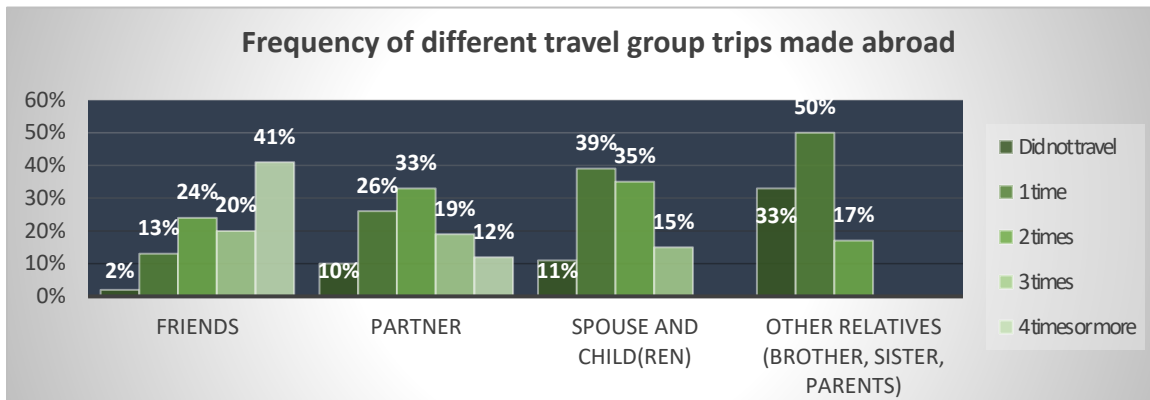


Figure 4.2.3: Frequency of the trips made abroad

Furthermore, corresponding to the previous literature, independent Chinese travellers tend to stay in Bali on average 9 days, which is 0.3 days more than average mass Chinese traveller (See chapter 2.2.2). In order to calculate average daily spending, the modal value of CYN1, 001 and CYN1, 500 was divided in two. As a result, the average daily spending amounts to CYN1, 250, what equals to EUR175. Comparing to the previous studies described in the literature, a majority of independent Chinese travellers in Bali spend a third more than the average Chinese outbound traveller described in the literature. Due to that 5,300 renminbi was taken as an indication to define the middle class monthly income, it can be assumed that most of the respondents earn a significantly higher wages, since the modal value of daily spending indicates a relatively high amount of disposable earnings.

4.3 Recognizing the need for travel

The following section exploring the introductory TPB phase of need recognition is analysing the most influential factors that lead to the first thoughts about the destination. Figure P.1 as seen in *Appendix P* shows that approximately 47% of independent Chinese traveller's first thoughts about a trip to Bali have occurred on average more than 3 months before the trip, whereas nearly 45% initiate the actual planning 2 to 3 months before the trip. When compared to the previous studies in chapter 2.2.2, it is rather a short period of time. Most likely that the recent changes initiated by Bali Tourism Board and government of Indonesia regarding the visa restrictions towards Chinese traveller gave positive results, thus travellers do not need to wait long before the visa can be proceeded. The Figure P.2 found in *Appendix P* clarifies that young Chinese travellers tend to organize the trip in are relatively short period of time. Except of travellers with children, it is clear that the remaining travel groups tend to be rather spontaneous, initiating the actual planning on average between 2 to 3 months and 1 month before the trip.

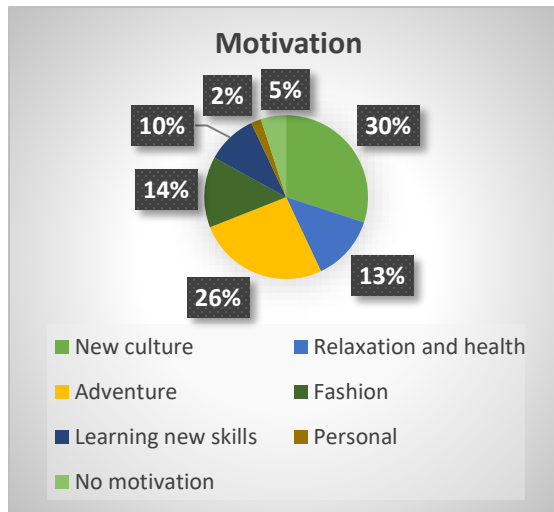


Figure 4.3.1: Motivation

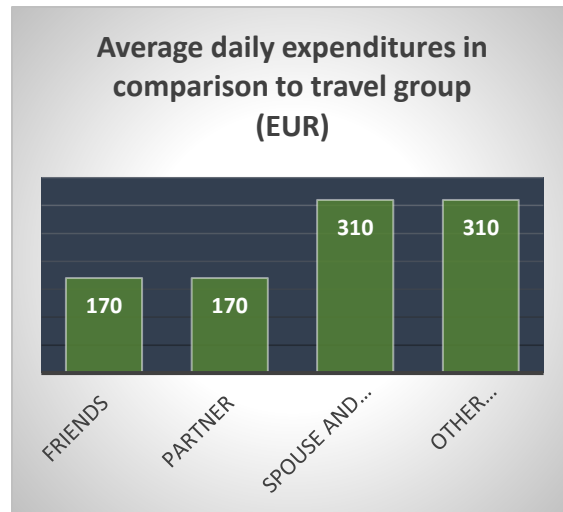


Figure 4.3.2: Average daily expenditures in comparison to travel group

In terms of motivation for travelling, Figure 4.3.1 shows different types of motivation that were derived from Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) studies (See literature in *Appendix K*). Most of the travellers have indicated new culture as the main motivation to visit Bali, followed by adventure travellers. Other emphasized motives were fashion, relaxation, health and personal motives. Figure 4.3.2 shows an average daily expenditure per travel group. Figure P.3 found in *Appendix P* demonstrates that travellers motivated to travel for fashion and to learn a new skill tend to spend nearly as twice as the average traveller. These facts support with a solid background when identifying a high demand of specific needs within the target group.

Furthermore, while planning a trip, respondents have emphasized main elements, which can influence their planning phase. 31% indicated a family member, 28% an online travel websites, 21% mobile travel applications and 20% a travel agent. The results show that although word-of-mouth is a key aspect for considering the destination, travel agents and online travel platforms remains a strong influence. The results are comparable to the literature findings presented in CITM (2016) report found in chapter 2.2.2. Further collected data shows that the respondents during the planning phase tend to visit video sharing platforms (43%) followed by social network platforms (20%), photo sharing platforms (17%) and online travel communities (10%). Mostly indicated platforms by the travellers were Youku, Meipai and QQ Live. Figure 4.3.3 compares the usage of platforms per travel group. The results reveal that travellers with a partner, spouse with children or relatives are more involved in online travel community websites, whereas travellers with friends consider more social network and video platforms. This data allows appropriate adjustments to be made in communication strategy by focusing on the most influential information channels, regarding a message that fit to the corresponding audience.

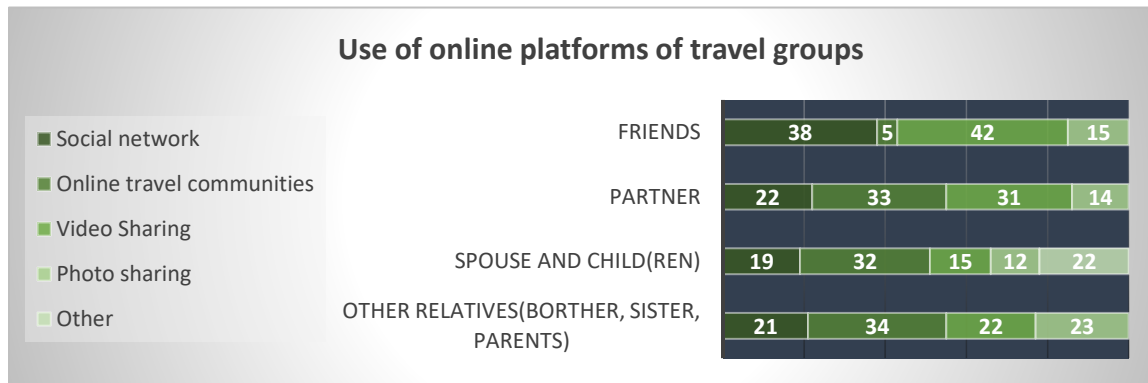


Figure 4.3.3: Use of online platforms of travel groups.

4.4 Searching for the information

When using different sources to find information about Bali, 45% social media was indicated as the most important source, while 42% referring to friends and colleagues, 37% to travel guides and 27% refer to mobile travel application. Figure 4.4.1 shows the importance of information source amongst the travel groups.

The results slightly differ from the literature described in chapter 2.2.2. What separates independent Chinese travellers is that they rely more on a social media and family with friend's recommendations than mobile travel applications as described in the literature. The most often used online information sources by the target group were indicated Ctrip, Agoda, eLong, Weibo, Sina, WeChat, QQ, WangWang. In terms of information search, independent Chinese target group use different sources than the mass traveller, therefore ICS needs to ensure that the brand is noticed within these channels.

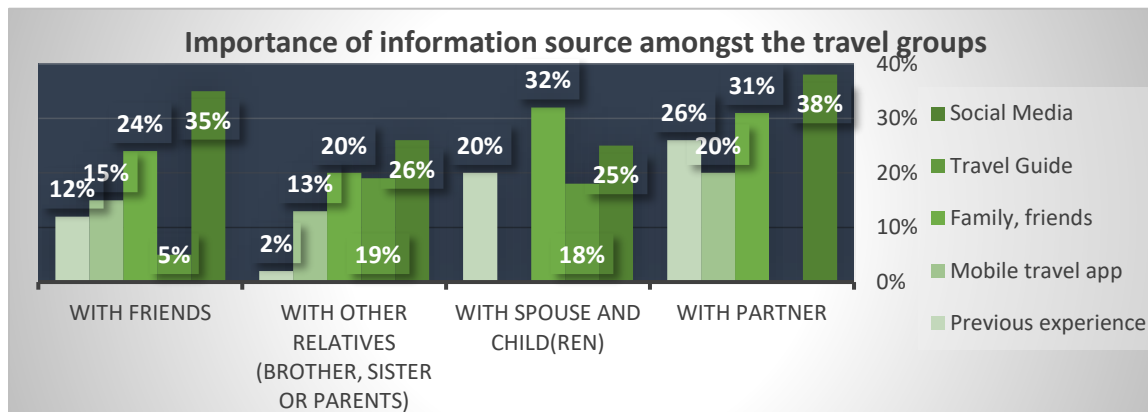


Figure 4.4.1: Importance of information source amongst the travel groups

Furthermore, Figure P.4 found in *Appendix P*, provides a valuable comparison of how different motives traveller make a use of different sources of information within the period of the actual travel planning, which is on average 2 to 3 months. Figure P.4 found in *Appendix P* shows that adventure motivated travellers tend to firmly rely on previous experience. As mentioned earlier, the fact

confirms the Lo and Lam (2004) theory, where scholars state that experienced travellers tend to seek more active type of travelling. Choosing the right communication channel to reach prospective types of travellers can have a positive influence towards their travel behaviour.

4.5 Making the final choice

The question 'Have you considered any alternative destination when planning your trip to Bali?' 74% of 122 respondents answered that they thought about other alternatives, when deciding on a destination. Figure P.5 found in *Appendix P* shows that most important leisure activities amongst Chinese travellers in Bali are adventure, dining experience, rural village and shopping activities. The field research results are comparable to the literature findings presented in CITM (2016) report (See chapter 2.2.2). Rural villages, which scored nearly 60%, could be a valuable input in communication concept to attract a traveller. Furthermore, Figure 4.5.1 presents most popular activities in comparison to a travel group.

Besides the leisure activities, Figure P.6 found in *Appendix P* shows that safety, quality of information offered, services and facilities are the most important aspects amongst Chinese travellers. All of the aspects can be found in Kim et al., (2005) theory (see chapter 2.2.2). Although the previous section indicated a high amount of disposable earnings amongst the travellers, analysing the most important travel aspects reveals that a majority of the travellers are rather price sensitive.

Regarding aspects such as government or independent rating, quantity of information offered and image of the destination, many respondents did not have an opinion or were undecided. Figure P.7 found in *Appendix P* shows the most important aspects for different compositions of travel groups.

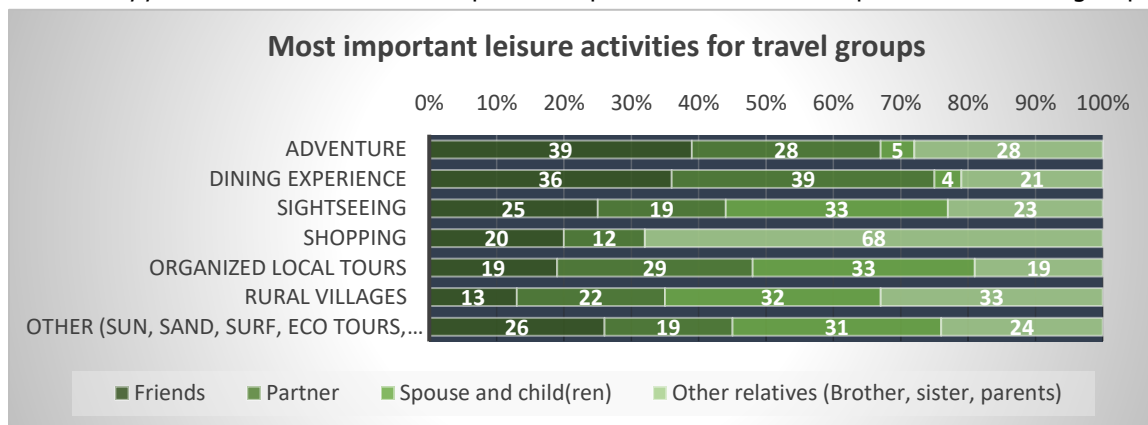


Figure 4.5.1: Leisure activities for travel groups

4.6 Purchase

Question 'During your current stay in Bali, have you engaged in any activities that were not planned prior to the trip?' leads to the knowledge of 'unplanned-done' activities, as stated by Woodside et al., (2004). 82% from 122 respondents answered that they have participated in an unplanned activity. Therefore, the researcher wanted to know which local source of information had the most influence. The division of the local information sources can be found in Figure 4.6.1 with a detailed

review in Figure P.8 found in *Appendix P*. In line with Woodside et al., (2004) theory, results suggest that ‘unplanned–done’ activity type of travellers tends to be more spontaneous. Spontaneity involves unplanned expenditures, which indicates the travellers who would potentially spend more during their stay in Bali. Once at the destination, travellers with their friends tend to rely on information provided by a tour guide, whereas travellers with a partner mostly pay attention to a street advertisement and accommodation provider. Furthermore, as seen in the Figure P.8 found in *Appendix P*, independent Chinese travellers once at the destination mostly refer to a mobile travel application, followed by tour guides and accommodation providers. Examining different motives of travellers coming to Bali, Figure P.9 shows that through fashion and learning new skills travellers firmly rely on information sources while in Bali, therefore are more dynamic and open for spontaneity. Although, not statistically essential, but important to know, promotion, through communication channels would increase the chances of attracting more Chinese travellers when addressing interesting insights about particular travel group.

Finally, in order to book a trip to Bali, 48% of independent Chinese travellers have used online travel agents, namely Ctrip, Tuniu or Ly, 35% used a booking platform and 14% used a travel agent. The results are corresponding to CITM (2016) report, where a majority of independent Chinese travellers tend to book their tour via an online travel agent. The main difference is that nearly 35% use a booking platform, whereas previous studies dedicate second place to hotel websites (see chapter 2.2.2).

In the last question, many respondents expressed lack of assistance during their trip in Bali. Several travellers would like to have online personal assistance that could help them with personal questions, while they are travelling in Bali.

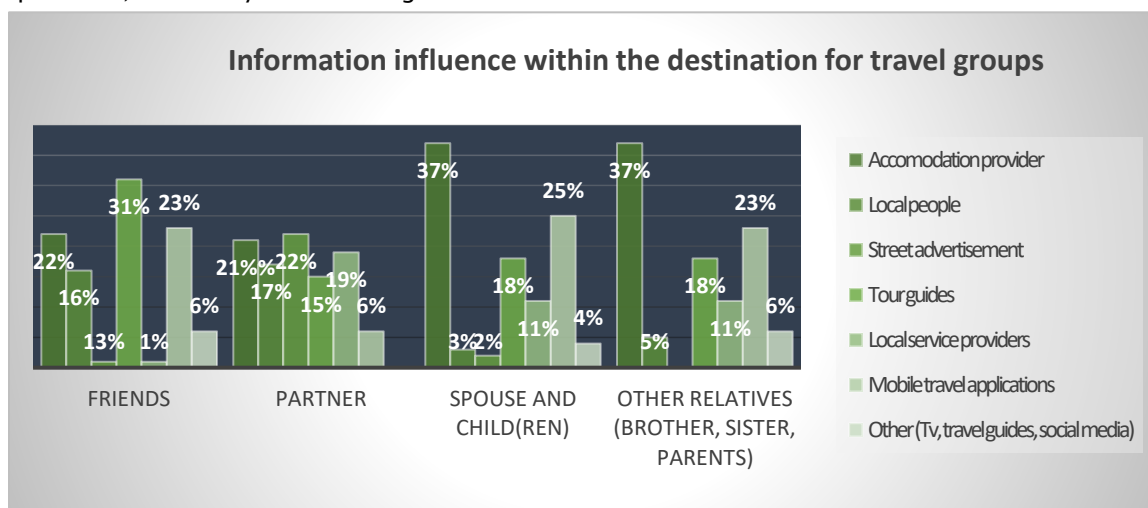


Figure 4.6.1 Information influence within the destination for travel groups

5. Conclusion

In this paragraph, the conclusions resulting from literature and field research will be explored. Firstly, the report will refer to the research questions provided in Chapter 1: Introduction. Based on both research methods, the researcher will use a comparison of the results, extracting significant information for answering research questions.

❖ Sub question 1: What is the definition of travel purchase behaviour process?

Tourism destinations are seen as very dynamic and involve numerous factors. Thus, travel purchase behaviour process represents a complex structure when viewing the way a traveller is engaged to various decisions when making a purchase. As Solomon (2010) described 'the process is involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires' (p. 27). Some of the major reasons for active participation in travel decision-making are price, level of risk, less frequently purchased, relating to self-expressiveness (Kotler et al., 2008).

As adapted from Butler and Peppard (1998) the process can be described in 5 main stages: need recognition, information search, and evaluation of the alternatives, purchase and post-purchase evaluation. Throughout the process, the traveller is faced with a variety of interacting variables that could at any given point in time change the direction of the leading decision, such as advertisement, recommendation from a relative or a special promotion. Furthermore, personality, social environment, different motivations, contrasting opinions while planning to travel at the destination can evolve into different preferences and different needs.

Some scholars argue that travel purchase is based on a rational thinking. However, other scholars argue that decision making might be often highly dependent on situational events, such as interactions with friends, family or travel members, sometimes leading to spontaneity.

❖ Sub question 2: What are the different elements of travel purchase behaviour process?

As the variety of different options for purchase evokes a complex process, a traveller faces several stages of decision-making process.

Decision making for a travel purchase starts with "an internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need" (Higgins, 1994). Based on extensive research, scholars Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) came to the conclusion that there are 6 main motives for travelling, which are: motivation to explore a new culture, motivation for health and relaxation, motivation for adventure, motivation for status or fashion, motivation for personal development or learning new skills and personal motivation or VFR. The first travel purchase behaviour stage is about a personality, different motives behind the travelling, values, attitudes and a socio-economic status. Nevertheless, need recognition stage can be evoked by any external sources such as travellers recommendations or advertisement through several different channels, which reflects one of the personal characteristics mentioned earlier.

When there is a lack of personal experience, different photos, videos or social platforms might be used to get inspiration of the desired travel experience. The search can be renewed at any given time in any other stage of the process. Information sources can be offline, such as brochures, travel guides, package deals, or travel information issued by a tourism sector supplier or TV advertisement, whereas online sources include user-dominated travel review website like tripadvisor.com, travel agent websites, travel and other online community-based mobile applications. As concluded by Lo and Lam (2004) amount of used different sources depends on whether the traveller is satisfied with quality of a source.

The next evaluation of the alternatives stage is based on measuring the outcome of the information with subjective measures such as perceived image of the destination or balance between price and value factors.

Finally, purchase stage is reached with a clear set of decisions regarding travel arrangement, which is driven by evaluated subjective criteria as well as the characteristics and features of service distribution that are offered by travel stakeholders. Amongst the selection of the alternatives, the final purchase is made, which is often adjusted during the actual trip due to influence of local information sources or on-site events.

❖ Sub question 3: What are the characteristics of an independent Chinese traveller coming to Bali?

As stated by Swarbrooke and Horner (1999), "Independent tourists differs from the mass tourists in terms of experiencing the destination rather than just visiting, by deeply engaging with local culture, and being attracted to destinations off the beaten tourist tracks".

The average age of the independent traveller in Bali is 29 years old. Literature research shows that an independent traveller compared to a mass traveller is younger and more educated, with the majority having at least a bachelor degree. Besides summer season, they use other national holidays for travelling, which are in the last week of January, first week of April, last week of May and first week of October in 2017.

According to the field research, within the last 12 months, 93% have travelled abroad at least 1 time, followed by 73% who travelled 2 or more times, therefore are seen as more experienced travellers than the older generation or organized group travellers. Unlike the description by Chan and Couper (2014) they arrive in Bali less with children, but more with a partner (27%), friends (25%), spouse with child or children (18%) and relatives (17%). Very occasionally, Chinese travellers can be met in Bali travelling single (3%) or with a colleague (9%). The most frequent travellers are those travelling with groups of friends, whereas travellers with spouses and children commonly travel abroad once a year.

An independent traveller stays in Bali 0.3 days, slightly longer than the average Chinese traveller. Corresponding to the previous studies, the self-organizers tend to stay longer than the package travellers, as a result taking more time to engage with the local culture. They are highly demanding,

since the new generation favours high quality in product and service, and are willing to spend more than average the Chinese traveller. 47% of the travellers have indicated high importance of expenses during the trip, although the comparison between traveller's average monthly income and daily expenditures suggests large disposable earnings.

❖ **Sub question 4: What are the most important elements of travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers in Bali that influences them to choose a tour operator?**

Literature research shows that increasing demand of flexibility, mobility and freedom are the most important aspects that distinguish an independent Chinese traveller. Although group travel is still most popular amongst the Chinese travellers, more experienced travellers seek control and independence over their travel itinerary, and more of them wish to discover Bali on their own. Chinese travelling to Bali take relatively short time to plan a trip. 45% of the travellers begin the actual planning 2 to 3 months in advance before the trip to Bali and tend to rely less on a structural planning. A majority of the travellers prior to the trip refer more to a social media (45%), followed by friends and colleagues (44%), travel guides (37%), mobile travel applications (27%).

In terms of traveller motivation, there are few distinct travel groups, namely new culture explorers and adventure seekers. Adventure seekers travel mostly with a group of friends, a partner, and other relatives. Besides adventure, they are interested in dining and sightseeing activities. Another group, new culture explorers mostly travels with a partner or with spouse and children. The second group mostly shows interests in dining experience and organized local tours. Other activities that influences travellers to choose Bali were indicated as a rural village experience and shopping activities.

Furthermore, most travellers are concerned about safety, quality of information, services and facilities during the trip. Travellers especially travelling with spouse and children are less sensitive about the price than the average outbound Chinese traveller. The expenses mostly relate to authentic goods or personalized and unique travel experiences that represent their status in social environment back home. Perception of independency means higher rank in a social environment group, which is highly valued amongst this particular type of traveller.

❖ **Central question 1: What is a travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali Island?**

Based on the answers of the sub questions, the central question is answered. Most independent Chinese travellers in Bali are encountered with a travel purchase process at least once a year. The process of independent Chinese travellers is rather spontaneous, which on average for a traveller begins 2 to 3 months before the trip. First, the traveller will look for online whether family or friends travel suggestions, since word-of-mouth is firmly perceived amongst the independent Chinese travellers and Chinese culture in general. Mainly active types of travellers strongly refer to their previous travel experience. More than half of Chinese travellers in Bali relate their motives to a new

culture and adventure side of Bali. Whether the travel needs are based on these motives, or triggered by any external recommendations, most of the traveller will look for information. The most often used online travel websites are Ctrip, Agoda, eLong, Mafengwo, Qyer, video platforms such as Youku, Meipai, QQ Live and social network platforms such as WeChat, QQ, Renren. Furthermore, the opinion of a friend, a colleague or a family member about their experience might have a strong effect on the traveller's choice.

Once the knowledge about the destination is obtained, the traveller will assess all collected advantages and disadvantages. Particularly preferred activities amongst independent Chinese traveller are adventure activities, dining experience, sightseeing, locally organized tours and a rural villages. Based on the research, a traveller will ensure that the travel arrangement is safe. Other evaluation will look at the quality of information provided as well as services and facilities offered. After evaluation, the most appealing offer is selected, and the booking is made mostly via Ctrip, Tuniu or Ly online travel agent website or a booking platform. Next to the activities that were booked in advance, 82% of the travellers are likely to consider an alternative activity once at the destination. Nearly 53% uses mobile travel applications while at the destination. The most influential local information sources, encountered by travellers in Bali with children or other relatives are accommodation providers, while travellers with friends usually are more influenced by a local tour guides and mobile travel applications.

❖ **Sub question 1: What is the definition of communication concept in a tourism context?**

The communication concept is highly related to marketing communications, which is applied by most of the organizations, including hospitality and tourism industry. Communication is formulated based on a company's resources and traveller's needs. Thus, companies communicate with a consumer in order to influence consumer's purchase behaviour by delivering various promotional messages of products and service to its target market (Esu & Ebitu, 2010).

Nevertheless, a shift in needs and demands of the target group can be vital for a company improving communication strategy, to better match their target group. By knowing particular needs of a consumer, different communication tools can positively influence a potential consumer's behaviour. Communication tools are referred to the communication mix found in the marketing related literature, which consists of advertising, personal selling, discounts and promotions, public relations, direct marketing, event sponsorship and digital marketing (Low, 2005). In order to achieve a successful communication concept, first the company needs to set a plan, determine the target market, set the objectives, consider potential channels to be involved, determine which components will be likely to achieve the best results, select a theme, establish the final budget, launch and maintain the concept, and finally evaluate the results (Morrison, 2013).

❖ **Sub question 2: What type of information sources is mostly used amongst independent Chinese travellers in Bali?**

The young target group, average of 29 years old is a tech-savvy traveller, who uses various devices in every stage of the travel purchase behaviour process to find information, connect to others, share their real time travel moments, travel memories and feedback on different travel aspects.

As described in the literature, the target group of independent Chinese travellers uses on average five different information sources that are involved when planning the trip abroad. Amongst these sources, 45% of travellers refer to social media, while 42% refer to friends and colleagues, 37% to travel guides and 27% to mobile travel application.

Based on the literature and field research, the most frequent online sources used by the travellers are: 'Sina Weibo' – western "Twitter" type Chinese social network website, used by different composition of travel groups. 'QQ', Weibo and 'WeChat' – Chinese market focused communication services used to share a real time travelling moments. Besides social media, 'Mafengwo' and 'Qyer' are the most popular online Chinese travel communities, especially amongst those who travel with their spouse with children or relatives.

In addition to that, confirming to the highest percentage of OTAs, 48% of Chinese travellers in Bali used OTAs services to gather information about the destination or to make their booking for a trip. As found in the literature, the main OTAs in China's tourism market are 'Ctrip' with 23.2% of total market share, 'Tuniu' with 13.4%, 'LY' with 5.6% and 'Lvmama' with 4.3%.

Above all, Chinese travellers pay attention to video sharing platforms Youku and Iqiyi. Previously mentioned mostly used social network websites are Sina Weibo and Renren. These are preferred communication channels by independent Chinese travellers, which play an important role in their travel purchase behaviour process.

❖ **Sub question 3: Which communication tools need to be included regarding communication concept in order to apply the knowledge gained about marketing communications and travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers in Bali?**

A detailed answer in form of adjusted communication concept can be found in Chapter 7: Advice.

❖ **Central question 2: What changes in ICS marketing communication concept will help to attract independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali?**

The analysis of Chinese travel behaviour process have provided insights of their need for a particular preference in communication, regarding a composition of their travel group and their personal characteristics for measuring and assessing potential options. These insights have given a particular view of which elements would potentially have an influence towards their travel purchase behaviour. After comparing the preferred communication by the travellers, the knowledge gained about this particular target market and discussion with the commissioning client, public relations and digital marketing can be seen as the two dominant communication tools that would potentially bring the most significant changes for achieving ICS objectives of attracting independent Chinese traveller. A complete elaboration of adjustments to be taken in communication strategy is presented in Chapter 7: Advice.

6. Reliability and Validity

Reliability – The researcher has to be confident that any time conducting the same research, the outcome will remain the same (Verhoeven, 2015). In order to explore existing theories, literature research was conducted, accompanied by a field research. A questionnaire for the field research was compiled based on the relevant aspects, gathered from literature study. Based on a non-probability sampling method, the absence of the record of independent Chinese travelling in Bali, has inevitably decreased reliability. However, the researcher ensured that the level of reliability is maintained by minimizing the bias in three steps: using more data by including existing theories in literature as well as conducting the field research, using diversity and aiming for sample representativeness. Convenience sample for selecting the respondents has enabled the researcher to set the quota, aiming for equality of the sample, which has contributed to overall reliability of the research (Brotherton, 2008). Regarding the diversity, the researcher has selected several places after contacting the expert in this field, Angelika Pagemanan, who was certain to provide a high density Chinese travellers places. Representativeness was achieved by evaluating each of these locations under the criteria, which could increase overall confidence of the sample.

The questionnaire selected as a measurement instrument was checked by a research teacher, Rienk van Marle, ensuring that formulation of the questionnaire is free of a random bias. However, the major challenge occurred to be a different language of the questionnaire. In order to obtain valuable and unbiased insights from Chinese travellers, the questionnaire had to be translated into the Mandarin language. Former Saxion University student, Taoran Feng, a native Chinese citizen helped the researcher by translating the questionnaire from English to Mandarin language. Afterwards, applying peer examination the questionnaire was tested several times with the other native Chinese student. After the draft of the questionnaire was compiled into the final version, the document was ready to be used on the field.

During the research, a guide working at ICS helped approach the Chinese travellers by introducing the topic in fluent Mandarin language. In order to avoid decrease in overall reliability due to language barrier, the researcher was assisted by a Chinese speaking guide. As it turned out, many respondents were not able to respond in English, thus guidance in language from the tour guide was crucial for gathering the responses. The volunteer has increased the reliability, by making a proper introduction, and finding a mutual understanding on the topic with a traveller. After eliminating questionnaires that were incomplete or did not apply to the selection criteria, a total number of 122 questionnaires was analysed.

Construct validity – Brotherton (2008) argues that construct validity is highly dependent on definitions used in the research design. Construct validity determines coverage of the research design and value of the results. Comparison of the different theories in this research helped to build convergent validity (Brotherton, 2010). A strong construct validity was ensured due to the fact that research questions were derived from the core concepts, which were defined in the literature review.

The major downside of a construct validity was a limited literature regarding an independent Chinese travellers in Bali. The questionnaire questions were derived from operationalization of the core concept, strengthening a construct validity of the research. In addition to that, all the literature used in the literature research was applied to AAOCC criteria, utilizing different Saxion library databases to ensure that sources are valid and reliable to the required level.

Internal validity – Internal validity determines ‘truthfulness’ of the results gathered from the field research (Brotherton, 2008). In order to be able to conclude that research findings were credible, the research used literature research and a consequent face-to-face survey followed by statistical analysis. Limitations to the outcome were that triangulation is lacking a qualitative research approach. Nevertheless, use of the other two data collections methods provided a solid foundation for a triangulation. Overall results gathered from quantitative research could be linked with the theoretical framework, therefore confirming credibility of the results (Brotherton, 2008). Corresponding relation found between the management problem, theoretical framework, research questions and questionnaire questions ensures a unified approach of the research.

External validity – External validity measures to what extent collected results can be generalized back to the population and applied for future research (Verhoeven, 2015). The results show some minor differences compared to the previous literature studies about Chinese travellers. Nevertheless, external validity is rather high for this research, since the researcher had an opportunity to personally approach the respondents, confirming that the research is being conducted on the intended population. Different perspective of volunteer was a major downside for external validity, which might have somewhat influenced the results. In order to minimize any interventions, the instructions were given to provide the information about the questions in as neutral and objective manner as possible. Selection questionnaire, based on independent traveller's characteristics found in the theory, ensured that a respondent is representing the desired population.

The results could not be generalized to the entire Chinese traveller population due to the fact that the research analysed independent travellers in Bali, and that the same population in different destination might have revealed different insights. However, it can be generalized for the companies in Bali with a similar type of target groups. For further studies that give high validity and reliability to the research topic, it is advised to use a mix of qualitative and quantitative research approach. Qualitative research could help gather an in-depth analysis of the sample, and reveal the reasons for certain selections over the others. Research could consider target groups of a senior, or a luxury independent travel segment.

7. Advice

The previous chapter demonstrates what the chosen target market of independent Chinese travellers is the most interested to travel to Bali, when it comes to their travel purchase decision and travel behaviour. The outcome of the results provides essential information that is necessary to build a suitable communication strategy. Thus, different frequencies in terms of figures were presented, including a bivariate analysis, which outlines some interesting results. Looking at various frequencies about independent Chinese travellers in Bali, the researcher was able to extract important details, which properly applied in ICS communication strategy can have an influence on potential travellers' purchase decision. Knowing travellers' preferences in a particular time frame allows proper adjustments in communication strategy.

The amount of gathered information is explained in graphs that the researcher discusses as a point of reference to develop several optional strategies that ICS in Bali could follow. This chapter will focus on how the current communication concept in ICS, taking into account previous chapter results, could be adjusted. Furthermore, after defining the main research questions, the advice part will answer the question: *How can ICS Travel Group adjust its communication strategy that would influence Chinese traveller purchase decision to choose ICS as their tour operator?* In order to answer these questions, a communication plan is selected as the main structure to develop a strategic advice. Every stage of the marketing communication plan is elaborated in this chapter, including the financial implications. Before the elaboration, a few alternatives will be examined. After the evaluation of several alternatives, the most suitable option will be selected as an input to build a communication strategy for ICS.

7.1 Determining the optional alternatives

Independent Chinese travellers target market was selected as the best fit with ICS mission and vision statements, as described in chapter 1.2. In these statements, one can highlight important keywords, namely 'attention to the detail', 'exclusivity', 'cultural reality', and 'local experience'. As discovered in the field research, the researcher can conclude that the independent Chinese travellers are mostly sophisticated travellers, since 93% of them have travelled abroad at least once within last 12 months. The top selected activities vary from culture explorer, which is travelling mostly with a partner or family, more relaxed type of traveller to an adventure-seeker, travelling to Bali mostly with group of friends or a partner who are driven by need for adventure. The distinction is made based on interests and motives between these two groups. The perceived differences are discussed in the following paragraph.

7.1.1 Examination of the alternatives

Three alternatives were developed for a potential ICS communication strategy. All three alternatives aim to increase the number of independent Chinese travellers selecting ICS as their tour operator for a trip to Bali, by addressing their specific travel needs. The alternatives are based on the results, derived from a combination of the theory and the field research, highlighting the differences

between travellers' motives and travel group arrangements while in Bali. Each of the alternatives will be evaluated on criteria-based selection. The one that scored the most will be selected for implementation of marketing communication strategy in the following section. A detailed description of the planning marketing communication concept can be found in *Appendix I*.

Alternative 1 – Adventurer's escape to Bali

A connection between the Chinese travelling with friends and adventure tourism has been established, which is presented in Figure P.5 and Figure 4.5.1. 62% of independent Chinese travellers are highly interested to travel to Bali due to adventure tourism activities that the island has to offer. Adventure tourism is a type of niche tourism where usually small groups or individuals travel to remote areas. Great diversity of adventure activities in Bali includes volcano or jungle trekking, water sports like diving in Amed or Lovina beach in the northern coast, white water rafting and many more. Besides the touristic sights, there is a great unexplored part of Bali, which is ready to be recognized by adventure seekers. Consequently, the communication concept could integrate these adventurous features to gain interests of these particular groups of travellers.

Equally, travellers with a partner, as seen in Figure P.5, show interest in adventure tourism activities. This group of travellers have indicated interests particularly in dining experience, which is associated with a more popular western type of travelling. Being aware of the independent Chinese travellers involves demonstrating exclusivity, and a unique wildlife flavour which creates an experience that very few can share. The promotion of various adventure activities in unexplored places of Bali, an unusual dining experience in an isolated beach or a tropical rainforest can bring excitement to this type of niche travellers. The offer proposes a true independent traveller's to experience Bali 'off the beaten track' providing a 'unique and insightful local experience', where even sophisticated travellers would find something that captures their attention.

The communication concept is focused on a younger, wealthier and independent travel segment, which are driven by a personalized service and self-expression, seeking for tailor-made experiences. Emphasis on a unique selling point (USP) and status of being a pioneer in providing an exclusive experience in ICS communication concept will raise competitive advantage amongst other tour operators. Furthermore, when promoting adventure tourism, in particular the aspect of safety should be highlighted in the concept. Moreover, as seen in the results, 81% of independent Chinese travellers highly value service features. As the product consists of different suppliers, first the concept would need to be introduced to different stakeholders, reassuring the consistency and high quality standards, before the concept could be launched.

Alternative 2 – Respire a different Asian culture

Bali is a unique and famous island, known for its rich cultural heritage. As discovered in the field research, 30% of independent Chinese travellers have indicated interests for experiences related to an exploration of a new culture while travelling in Bali. According to the Figure 4.5.1, travellers with

spouses and children show interests in organized local tours, sightseeing and rural village options which could all be linked to cultural aspects. A precise example to visualize an engagement with local community experience can be a personalized rice field trekking, where local farmers introduce their daily life to a traveller. By emphasizing an interactive way of developing understanding about the Balinese culture, the communication concept will target travellers for family activities such as cooking classes, agriculture or different household activities. The traditions with local ceremonies contribute to representing a rich Balinese heritage and Hindu's religion ties. Gianyar and Ubud regions, situated in the central area of Bali can be used when promoting cultural centre in communication concept (see *Appendix Q*). Furthermore, buying authentic goods is seen as more important amongst travellers with relatives, therefore could be well implemented into the concept. Local craftsmen and painters can be presented in the culture-related art side of Bali, whereas in exchange the travellers would contribute back to communities by purchasing some of their authentic goods. The communication concept must be well addressing the uniqueness and personalization aspects, meanwhile representing the independent traveller's slogan 'off the beaten tourist track'. ICS in their contact list have various suppliers from a different yet less touristy farm of central region in Bali, who could be contacted for such a proposal. A particular attention for safety and service features are needed for developing this concept.

Alternative 3 – Representative office setup in China

The alternative was developed based on the fact that nearly 42% of the travellers use friends and colleagues as a second most important source of information, after social networks. Furthermore, according to the results, 37% highlight the importance in local travel guides followed by 27% mobile travel applications. In order to gain an influence over these particular sources, there is an opportunity to strengthen public relations within China. As per discussion with the client, ICS already have some ideas for launching a representative sales office in China. Locally based ICS offices in China represent direct contact with potential clients, improving a relationship with individuals and other Chinese tourism stakeholders. Furthermore, direct sales can be highly convincing to make a travel purchase. This alternative differs from previously mentioned ones and it is a tangible asset development, which adjusts the way the company reaches its potential travel market.

Nevertheless, this alternative would rise several major challenges. First, China is a large country, thus decision on strategic location for an office would have a critical impact towards achieving the objectives. Second, the majority in China are still leisure package travellers, thus independent tour sales office might face some difficulties finding the right target market. Nevertheless, developing the knowledge about Chinese market after some time would increase cooperation with a local travel agents, this way rising awareness of ICS tour operator expertise in individual needs of the Chinese outbound travellers. Rising awareness of ICS through local travel guides and mobile travel applications will accelerate awareness of the brand in most influential travel information sources

amongst the target group. Besides that, gained knowledge would serve in the future when working with a rapidly increasing and dynamic China's outbound travel market. Also, locally based offices would contribute towards increasing the sales, a powerful spread of word-of-mouth within traveller's communities in China, and thus, a gain in competitive advantage over the other tour operators.

In the first year there would be no expected revenue due to time needed to get acquainted with the Chinese market. During the second year ICS in China could already expect several links with business partners established, therefore reduction of expenses, and potentially an increase in revenue. With an active public relations involvement in advertisement on social media and local travel guides, ICS will develop in China by becoming known organization within the Chinese market.

7.1.2 Evaluation of the criteria

The criteria of three main components were established in order to evaluate possible alternatives, namely, time, money and resources (I.Hermann, personal communication, October 31, 2016). The three alternatives were objectively evaluated in order to formulate the best possible option for ICS. An elaborated evaluation, including a detailed description of the criteria can be found in *Appendix U*. The summary of the calculations is presented in the Table 7.1.2. Prior to the evaluation, all three alternatives were confirmed to be:

- A highest score in all three criteria: time, money and resources
- A match with the mission of the ICS travel group organization.
- A match with the vision of the ICS travel group organization.
- A match with Bali's Tourism Board (BTB) strategy: 'market diversification into potential new regional areas and niche markets' (Putra, 2010).

Time – ICS travel group is willing to put time and effort in order to achieve the desired outcome. The deadline for the desired results was set on December 2017, therefore roughly around 12 months. The client would like to evaluate the performance of the concept, which should result in an increase of customers during the summer peak of high season between months April and October.

Money – Money should not exceed the budget dedicated for marketing purposes in 2017, which amounts to €13,000. Nevertheless, in case the budget should exceed, additional budget from ICS headquarters based in Bangkok can be requested. By setting an initial investment planning, which proves a potential return on investment, additional budget could be issued.

Resources – ICS wants to maintain the current marketing staff and keep the costs as low as possible. However, taking into account preferred communication tools to be used, the client stressed a particular need for adjustments in public relations (PR) and digital marketing areas. Therefore, following the will, ICS will need to consider additional staff particularly assigned to monitor the new strategy and handle direct communication with potential Chinese customers. Regardless the chosen alternatives for the communication concept, presumably there will be a need for hiring one to two full-time employee (FTE), depending on the extent of the campaign.

Alternative Criteria	Adventurer's escape to Bali	Respire a different Asian culture	Representative office setup in China
Time	+/+	+/-	+/-
Money	+/-	+/-	+/-
Resources	+/+	+/+	+/-
Total	5	4	3

Table 7.1.2: Evaluation of the alternatives (Indicators: (+/+) Very suitable, (+) suitable, (+/-) sufficient, (-) less suitable, (-/-) not suitable)

7.1.3 Final recommendations

Based on the evaluation of all three criteria described in *Appendix U*, the final result was calculated. Taking into account all three criteria, namely time, money and resources, 'Adventurer's escape to Bali' alternative communication concept proves to be the most fitting option for ICS marketing strategy. Although, the setup of representative office in China would possibly be the best option for a long term, the time needed to evaluate the strategy exceeds period of 12 months. On the contrary, the 'Adventurer's escape to Bali' concept can be realized and evaluated in the given period of time, concluding whether the concept helped ICS to achieve the desired objectives. Also, if necessary, the concept can be adjusted on short notice, depending on the feedback from the customers. A positive feedback about the product within the chosen concept could increase a chance of positive recommendations for their relatives and friends, which as discovered in the field research is critical for attracting new customers. With regards to time, option 1 scored better due to the fact that it requires less risk than the option 2 to ensure that the concept will be launched on time.

With regards to criteria 'money', the selected option fits within the marketing budget unlike the new office setup in China, which would exceed current budget dedicated for marketing purposes. In comparison to option 2, due to the fact that setup of a new marketing communication strategy would require similar investments, both alternatives received the same score. With regards to the current resources, the trainees will help the company to decrease its costs, whereas option 3 would require hiring a full time native Chinese experts to set up the representative sales office in China. In case of requirement to terminate the project, the contract with a trainee could simply be no longer extended, avoiding the issues related to hiring a full time employee.

As seen in the research results, the chosen concept will potentially help ICS to become a well-known tour operator amongst the two biggest groups of travellers coming to Bali, namely travellers with friends and a partner.

As mentioned earlier, the representative office set up in China should be considered as a next step for developing their business in China. Such a step will improve relations with the customers and ICS branding within China. As being a major stakeholder, ICS headquarters in Bangkok should be convinced to initiate the project, urging the need to gain competitive advantage in the market share.

7.2 Implementation of marketing communication concept

This paragraph will reveal how the selected communication concept for ICS office in Bali will be implemented. A fundamental structure of marketing communications planning can be found in *Appendix I* (Morrison, 2013). The first step of the marketing communication plan step defines the target group. The following steps of marketing communication plan are to set the campaign objectives, consider potential communication channels, determine the components of communication mix, design and test, prepare the final campaign, launch and monitor the concept, and finally measure and evaluate the results. In order to improve the quality and meet the guidelines for reporting that were outlined by Saxion University, all of marketing communication planning steps were closely aligned with PDCA cycle (Plan – do – check – act) (Smith & Hawkins, 2004). Paragraph 7.2.2 to 7.2.4 represents 'Plan' phase, 7.2.5 to 7.2.8 represents 'Do' phase, 7.2.9 'Check' phase and 7.3 'Act' phase. In addition to that, a concrete actions to be taken by ICS staff regarding every step in communications planning are presented in paragraph 7.2.8. An illustration of full employee deployment in marketing communication plan for 2017 can be found in *Appendix R*.

7.2.1 Target group

The target group for the selected communication concept are independent Chinese travellers in Bali, who are travelling mostly with their friends or a partner. The average age of travellers is 29 years old. They are active type of travellers, especially travellers with friends, who travel abroad on average once every three months. Furthermore, they tend to rely less on structure when organizing a trip. According to the field research, for this group of travellers, active planning of the trip starts 2 to 3 months in advance, whereas travellers with a partner organize the trip one month in advance. Moreover, when planning the trip, travellers with a partner or group of friends, tend to mostly research social network websites and video sharing platforms regarding the destination. Other, mostly referred sources of information are online travel communities, family and friends recommendations.

When at the destination, they stay on average 9 days, and spend CYN1, 250 on a daily basis, which is approximately EUR 170. Amongst the variety of activities, both groups of travellers are specifically interested in adventure and dining experiences in Bali. Shopping is mostly popular amongst travellers with relatives. Additionally, travellers with a partner like to enjoy sightseeing while in Bali. Besides that, the most valued aspects amongst Chinese travellers are safety, followed by quality of information services, facilities offered and a combination of activities. Nearly half of the independent Chinese travellers consult or make a booking through an online travel agent. Moreover, nearly 82% of the travellers participate in an unplanned activity. As a result, accommodation providers, tour guides and street advertisement information sources could have a strong influence towards the target group in terms of participation in an unplanned onsite activity.

7.2.2 Plan: Establishing the objectives

In order to achieve a successful communication concept, the next step is to set the objectives. The objectives will help structure the marketing communication concept with the aim to attract more independent Chinese travellers. In order to set obtainable objectives, SMART criteria are applied. SMART acronym stands for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-related. The corresponding objectives are:

- By December 2017 an increase of 40% independent Chinese traveller's audience, who recognize the ICS travel group as an adventure tourism tour operator in Bali will be obtained.
- By December 2017 an increase of 30% independent Chinese travellers, who book their tour in Bali independently with a partner or a group of friends will be obtained.
- By December 2017 an increase of 20% in revenue due to the launch of a newly developed 'Adventurer's escape to Bali' concept will be obtained.

As a result, the objectives were set to measure the success of the concept in terms of increase of the customers, the target audience and the revenue. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration most applicable communication mix components for achieving these objectives.

As discussed with the client, having a timeframe of 1 year, in order to achieve the objectives seems reasonable. After the test was performed and the feedback was collected in January 2017, the campaign should start before the high season, by the end of 1st quarter of 2017. The preliminary results of the campaign will be visible in November, after high season of 2017.

7.2.3 Potential communication channels

After the objectives were determined, the next step is to approach a potential communication channels in Chinese media, which might be interested in participating in a form of sponsorship. Furthermore, a sponsorship can be considered beneficial for the presence throughout a variety of communication channels. This way, the sponsorship can help reach the desired objectives by raising awareness of ICS tour operator in Bali amongst Chinese travellers. The appointed staff will negotiate potential commissions to be earned, in exchange to be promoted as a leading tour operator in Bali, which specializes in adventure tourism.

Furthermore, selected marketing channels should fit the target group, particularly of independent Chinese travellers. Based on the field research, active planning starts 2 to 3 months prior to a trip. Adventure travellers primarily rely on previous experiences. A comprehensive list of different communication channels, addressing different travel groups is presented underneath. The information was taken from the field research including Chinese social media landscape (2016), which can be found in *Appendix H*. A complete description of of full employee deployment regarding the communication channels can be found in paragraph 7.2.8.

Video sharing platforms: Youku, Meipai, QQ Live

As discovered in the field research, travellers especially planning a trip with friends refer to video sharing platforms. Since they tend to organize a trip on short notice, the review of the video takes

place on average 2 to 3 months before the trip to Bali. Therefore, a high definition short video representing a story of an independent traveller in Bali, who discovers an unseen side of the island, must be created. The video can also be captured by one of the bloggers, described latter in this chapter. The video must capture the key elements such as 'spontaneity', 'active explorer' 'dining as a couple' 'dining with friends', 'personalized', 'experience in nature'. Also, the video must be stylish and upscale, in order to capture the attention of potential young Chinese niche tourism travellers. The video should be uploaded on Youku, Meipai and QQ Live video platforms and regularly shared on social network websites, which are described latter in this chapter.

Adjustments in ICS travel group website

After the representative video of the new concept was compiled, the next step is to adjust information and design in www.icstravelgroup.com website, since it is a major information source where the target group will be most often referred to. In the official website's setup, 'Adventurer's escape to Bali' slogan must be eye-catching for a visitor of the website, signalling about the new concept, which is mainly presented in an interactive visual content. Based on the field research results, aspects of safety, quality of information and services with facilities offered must be visible in the website. Although independent Chinese travellers are more educated than the older generation and the majority speaks English, in order to provide Chinese focused amenities and fully reach an expanding target market, the website should be translated to the Mandarin language. Alternatively, shopping activities and rural village tours can be included, in order to attract travellers with relatives and spouses with children. Based on the research this target group prefers less active tourism.

Communication platforms and social network websites: WeChat, QQ, WangWang, QZone, Renren

As highlighted during the field research, these are the most popular communication platforms amongst travellers with friends. Particularly, travellers with a partner refer to online travel communities to gather the information, connect to other travellers, and share their real time travel moments about different travel aspects. The promotion should consist of the slogan, introduction and a reference to ICS travel group website. The target group is of Chinese nationality, thus information should be written in English and Mandarin. Therefore, at the beginning of the campaign, a native Chinese trainee should be hired, in order to manage online public relations within these platforms and to keep the information up-to-date.

Travel and travel review websites: Ctrip, Agoda, eLong, Mafengwo, Qyer, Lvping, Mofang, Weibo, Sina

According to the literature and field research, these travel websites were rated as the most popular amongst Chinese outbound traveller communities. Once the adjusted communication concept has been launched, editors of these travel websites should be approached, promoting the renewed ICS

concept with a detailed description and a short video based on ‘Adventurer’s escape: Submerge in an unseen beauty of Bali!’ theme. As discovered in the field research, nearly 50% of the target group book their tour via travel agent and on a short notice. Thus, when a major online travel agents like ‘Ctrip’, ‘Tuniu’ and ‘Ly’ publish a video in their communities that can potentially have influence towards target group travel purchase. (The list of OTA can be found in *Appendix M*). It is important to stress the value-for-money advantage and flexibility that ICS as a tour operator is able to provide depending on customer’s demands.

Although review websites were not indicated amongst the most important source of information, these websites are strongly linked with the other mobile travel applications, mentioned in the previous paragraph. Some of the articles about travel experiences become immediately trending throughout social media. As described in the literature review, around 51% of the travellers would write about a negative experience. Therefore, to keep a positive image of ICS, Weibo and Sina travel review websites should be reviewed regularly. In order to attract more travellers with spouses and children as well as their relatives, current contracted accommodation providers should include a promotion, addressing this particular target group.

Blogger’s experience

As discovered in the field research, word-of-mouth is the second most powerful influential source of information amongst the target group. In addition to that, key opinion leaders (KOL), as described in the chapter 2.2.2, play a significant role in Chinese society, whether it is a famous musician, artist or a writer. Travellers are highly involved in sharing the news, this way generating trending topics. The ‘Adventurer’s escape to Bali’ is a newly developed concept, made to attract independent Chinese travellers. ICS needs to become known in Chinese media as a reliable tour operator. Therefore, ICS should consider inviting one of the Chinese celebrities to Bali to experience a rearranged product under the newly developed marketing communication strategy. Taking into account necessary costs, bloggers who publish their articles in online Chinese travel communities such as ‘Ctrip’, ‘Qyer’ or ‘Mafengwo’ or Youku, Meipai, QQ live video platforms would be the most feasible option within the limited ICS budget. A video blogger who is known for having travel experience and authorized videos in China could also contribute to this project. The blogger needs to be introduced with the newly developed concept, towards young independent Chinese travellers. The short video or the article should include an experience of an adventure tour that combines all of the most important aspects such as safety, quality of services and facilities, information offered and arrangement of activities that independent Chinese travellers values the most. Especially travellers who decide on the destination based on previous experience, or influenced by family or friend’s recommendation would be highly interested to review an article about the experience of an expert in the tourism field.

By making sure that a blogger has an experience of a lifetime, he would be happy to share it with the followers. An article or a video needs to be published in a travel community channel, in order

to promote ICS as a tour operator for young couples and a group of friends. It is a rather simple and economic way to generate promotion in the mainstream media. In exchange, ICS would have to propose a free of charge roundtrip, including transportation, accommodation, meals and activities. Once the blogger would agree to write an article about the experience in Bali, a contract to ensure a legal procedure must be settled.

7.2.4 Communication mix components

As the potential communication channels were described, in the next step the two main communication mix components indicated what that ICS should particularly focus on. After an analysis of the target group, it became clear that social media is the main source of information, followed by family and friends recommendations.

As a result, two main components of public relations (PR) and digital marketing were selected and discussed with the client. Each component contributes differently to the overall communication concept. Digital marketing is good at visually communicating the concept, whereas PR can provide a better explanation in text. Conforming to the field research results, ICS needs to prioritize these components, in order to reach the desired target market.

Digital marketing and public relations

Regarding the component of digital marketing, social media plays a significant role in information sources amongst Chinese travellers in Bali; therefore it is seen as a critical point for representing ICS. Another advantage is that an online advertisement is less expensive than traditional advertisement, and aimed at a younger audience, who are willing to organize their own tour. Media familiarization tour such as the invitation of a known Chinese travel blogger to participate and share the experience in Chinese media by writing an article or making a short video would potentially generate a positive presence which is needed to become known in Chinese travel communities. Shareable material and the emotional pull can become instantly visible to the mass audience, capturing interests of the target group. Moreover, an initiative to cooperate with the online Chinese travel agents like Ctrip, Tuniu and Ly, in working together to build a successful digital campaign should contribute to overall positive media presence of ICS.

Regarding travel purchase behaviour process, PR and digital marketing can be seen as inevitable in every TPB process stage. As it is shown in the field research, a traveller can be influenced by social media in need of a recognition phase, as well as information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and during the trip. For example, knowing that during the decision making stage the target group is mostly concerned about safety and the services offered, a communication message in the video as well as on ICS official website should highlight these particular aspects, stressing the confidence in expertise working only with reliable partners who can ensure high safety standards.

PR can be managed in person or virtually, and therefore the component is highly interconnected with digital marketing. The purpose of PR is to become known as a professional and reliable tour

operator amongst Chinese outbound travel communities, where good relationships between the ICS, individuals, Bali tourism board and Chinese tourism stakeholders should be constantly maintained or improved. PR is responsible for maintaining a positive presence with a potential customer in person or online. Also, PR is responsible for dealing with a negative customer's complaints as well as publicity such as outbreaks of diseases or acts of terrorism, where ICS needs to stand out as presenting the best interests of the company as well as the destination.

In line with digital marketing, public relations during the TPB process should assist every traveller personally, depending on their wishes, needs or demands of services or products. As indicated by several travellers during the field research, they would rather like to have online personal assistance, to which they can refer with a specific travel related questions prior or during their trip.

PR and digital marketing should be simultaneously used addressing a traveller, whether it is a first, median or the final stage of the TPB process with a respective message while remaining consistent. As mentioned previously, PR can vitally contribute towards promoting the concept, increasing relationships with tourism stakeholders and convincing a customer for travel purchase to be made. Being aware that a traveller with friends is more often influenced by tour guides once at the destination, ICS human resource department should issue training for their tour guides about independent Chinese target groups and how to promote the newly developed concept to capture their attention. Furthermore, participation in annual China international travel market (CITM) could be considered. CITM takes place in November 2017 in Shanghai and Kunming. Participation costs amount to €2,965 for renting a booth, excluding additional costs. That would potentially help the company to become known in Chinese travel guides, by establishing a partnership with local tour operators.

7.2.5 Do: Design and test

A creative design must reflect the chosen concept of adventure seekers in Bali. 'Submerge yourself in an unseen beauty of Bali!' and 'off the beaten tourist track' are the two main catchwords that the concept is based on. The slogans illustrate the campaign and the mood board. A mood board was created to visualize the ambience that represents the concept, which can be found in *Appendix O*. In order to be prepared for the high season, a test of the campaign should take place within the first quarter of 2017. The test would be made after a new representative video, as well as the adjustments on the website. An employee in sales department will be appointed to find several travellers via Qzone website who could be kindly requested to evaluate newly developed concept, based on aspects such as improvements in ICS official website, creativity in the video and representativeness in social network. Their feedback would potentially add some necessary input, in order to increase interests amongst the Chinese traveller community, particularly independent travellers. This way ICS will develop the knowledge about the market and gather some fresh ideas for the concept.

7.2.6 Final campaign

The final concept is established based on a pre-test and ready to be launched. The focus of the strategy is to target wealthy independent Chinese travellers with friends and partners without children. ICS will position itself as a premium tour operator, providing explicit knowledge in traveller's requirements for adventure-based product combination.

The concept will be raising awareness amongst Chinese outbound travellers about the niche tourism in Bali. The adjusted communication concept will be initiated in the first quarter of 2017, with a clear message that is particularly addressed to their target group, with active promotion based on the dates of national holidays in China, which takes place in April and May, summer season and first week of October (CITM, 2016). Especially the promotion in the first quarter of 2017, including the official website, all major Chinese social network websites and video platform Youku require immediate presence in order to build brand awareness. The sooner the presence on the media will be established, the more chances that ICS will receive tour bookings, before the high season starts. The key message will consist of the slogan: 'Submerge yourself in an unseen beauty of Bali!' which is simple, rise curiosity and engages a traveller to explore. All the communication will be kept evenly under the same concept in every communication channel used, in order to maintain consistency. Furthermore, identifying a stage of travel purchase behaviour will allow approaching a customer with a respective message. For example, being aware that a potential traveller tends to less rely on structural planning, a message can encourage value in spontaneous getaway deals, targeting with a young explorer's mind-set based message.

In addition to adventure tours, the communication concept will stress a possibility for a romantic and exceptional dinner for a couple or group of friends, which is presented as a unique chance to get close to an unseen beauty of Bali. At the same time it is a bonding and unforgettable experience for the travellers. The customer will be given an opportunity to choose between several options depending on preferred type of a product. Thus, a customer is accompanied by ICS throughout every stage of travel purchase behaviour process, based on the consistency and expertise in the field. This will ensure a competitive advantage over the other tour operators, which are purely focusing on mass tourism locations and activities.

7.2.7 Final budget

This paragraph will provide budget calculations in terms of previously given information regarding the adjustments in the communication concept. Some of the activities in Bali are already promoted in the ICS official website. Nevertheless, some changes in the campaign are necessary in order to present the company as the most fitting Chinese target market. As per consultation with the commissioning client, estimated deduction for marketing purposes from headquarters in Bangkok for ICS operation office in Bali, is approximately €13,000 annually. Costs are directly related to attracting an independent Chinese traveller as well as adjustments on the ICS website, contracting Chinese native trainees, creating the video and funding Chinese travel community blogger's visit to Bali. A breakdown of the costs involved can be found below.

Cost	Description	Amount	Source
Adjustments in the website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Add a video platform -Input of interactive software -Adjustments of new design in the current ICS website -Add new information (Photos, videos) -Translations from English to Mandarin language 	<p>From €320/year incl. VAT</p> <p>€9 x 5 (approx. pages) = €45</p>	<p>digibali.com/en/ (2016) Website package 05 (Incl. Domain name, web hosting 500MB, Professional web design, content management system, unlimited pages, email form, reservation form, flash banner, module hit counter, latest news, 2 languages)</p> <p>translationpapersbali.com (2016)</p>
Create an account on each of the Chinese social network websites: Youku, Meipai, QQ live, WeChat, QQ, WangWang, QZone, Renren	No additional staff or costs needed, since it can be done by appointed ICS IT department employee	-	-
Training for 2 native Chinese students	Manage and maintain social platforms, communicate with customers, help colleagues with the translations	Might vary between €100 and €300 times 2 students (Depending on the contract, optional daily allowances for food, accommodation, transportation, or monthly fee)	ICS traineeship contract (2016)
Professional video editor	Creating an interactive video content for the website - compile a professional representative video for the newly developed concept	€40 x 8hrs = €320 (one time)	valoso.com/blog/ (2016)
Bloggers experience in Bali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1x return flight ticket Beijing (PEK) - Denpasar (DPS) -Accommodation (Including breakfast) -1x Transportation (Pick up from the airport, full day transfers) -3x Meals (Lunch, 2 times dinner at hotel + dinner at isolated Uluwatu beach) -3x activities (Volcano climbing, jungle trekking, cycling in Kintamani) -1x Tour guide for 3 days 	<p>-Approx. €420 (Price calculated for mid. February, 2017)</p> <p>-€105 x 3 nights = €315</p> <p>-€50 x 4 days = €200</p> <p>-€70 x 3 = €210</p> <p>-Approx. €150</p> <p>-€30 x 3 days = €120</p>	<p>skyscanner.co.id (2016)</p> <p>ICS contracting rate (2016)</p> <p>Trikayana transportation company, contracting rate (2016)</p> <p>ICS contracting rate, (2016)</p> <p>ICS contracting rate, (2016)</p> <p>ICS tour guide, 2016</p>
Total costs for 2017:		€2,100 + (€2,400 to €7,200)	

Table 7.2.7: Final budget

The adjustments in official ICS travel website amount to a fee of €365 recurring yearly costs. After the formal translation to Mandarin language was made, further adjustments can be achieved by an appointed employee in cooperation with a native Chinese student that will be contracted for the

traineeship in the marketing department in ICS Bali. Other tasks, like creating an account on each social media website can be done by the current employee working in the sales department. As mentioned earlier, trainees from Saxion University could do their traineeship in the company as a part of their curriculum. Depending on the contract with the university, trainees would receive an allowance, which is a maximum of €300 a month. Moreover, in order to introduce the new concept of ICS to the public, a high definition video must be created. It is estimated that to finalize a video would require 8 hours of work, resulting in approximately €320. Besides, investment in blogger's invitation to Bali, including flight tickets, accommodation, meals, a guide service, activities and transportation in total were estimated to €1,250. The total costs for implementing the new communication plan were estimated at €2,100. Additionally, Chinese native students could help with the language when translating and communicating with the customers, therefore would be entitled for a monthly allowance. The allowance could vary from €2,400 to €7,200 a year, depending on the contract with the university. Besides that, there is no additional costs for a FTE involved.

7.2.8 Employee deployment

A complete illustration of employee deployment in marketing communication plan for 2017 can be found in *Appendix R*. Employee 1 is responsible for setting the objectives and monitoring the progress throughout the 2017. Increasing adventure tourism awareness amongst Chinese travelers will be monitored by an online questionnaire at the end of every quarter, which will be published on the official ICS website. After every booking made, the system will evaluate group composition during the travel. In order to evaluate the percentage of increase in sales, the data will be compared with records of 2016. At the end of the year, in November 2017, the employee will deliver a presentation in the ICS office in Bali, presenting the results that were achieved during the three quarters of 2017.

Employee 1 in cooperation with trainee 1 is responsible for testing the campaign in January 2017. They will approach potential travelers on QQ live by asking to evaluate ICS newly developed communication concept. Trainee 1 will be appointed to collect the feedback from online social media during January, 2017. In total 32 hours during the first month are dedicated for this task. Based on the customer's feedback, the staff will proceed with necessary adjustments in the newly developed marketing communication concept, which will be made in the following month after the test in February, 2017. Besides these tasks, both of the staff will be responsible to find a travel blogger, who is experienced and willing to write an article about the ICS organized tour in Bali. In exchange employee 1 in cooperation with trainee 1 will compile a round trip tour, including the transportation, a guide, accommodation, meals and activities. Employee 1 will settle a contract to ensure a legal procedure and mutual agreement of both sides. Afterwards, trainee 1 task will be to translate it to Mandarin language. Additionally, during Chinese blogger visit in Bali, the staff will supervise the trip, to ensure that everything goes according to the plan. In the 3rd and the 4th week of February and March 2017, Employee 1 and trainee 1 will be responsible for contacting a potential DMC in China for sponsorship-focused partnership. The staff will actively participate in presenting

their new concept for a potential partner, who would be willing to promote the company in exchange to a negotiated commission percentage.

Employee 2 is responsible for contacting a professional video editor who could compile a short video. The search for a video editor needs to start prior to the Chinese blogger's visit to Bali, in order to be able to start the campaign on time and to capture a blogger in the video. Once the video is created, the same employee will take care of the promotion by actively sharing it on different social media channels. In the meantime, the same employee must contact several IT specialists in Bali, who would be able to adjust the design of the current website into interactive visual content. After 3 weeks of adjustments, a website developer together with a native Chinese trainee will translate the website in a proper Mandarin language. Once it is done, a second trainee will re-read it, in order to minimize any translation mistakes.

Besides the other tasks, trainee 2 will be responsible for creating an account in each Chinese social media website, further maintaining the communication with the customer. It must be done at the end of 1st quarter, once the video was finalized, in order to appeal better to customers. An appointed employee or a trainee should regularly upload the news and actively engage with the target audience. Timeframe for responses to the customers should be 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the afternoon, preferably every week throughout 2017. Employee 2 and trainee 2 will be also responsible for approaching editors of travel websites as well as travel review websites, In order to promote the concept. This task will be assigned during the first quarter of 2017.

7.2.9 Check: Launch, maintain, monitor

The previous actions needs to be monitored, in order to determine any points of improvement. The Chinese social media websites that were mentioned in the previous paragraph should be reviewed during working days, a few times per day. Visitors need to be monitored on social media, as well as ensuring personal communication, making sure that the company is sufficiently informative and appreciates customer's feedback.

Furthermore, employee 1 together with trainee 1 during the first quarter will make sure that the trip for a blogger was successfully arranged. In order to avoid any disappointments, an inspection with suppliers should take place before signing the agreement. An arrangement of Chinese blogger visit to Bali should take place within the 1st quarter of 2017 at the latest.

After the needed adjustments based on customer's feedback, the campaign could be launched in the beginning of the second quarter of 2017. The supplier's opinion about the campaign is highly valued. Therefore, once the contracts were signed, employee 1 in cooperation with trainee 1 will initiate a brainstorm conversation with every supplier on a monthly basis, in order to check which improvements can be made regarding the website and the composition of the promotion (See *Appendix R*). Nevertheless, suppliers should be encouraged to share their feedback and maintain communication on a regular basis.

7.3 Act: Evaluation of the results

After monitoring the process, results have to be evaluated, in order to implement necessary adjustments or reformulate the entire strategy. To conclude whether the concept was successful, the results should be compared to the objectives that were set at the beginning of the campaign.

Evaluation by employee 1 will take place at the end of every quarter. Success in PR can be measured in a few ways, for instance appointing an employee to track the communication channels that ICS publicity appears the most. Also, Google Analytics software can help to evaluate percentage of increase whether a decline in number of ICS official website visitors. Second objective will be evaluated by asking customer directly about the arrangement of their travel group by means of a survey, which will be evaluated by employee 1 every three months, in order to draw the conclusions.

The third objective will be evaluated by company's data of the total tours sold. In case of an unsatisfactory outcome, the concept should be revised to concrete steps, identifying what are the causes. Based on the results, the client then will decide whether the concept needs to be terminated or which actions should be taken, in order to successfully maintain the concept.

7.3.1 Conclusion

Taking into account the steps of the financial budget, the researcher can conclude that required investment for the adjustments can be used within the annual budget and deducted for marketing purposes. The communication concept can be handled by the current staff of ICS, additionally hiring 2 trainees for 2 semesters what equals total of one year. Instead of hiring 2 FTEs, the contract with Saxion University trainees or any other cooperating university will save valuable time and costs for the client, taking into account that the contracts are temporarily and can be terminated at any given time.

All of the steps in marketing communication planning indicate achievable items, which overall aim to modify aspects that influence independent Chinese travellers during their TPB process. In conclusion, the given communication concept will help to achieve the objectives. Successful use of marketing in Chinese society plays a significant role, thus the creative use of it will help ICS to become known in Chinese media as a niche tour operator providing a unique travel product in Bali. This way ICS will solve their management problem and potentially will achieve a high return on investment. After answering the central and sub-questions, management question is presented:

How can ICS Travel Group adjust its communication strategy that would influence Chinese traveller purchase decision to choose ICS as their tour operator?

Taking into account travellers profile and their preferences in travel behaviour, ICS should mainly focus on becoming known brand within Chinese travel market. After a successfully sold product, travellers will spread a positive word to their relatives as well as in their virtual environment about the image and experience that ICS creates for their customers. Awareness of the brand will give more confidence in independent Chinese travel purchase. Spreading the right word in a rapidly expanding market will bring an inevitable success for the company.

Afterword

Opportunity to write my thesis in Bali was an opportunity of a life time that I could never imagine to happen. Working with a different top-end hotels and different suppliers, I have realized how tourism is embedded in Bali's hospitality industry and that I have an opportunity to analyse it from a closer look.

Writing the thesis outside European Union was truly challenging but a rewarding experience. During my 3rd year I started to think where I could prepare myself for a life after the university. First thoughts that I could ask for a permission to write my thesis in the company I did my traineeship have occurred once I have arrived in Bali. As it turned out, I could have started to organize the whole project earlier, in order to avoid the postponement that happened afterwards. The reason for it was a lack of organization that did not go well since a few unfinished exams and portfolios have interfered with starting the thesis on time, thus I needed to postpone it for a half a year. Next time I would plan differently, by first finishing the exams and reports before starting any big scale project like the thesis.

When I first encountered Chinese travellers I did not know much about this particular travel market. However, by working with ICS and doing some personal research, this particular market has captured my attention with the future potential. After then, I have realized to what extent this project can be valuable for the industry in the future, and that was one of the motivation aspects that convinced me to do the research about this market. I knew that the information about the market I will gain while working on this report will serve me in any branch of tourism sector that I would choose to work after my studies.

First, during the thesis process I wanted to proceed further by filling every chapter with loads of information, thinking that every source would bring a value to my project. Sometimes it was difficult to evaluate objectively my own work in order to make some improvements. My first examiner, Inge Hermann, helped me to realize a weakness in focusing on the topic and expressing myself clearly. I have learned how it is important to start structuring the work instead of working on a different pieces at the time what at the end improved overall productivity via discipline. I have realized that in order to finish this project I need to become more patient, attentive and think independently with every paragraph that I write. The decision to skip the university by only working in the company have imbalanced my study routine. I learned how it is important to stick with one project at the time. This lesson will always help me to make the progress in working on one thing at the time.

Research teacher, Rienk van Marle as well as the first examiner were very helpful by listening to my case and giving me a few valuable tips that I should change in my assignment. Nevertheless, actions such as cutting hours in my part time job, long hours of work every day in addition to work during the weekends have paid off and I was able to pass the TPD from the second time.

The contacts with my client were not often, but informative and efficient to get the information I needed, in order to proceed with the work. Most importantly I have learned how to navigate wishes and expectations of the two stakeholders involved that would reach a satisfactory level for both sides. With some guidance from my first examiner I was able to combine it with the client's wishes

in my own perspective. Sometimes, getting in contact with the client was nerve-racking since I needed a response as quick as possible, in order to make the progress. Partially, the anxiety occurred from many questions that were unclear combined to a time pressure. I notice a mistake that I did by not providing myself a clearly written work division, including the time frame necessary to complete every task. I have underestimated literature research part, without objectively evaluating myself in this project. I have learned that although I am faced with a familiar task, I should never feel confident in advance before drawing a plan, for carrying a task. For example, compiling a questionnaire due to a different language took me longer than expected, although I could have anticipated these difficulties earlier.

Once I felt lack of motivation, I kept telling to myself that the achievement will be rewarding. Finally, I was able to reach a level a discipline that helped me to stay focused, although sometimes a good rest was the best choice, in order to come back with a fresh mind. I have learned that although sometimes I felt frozen on certain topics, I should continue by giving more hours for this project until the repetition becomes a habit.

Current needs in tourism industry are expanding rapidly. In order to catch up with an upcoming markets, one have to be sincerely research the possibilities that a certain market provides by constantly improving a knowledge about it. Nevertheless, I found this topic incredibly far-reaching in tourism industry, since besides the given facts I personally believe that this outbound travel market will further expand into a major leader in tourism field within the coming decades. Although, the research is limited in external validity by lacking a qualitative insights such as in-depth interview, this thesis can be used as a guidance to the other tourism stakeholders, similarly visioning a potential of personalized service for a dynamic Chinese travel market. The gathered information can be used as an input for a larger projects, clarifying a reason behind different tourism key-role aspects amongst Chinese independent travellers. Likewise, this report revealed an underdeveloped information about Chinese travellers increasingly adapting a pattern of their travelling. Travellers are densely interested in a variety of tourism alternatives as this report provides a field research-based proof. A models that help to understand their travel purchase behaviour were included in this report. It can be expected that a majority of the travellers, who have not been abroad yet, will be increasingly affected via different information tools that address a specific needs for travelling. I believe that this report provides new insights for tour operators on how to capture an attention of independent outbound Chinese travellers by offering a personalized service. The stakeholders in tourism industry might find it extremely important to get to know more about the way the travellers look at different tourism aspects, which might seem totally different for already sophisticated travel markets from western countries. The analysis of the current travellers help to better understand what effect it will have on the future travellers. Furthermore, the reader can use some up-to-date ideas regarding relevant independent travel topic that were presented in this report.

In general, I truly appreciate the opportunity to have my graduation paper written about Chinese upcoming market, where gained knowledge will serve hospitality and tourism sector in the future.

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Appendix A: Chinese traveller arrivals

Chinese traveller arrivals to top city destinations

Absolute growth in thousands, 2013 - 2023

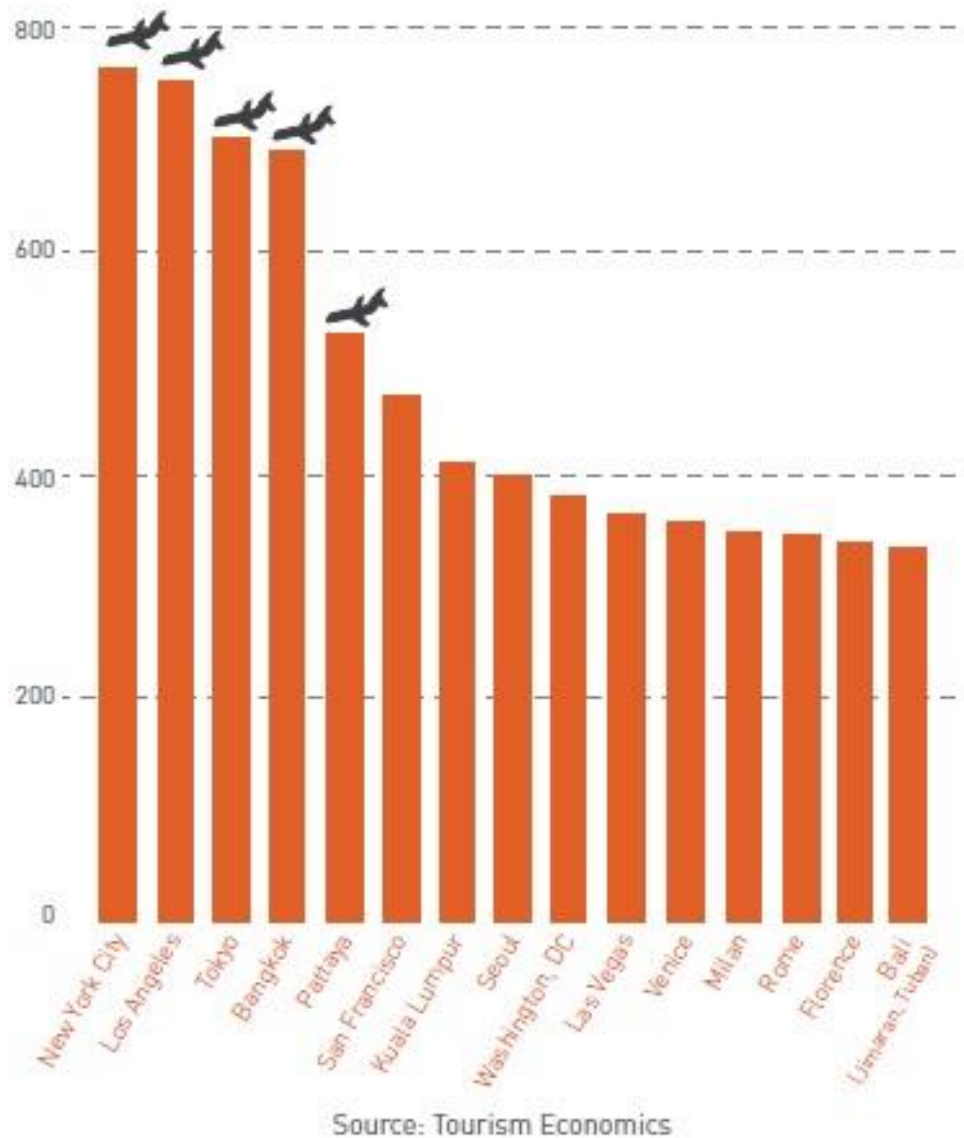


Table A.1: Chinese traveller arrivals to top city destinations (CITM, 2016)

Appendix B: Search Methods

The following paragraph is focusing on describing most relevant methods of literature research in a most efficient approach. All the online theory collected in this assignment was evaluated with AAOCC criteria. The example of the evaluation can be found in the following *Appendix C: AAOCC Criteria*. Credible online databases were used for the literature review, in order to improve validity of the assignment. The list of these search engines can be found in Table B.1.

- www.saxionbibliotheek.nl
- www.scholar.google.com
- www.sciencedirect.com
- www.ebscohost.com

Search engine	Ebsco host	Google scholar	Science direct
Search term			
1. Decision-making process	99,900	1,740,000	970,000
Purchase behaviour in tourism context	55,000	800,000	460,000
Travel purchase behaviour model	60,000	765,000	24,000
2. Independent Chinese traveller			
Independent traveller profile	12,000	42,000	566,000
Chinese tourism in Bali	34,000	123,000	155,000
Chinese independent traveller profile	39,000	200,000	40,000
Chinese traveller decision making process	14,000	142,000	30,000
3. Communication strategy			
Communication strategies in tourism context	17,000	27,000	16,000
Marketing communications	15,000	14,000	80,000

Table B.1 Visualized search engines

The search terms were used in different search engines, mostly leading to the desired and relevant knowledge for this assignment. To illustrate the number of hits for certain topics, example from different search engines are represented in the table.

Besides, hospitality and research books of Brotherton (2008) and Verhoeven (2015) were in support throughout the assignment. As mentioned in Chapter 2: Theoretical framework, Snowball method helped to find relevant information, navigating through the sources.

Appendix C: AAOCC Criteria

The selected literature source were assessed to ensure it is valid, credible, objective, up-to-date, complete and relevant (Ngo, 2014). It could be concluded that approximately, 80% of the sources are based on academic articles, therefore meets the criteria mentioned earlier. To meet the currency criteria, sources since 2005 were used. Nevertheless, to explain the origins of the theory or to compare the given theories, sources before 2005 were included as well. Mainly, summaries of the articles were used to paraphrase or quote in order to use the findings for thesis report. As a result, obtained knowledge was translated to theoretical framework part. Examples of evaluation of sources:

Source A

<i>Source:</i>	Prayag, G., & Hosany, S. (2013). When Middle East meets West: Understanding motives and perceptions of young tourists from United Arab Emirates
<i>Authority</i>	The article is published on Elsevier, Tourism management and leading international scientific journal. Mr Girish Prayag has obtained PH.D degree and works as lecturer of marketing at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. Mr. Sameer Hosany Ph.D is an Associate Professor of Marketing at Holloway, University of London. The knowledge of both authors makes them credible, since both are specializing on consumer emotions, tourist behaviour and destination marketing.
<i>Accuracy</i>	The article meets the criteria accuracy to a high extend. The authors are listed, the purpose of the article is explained, the article refers regularly to used sources, also including examples in practice. Therefore, information is rather valid and reliable.
<i>Objectivity</i>	The objective of the article is to identify differences between Middle East and west of young tourists, thus it analyses different cultural motives for travelling that could be applied for this thesis assignment. All the researches are well-structured regarding the content, and based on the theory what ensures objectivity of the article.
<i>Currency</i>	The report is written in 2013, therefore the report represents high currency and validation.
<i>Coverage</i>	The article advises on differences between eastern and western countries, implying push-pull theory, luxury image and destination image from both perspectives, therefore relevant for the thesis topic. The article is not focused on Chinese travelers, yet it provides insights on relevant theory and therefore is useful for the thesis.

Table C.1 AAOCC analysis (Prayag & Hosany, 2013)

Source B

<i>Source:</i>	Cathy H.C. Hsu, & Huang, S. (2016). Reconfiguring Chinese cultural values and their tourism implications. <i>Tourism Management</i> , ii.
<i>Authority</i>	The article is published on Science direct database, <i>Tourism management</i> and leading international scientific journal. Mrs Cathy Hsu and Sam Huang both are tourism management PhD professors based in Hong Kong and South Australia.
<i>Accuracy</i>	Cited on many other research on Chinese cultural values in tourism.
<i>Objectivity</i>	Analyses different perspectives in traditional and modern Chinese tourism, draws the link between these values and travel behavior.
<i>Currency</i>	Highly current
<i>Coverage</i>	The article advice a timely update on the present values systems in China, therefore relevant when analyzing the impact on shift in tourism.

Table C.2 AAOCC analysis (Cathy, Hsu & Huang, 2016)

Source C

<i>Source:</i>	Schmoll, G. A. (1977). <i>Tourism promotion</i> . London: Tourism International Press.
<i>Authority</i>	One of the first tourism marketing pioneers who has developed 'Travel decision making model'.
<i>Accuracy</i>	The theory is applied in numerous articles, regarding travel decision making.
<i>Objectivity</i>	Social psychologist and tourism expert who was one of the first theorist to make a link between decision making and tourism field.
<i>Currency</i>	Although the model is outdated, it is still used in current tourism sources.
<i>Coverage</i>	Highlights characteristics that were never applied in any tourism model such as personal and social determinants, where segmentation between the types of traveller, their motivations and their needs occurs.

Table C.3 AAOCC analysis (Schmoll, 1977)

Appendix D: Exploring definitions of decision-making

1) Decision-making consumer behaviour, explored by tourism research

<i>Author</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Aspect</i>
<i>Belch (1998)</i>	The process and activities people engage in when searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services so as to satisfy their needs and desires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Process of activities ❖ Satisfy needs and desires ❖ Search, select, purchase, use, evaluate dispose

<i>Schmoll (1977)</i>	Tourist is a rational decision maker within his/her capacity and obtained information. While making a decision traveller is affected by four variables: Travel stimuli, personal and social determinants, external variables, characteristics and features of destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Advertising, Travel literature, Suggestions from travelers, Travel trade recommendations ❖ Socio-economic status, Personality features, Social influence and aspirations, Attitudes and values, Motivation ❖ Confidence in travel intermediary, Image of destination service, Previous travel experience, Assessment of risks, Constraints of time and costs ❖ Cost/value relations Attractions/amenities offered, Attractions/amenities offered, Range of travel opportunities
<i>Um and Crompton (1990)</i>	Attitudes play an important role in destination decision process. After the generic decision has been made, choice of destination should be conceptualized as the result of interaction of perceived constraints such as time, money, and destination image.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ External inputs – stimulus of marketing, symbols, and social ❖ Internal inputs – personal characteristics, motives, values, attitudes ❖ Awareness set follows evoked set
<i>Woodside, MacDonald, & Burford, 2004</i>	Decision-making process can be seen as a useful mapping and description of flows of thoughts, decisions, events, and outcomes within specific contexts in leisure travel. Tourist choices are not always rational, where interactions by the travel members of travel party play an important role in decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Demographics and lifestyles, pre-framing , external factors, leisure choice alternatives ❖ Influence of friends, on-site situations, key activity drivers, planned-done activities versus unplanned-done.
<i>Kurniawan, Au, Zeng & Tseng, 2002</i>	The consumer decision-making process refers to the process used by consumers to make selections when faced with different product alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A process of making selections ❖ Depending on many alternatives

Table D.1 Definition analysis

2) Independent traveller, explored by tourism research

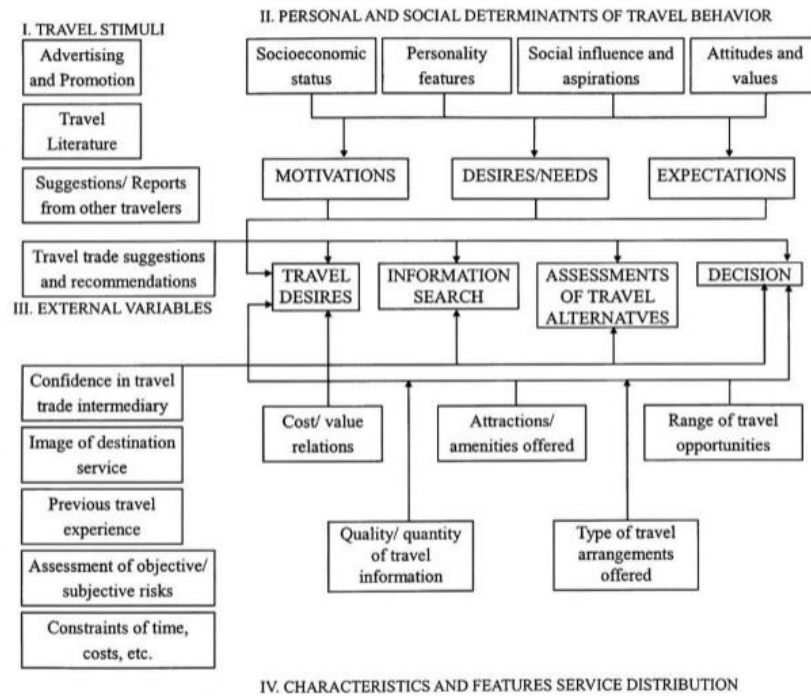
Author	Definition	Aspect
Swarbrooke and Horner (1999)	Independent tourists differs from the mass tourists in terms of experiencing the destination rather than just visiting, by deeply engaging with local culture, and being attracted to destinations off the beaten tourist tracks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prolonged experience ❖ Exploring local culture ❖ Unexplored destinations ❖ Meaning of experience
Burkart and Medlik (1981)	The modern tourist is increasingly mobile and enjoys greater freedom and Independence than tourists of the past.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Different than mass tourism ❖ Dynamic ❖ Enjoys freedom
Wilson & Harris (2006)	Independent travel offer tourists an alternative 'lens' to examine their lives, away from spouses, family members or domestic responsibilities; a moment in which they are able to find time and space for their own reflections and self-development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Being away from domestic responsibilities ❖ Self-reflection
Kontogeorgopoulos (2004)	Tourism supply and demand is in transformation towards more independent, active, individual and flexible forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Active ❖ Independency ❖ Flexibility

Table D.2 Definition analysis

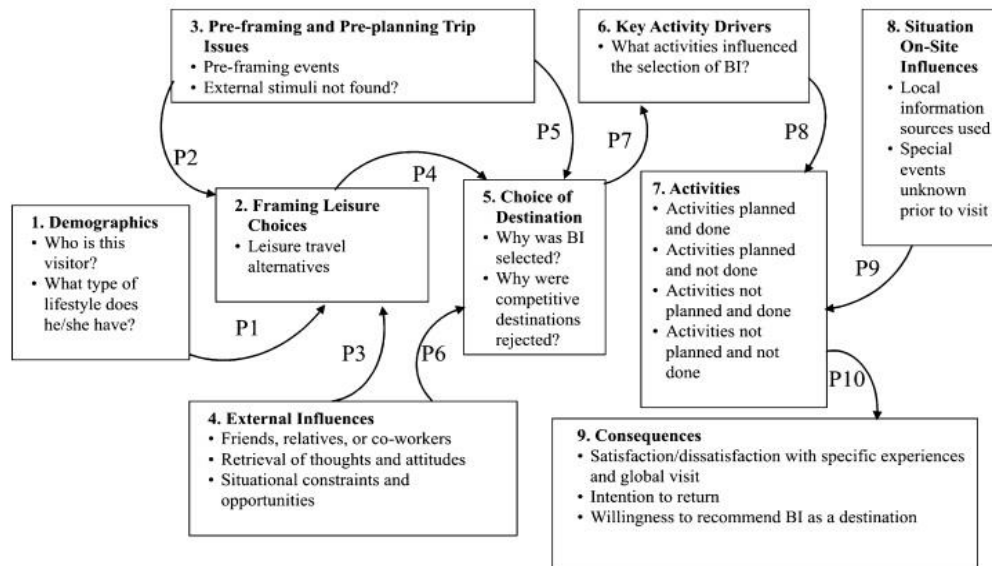
Appendix E: Theoretical framework models

1) Travel Decision making model by Schmoll (1977)

2) Leisure Travel model by Woodside, MacDonald & Burford (2004)



Source: Schmoll, 1977



Adapted from Woodside, MacDonald, and Burford 2004

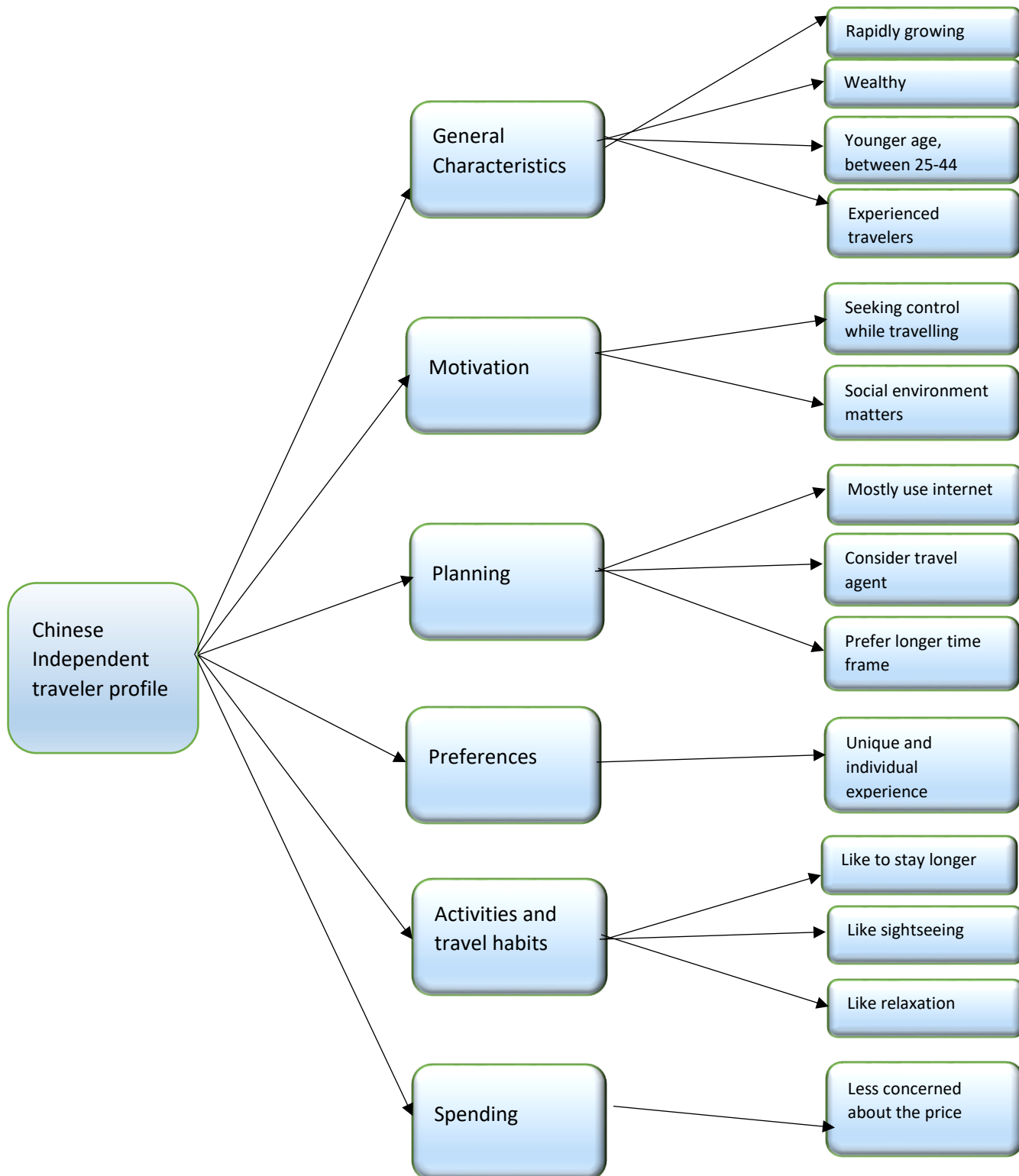
Theory not only describes the components involved in TPB process but suggest a propositions in a simple way. Propositions shows potential influences of different variables, necessary for developing guiding questions in TPB process. The summary of each proposition can be found below.

- P1 suggests demographic and lifestyle affect the alternative leisure choices.
- P2 suggests different information sources, advertisement, unplanned events affect framing the alternative leisure choice, however the part lacks personal motivation.
- P3 recognize influence of external factors, mainly word-of-mouth effect from friends, relatives, colleagues, their thoughts, experiences and opinions.
- P4 indicate how features and benefits from previous P's help to make a choice.
- P5 suggests influence of advertisement and other information source reshaping the decision.
- P6 suggests external influences has influence of framing the choice as well as making final decision.
- P7 Suggests key activities that help to solidify the choice.
- P8 Key activities affect what is: planned-done; planned-undone; unplanned-done; and unplanned-undone. Planned-done activities typically are key activity drivers.
- P9 Propose that traveler learn about different information and events while in destination.
- P10 concludes whether it 'meet' or 'exceed' the expectations.

Appendix F: Chinese independent traveller profile

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>
➤ General points	Rapidly growing, wealthy segment, feel comfortable travelling independently which tends to be more expensive, younger between 25–44 years old, yet have travelled, lived, worked or studied abroad.
➤ Motivation	Want control over their itineraries in order to engage with local culture. Different experience make them stand out in their social environment and “They see package travel as boring or superficial”.
➤ Planning	Mostly using internet, trust 3 rd parties' communication rather than marketing, mostly book via travel agent. Prefer longer planning time frames due to visa restrictions.
➤ Preferences	Unique, individual, niche activities.
➤ Activities and travel habits	Search more authentic and interactive experience, like to stay longer in the destination, prefer sightseeing, relaxation.
➤ Spending	Less concerned about the price, willing to spend on authentic goods.

Table F.1: Chinese independent traveller profile. State of Chinese Outbound travel (2014)



Appendix G: Chinese independent traveller profile

Dozens of articles about evolving modern Chinese traveller can be found in a numerous databases. Literature describe two epochs of Chinese outbound tourism: 1st period until 1980s, when tight restrictions and regulations was an obstacle for Chinese tourists to leave the country (Andreu, Claver and Quer, 2014). The 2nd period from 1980s indicates a radical changes in travelling patterns of Chinese travellers, which as a result grew to the largest outbound traveller market, surpassing major outbound markets of Germany and United States (Future of Chinese Traveller, 2014). Various large institutes around the globe such as McKinsey & Company, investigate this particular phenomena, looking for clues, how the future of Chinese tourism will look like (Atsmon, Magni, & Li, 2012).

Chinese traveller's growth in Bali in coming years is expected to surpass the major outbound Australian market, reaching growth of 37 percent in 2015 (The central statistics agency, 2015). Bali Island in 2015 has received 642 thousand Chinese travellers, accounting for 20.6 percent of total travellers, staying in Bali on average 8.7 days, while the main Australian market nearly 23 percent, staying on average 9.3 days (BTB, 2015). While remaining the second source market visiting Bali after Australia, Chinese travellers are accounted as the largest spenders worldwide, spending an average EUR1,240 per person per trip (V. Trivett, 2013). The phenomena of a shift in major tourism market calls for attention of various stakeholders involved in Bali's tourism sector. Analysing further, several reasons can be identified, contributing to the rising number of Chinese travellers in "paradise on earth" island, called Bali.

Bali remains as the dominant destination in Indonesia, which hosts majority of international tourists and infrastructure (Badan Pusan Statistik, 2014). In 2015, an increase in Chinese travellers of a 19 percent from 2014, contributed for launching direct flights from Shanghai in China with Denpasar in Bali (Garuda Indonesia, 2016). Besides, after terrorist attacks in 2002 and 2005, Bali Tourism Board in cooperation with government of Indonesia implemented strategies such as 'market diversification into potential new regional areas and niche markets, effective engagement of technology and social media platforms and focus on quality consumer service and products' (Nanda & Hargreaves, 2013; Putra, 2010).

In addition to that, extensive discounting and development into relatively new China market demonstrated to be successful strategies (BTB, 2015). For example, instead to rely on "sun, surf and sand" or cultural tourism, lately another option was developed to identify niche markets (BTB 2015; Putra, 2010). Entrepreneurs started focusing on spa, wellness eco and cooking tourism including medical tourism reshaping Bali's image, this way influencing various segments of travellers from China to pursue their tailor-made "dream holidays" in Bali.

Chinese Outbound Tourists' Personal Monthly Income in 2014

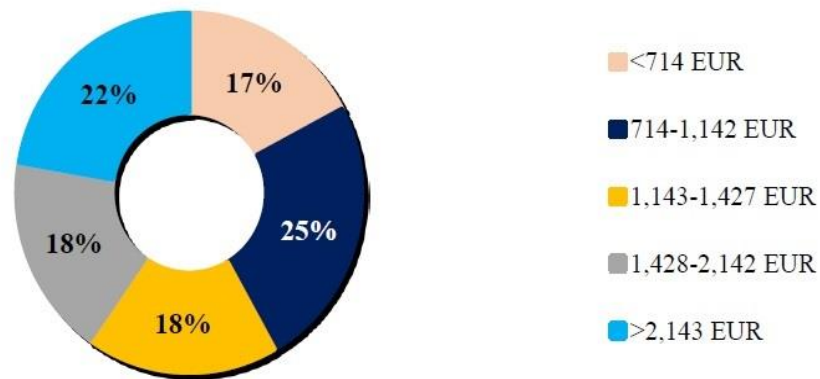
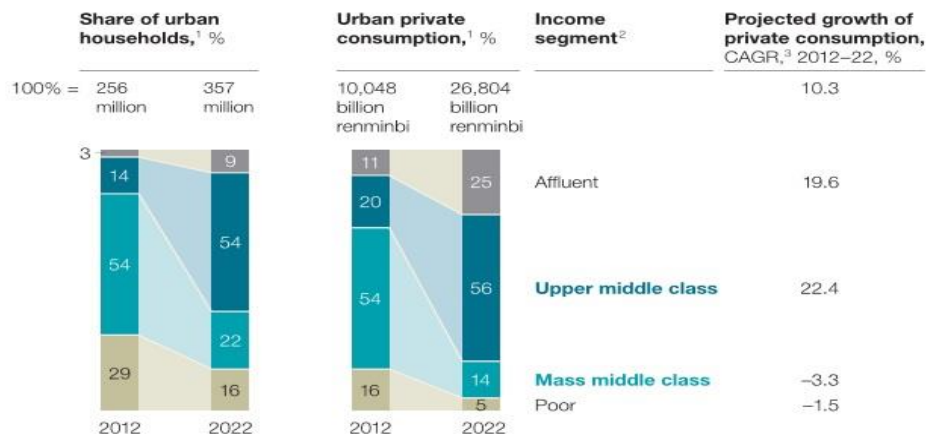


Figure G.1: Chinese personal monthly income. (Hernandez, Bahut, Wang, & Garcia ,2015)

The magnitude of China's middle-class growth is transforming the nation.



¹Figures may not sum to 100%, because of rounding; data for 2022 are projected.

²Defined by annual disposable income per urban household, in 2010 real terms; affluent, >229,000 renminbi (equivalent to >\$34,000); upper middle class, 106,000 to 229,000 renminbi (equivalent to \$16,000 to \$34,000); mass middle class, 60,000 to 106,000 renminbi (equivalent to \$9,000 to \$16,000); poor, <60,000 renminbi (equivalent to <\$9,000).

³Compound annual growth rate.

Figure G.2 China's middle-class growth(Atsmon, Magni, & Li,2012)

2) An independent traveller

Even though some characteristics were match with a backpacker travellers, according to Tourism Western Australia (2008), independent traveller ought not to be mixed with a backpacker due to several reasons:

- ❖ Backpackers tend to look for budget accommodation and activities, while independent travellers are less concerned when it comes to the price. Therefore, backpacker travellers were not linked “most spending travellers worldwide” category group.
- ❖ Backpackers emphasize meeting other travellers, whereas independent traveller seeks for unique experience that make them stand out in their social environment.

Chinese travellers falls under several segments such as age, frequency in travelling, single versus package tours and super-rich travellers (Chinese outbound source (2014). Even though an overlap might be occurring often, Chinese outbound segment trend still remains a distinct.

Reasoning for independent traveller segment for this assignment can be found below:

- ❖ Most travelling is carried out in package tours, choose other mass-tourism focused companies.
- ❖ Often look for budget-friendly package deals, therefore is not a suitable target segment for ICS travel group.
- ❖ Group budget travelling provides limited opportunity for individual activities.
- ❖ Most activities involves sightseeing or shopping, whereas individual traveller tends to avoid mass tourism and seek for range of experiences.

Generally speaking findings indicate an inevitable rising segment of independent, middle-upper class Chinese traveller attracted to holidays in Bali, due to sun, surf and sand tourism, cultural activities, while as mentioned earlier diversification in wellness, food and adventure tourism is increasingly being recognized. They want to experience personalized west-travelling, bearing in mind other exotic island attributes, namely tropical climate, volcanoes, large-scale water activities. Package tour travellers are more traditional, coming from a small cities and are price sensitive, while individual tourists are less likely to make travel decision based on price, in order to satisfy their needs and represent their status and wealth back home (Arlt, 2006; Gerth, 2011). Taking that into account, entrepreneurs and tourism suppliers are increasingly adapting their business towards the Chinese travellers, in order to attract a profitable, highly educated, sophisticated and different experience than mass travel seeking customer.

3) List of National public holidays

 List of National Public holidays of China in 2017

Day	Date	Holiday	Comments
Sunday	January 01	New Years Day	
Monday	January 02	New Years Holiday	Public Holiday as New Years Day falls on a Sunday
Friday	January 27	Chinese New Year Eve	Eve of 1st lunar month
Saturday	January 28	Chinese New Year	1st day of 1st lunar month
Sunday	January 29	Chinese New Year	2nd day of 1st lunar month
Monday	January 30	Chinese New Year	3rd day of 1st lunar month
Tuesday	January 31	Chinese New Year	4th day of 1st lunar month
Wednesday	February 01	Chinese New Year Holiday	Compensated by Saturday 22 January
Thursday	February 02	Chinese New Year Holiday	Compensated by Saturday 4 February
Wednesday	March 08	Womens Day	All women can have a half day holiday
Sunday	April 02	Ching Ming	Qing Ming Jie, Tomb Sweeping Day or Mourning Day
Monday	April 03	Ching Ming Festival	Qing Ming Jie, Tomb Sweeping Day or Mourning Day
Tuesday	April 04	Ching Ming Festival	Compensated by Saturday 1 April
Monday	May 01	Labour Day	
Sunday	May 28	Dragon Boat Festival	
Monday	May 29	Dragon Boat Festival	
Tuesday	May 30	Dragon Boat Festival	Compensated by Saturday 27 May
Sunday	October 01	National Day	
Monday	October 02	National Day Holiday	
Tuesday	October 03	National Day Holiday	
Wednesday	October 04	Mid Autumn Festival	Moon Festival
Wednesday	October 04	National Day Holiday	
Thursday	October 05	National Day Holiday	
Friday	October 06	National Day Holiday	Compensated by Saturday 30 September
Saturday	October 28	Chung Yeung Festival	Double Ninth Festival or Dual-Yang Festival

Figure G.3: List of national public holidays of China 2017 (CITM, 2016)

Appendix H: Communication mix

1) Communication Mix

Advertising

Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor (Kotler et al. 2008). Advertising involves a one-way communication means and thus cannot provide much feedback (Kotler et al. 2008). Traditional advertising includes TV, radio, magazines, newspapers while modern advertising is known as 'online advertising' (Kotler et al. 2008).

Personal selling

Sales are about selling personally to the potential customer or business-to-business (B2B) entities. The communication, split into publics within the destination and outside the destination, can be direct via telephone, face-to-face, online applications or email (Kotler et al. 2008). Customer

Relationship Management (CRM) as a tool for personal selling is commonly used amongst customer-centric organizations (Morrison, 2013).

Public relations

Public relations are related to improving the relationships with individuals and other tourism stakeholders including activities such as news, speeches or public activities. Word-of-mouth remains as the most influencing tool sharing opinions about products or services in particular communities, therefore can be highly effective when convincing the potential customer to make a travel purchase. It includes accommodation providers, local people, travel guides, tour guides, street advertisement, local service operators, social media, mobile applications and other people. Tour operators can be a part of dialogue by interacting with people online (Kotler et al. 2008, Czinkota & Ronkainen 2012).

Sales promotion and Merchandising

Sales promotions and merchandising can be defined as short-term stimulus, for people to visit destination and specific communications techniques that are not included in other promotional components in various locations such as information centres, public terminals, attractions and accommodations (Kotler et al. 2008). DMO's are usually interested to sampling by means familiarizing with tours, and exhibition at travel shows (Morrison, 2013).

Digital marketing

Digital marketing is achieved via various information and communication technologies to connect with diverse audience, to promote specific destination (Kotler et al. 2008). The most important for DMO's to consider are: websites, e-mail, social network sites, traveller review sites, blogging and mobile application, since they are source of up-to-date information, immediately accessed by the customer. Other online travel communities, video and photo sharing platforms are widely being used by the tourism organizations, recognized as one of the most effective tools to inspire the traveller (Morrison, 2013). The most common digital platforms within Chinese market, where travellers gather to exchange experiences, look for information and book their tours can be found in the canvas below (Kantar Media CIC, 2016).

2) Chinese social media landscape



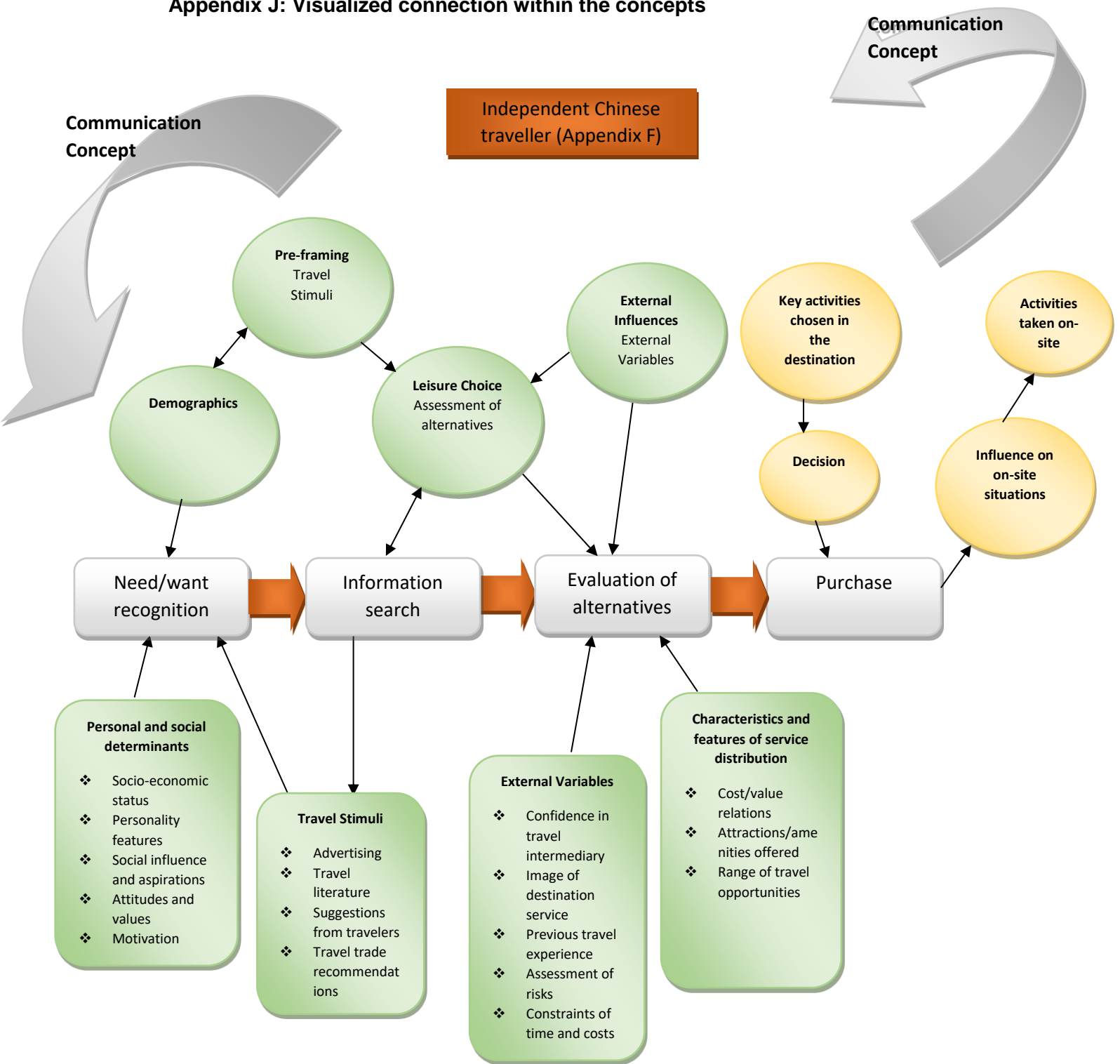
Figure H.1 China's social media landscape. Kantar Media CIC (2016, June)

Appendix I: Planning marketing communications

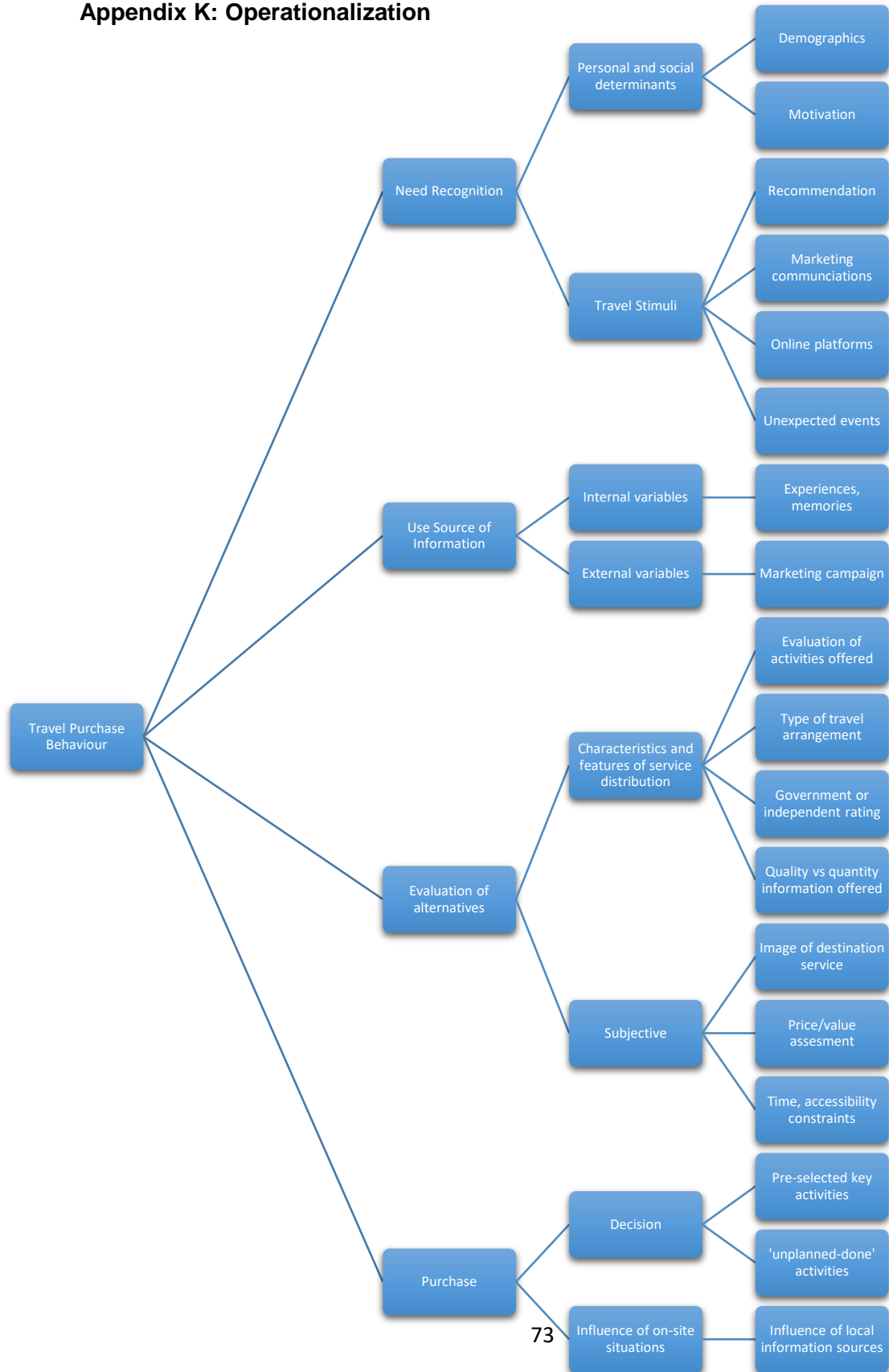


Table I.1: Planning marketing communication (Morrison, 2013)

Appendix J: Visualized connection within the concepts



Appendix K: Operationalization



Explanation of Operationalization:

Need recognition

Decision making begins from “internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need” (Higgins, 1994). An appealing destination reflects traveller emotions and opinions about the destination, delivering individual desires (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). Demographics (age, gender, education, income) and motivations shape the type of traveller, in other words segmentation of personal and social determinants (Schmoll, 1997; McGuigan & Foo, 2004). In tourism industry, people travel for different motivations and many authors see motivation as a major determinant of the tourists' behaviour. Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) after conducting various research studies, have recognized the importance of motivation in travelling and divided it into these categories: Cultural: Sightseeing, new culture. Physical: Relaxation, sun, exercise and health. Emotional: Nostalgia, romance, adventure, fantasy, spiritual fulfilment. Tourist: Status and exclusivity, fashion. Personal development: increasing knowledge by learning new skills. Personal: Visiting friends and relatives (VFR), need to satisfy others.

Travel stimuli is rather an external factor which triggers initial thoughts about a visit to a certain destination (Schmoll, 1977). It can be a recommendation in the literature, advertisement, an event, personal approach via e-mail, telephone, face-to-face, online applications, user generated video or photo sharing online platforms (Low, 2005). Unexpected or an unplanned event i.e. offer from a friend, work incentive in this phase could as well trigger a stimulus for travel (Woodside et al. 2004).

Information search

The 2nd dimension, “use source of information” begins when the need has been recognized, thus more information about the choice is further required to satisfy that need. The choice of tourism product and service depends on the information provided and used by the tourists (Mcintosh & Goeldner 1990). Sources of information can be split into internal sources based on past experiences for planning a repeat visit to destination (Dale & Brian, 1997). When past experiences are not present for travel purchase, search activities might extend to external factors, which includes different type of online and offline sources (Lee, O'Leary, & Morrison, 2013). Recent study found that friends as a reference group has a high influence towards decision making (Hsu, Kang, & Lam, 2006). Furthermore, traveller might use social network, brochures or package deals information issued by various marketing campaigns (See *Appendix H: Communication Mix*) or consider user-generated-content (UGC) traveller review like tripadvisor.com or any other user-dominated, micro-blogging or social media website (Twitter, Facebook, Blogger) (Lee et al., 2013). Inclusion of most popular Chinese travel review network websites can be found in *Appendix H*.

Evaluation of the alternatives

Following information search stage, Um and Crompton (1990) argues that once the positive and negative information was gathered, some destinations will be eliminated quickly, while the others will be evaluated. The generated feedback can be further driven by trial experience. Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) argues that the greater the importance of leisure travel, the number of choices likely to be smaller considering other destinations. Um and Crompton (1990) suggest that the ‘awareness

set' plays an important role in this stage. The 'awareness set' phase clearly indicates mental classification process among consideration set (spontaneously evoked destinations), inept set (rejected destinations), inert set (destinations that are not actively considered and unavailable set (Decrop, 1999).

Traveller objectively evaluates characteristics and features of the chosen destination, type of travel arrangements and activities offered, and other alternatives (Schmoll, 1977). Once pros and cons were established, traveller might consider using a third-party information, such as government and independent rating systems like 'Michelin' scheme or other criteria, which helps to make a decision (Lee et al., 2013). Objective criteria is commonly accompanied by subjective criteria, where traveller assess the time, distance, and other constraints, price and value relations, other intangible assets such as image of the destination (Schmoll, 1977; Lee et al. 2013).

Purchase

After evaluation has been made, the 'purchase' stage examines again these factors, which can influence the decision just before purchasing it. The final question is how the tourist is going to purchase the selected product. Woodside et al. (2004) argues that once the decision has been made additional changes will inevitably occur. Often travellers are driven by key activities within the destination, which are planned prior to the travel (Woodside and Martin, 2008). Travel purchase often being influenced by on-site events, therefore, some activities falls under 'planned-undone' activities while others qualifies as 'unplanned-done' (Woodside et al., 2004).

Appendix L: Evaluation of the locations

Location	'Golden Lotus' Chinese restaurant	'Bali Safari Marine' Theme Park	Marriott Seminyak Bali 5 star Hotel
Criteria			
High density of Chinese travellers	+/-	+/-	++
High standard upscale service	+/-	+/-	++
Available time for respondents to fill in the questionnaire	++	+/-	++
Young age of desired target group	+/-	++	+/-
Accessibility for a researcher	--	++	++
Total	5	7	9

Table L.1 Location criteria

Appendix M: The questionnaire



My name is Mindaugas Gluchovskis and I am student at Saxion University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands.

For my thesis project I am interested to hear your opinion about your stay and activities in Bali. Your input will help my client ICS Travel group to tailor and improve its services. In order to adapt the service to your wishes we will ask you a couple of questions regarding your trip planning to Bali. Your information will be analysed anonymously and will only be used

within company and for educational purposes. If you have any questions, please contact me via email: mgluchovskis@yahoo.com or ICS Travel group at info@is-indonesia.com.

Thank you for your contribution!

Selection questionnaire

- Q1. Do you have a Chinese nationality?
 - Yes
 - No
- Q2. What is your current age?
 - Open space
- Q3. Is your monthly net income above or below 5,300 Renminbi?
 - Above
 - Below
- Q4. Do you travel with organized package tour or independently?
 - Organized package tour
 - Independently
- Q5. What is the purpose of your trip to Bali?
 - Business
 - Leisure

Remaining demographics

- Q6. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female

- Q7. What is the composition of your group during this trip? (Please select one or multiple answers below)
 - Single traveller
 - Traveling with partner
 - Travelling with child(ren)
 - Travelling with friends
 - Travelling with relatives
 - Travelling with colleagues
 - Other (Please specify)
- Q8. How many times have you travelled abroad within last 12 months?
 - I did not travel abroad within last 12 months
 - I travelled 1 time within last 12 months
 - I travelled 2 times within last 12 months
 - I travelled 3 times within last 12 months
 - I travelled 4 times or more within last 12 months
- Q9. How many days do you plan to stay in Bali?

Open space

- Q10. How much do you spent per day during your current trip?
 - 0 – 500 renminbi
 - 501 – 1,000 renminbi
 - 1,001 – 1,500 renminbi
 - 1,501 – 2,000 renminbi
 - 2,001 – 2,500 renminbi
 - 2,501 renminbi or more

Recognizing the need for travel

- Q11. When did you **first considered** your current trip to Bali?
 - More than 3 months ago
 - 2 to 3 months ago
 - 1 month ago
 - Less than 1 month ago
- Q12. What was your main **motivation** to travel to Bali?(Please select one or multiple answers below)
 - No motivation

- Motivation for culture
- Motivation for health and relaxation
- Motivation for adventure
- Motivation for fashion
- Motivation for learning new skills
- Personal
- Other (Please specify)

➤ Q13. To what extent the elements below **have influenced the planning** of your current trip to Bali? (1 = no influence, 5 = strong influence) You can indicate the level of influence by ticking the appropriate box)

	1 No influence	2	3	4	5 Strong influence
▪ Recommendations of friends, relatives, family members					
▪ Travel agents					
▪ Sales person					
▪ Tourism fair					
▪ Public event					
▪ Online website advertising					
▪ TV, radio, magazines					
▪ Social media					
▪ Mobile travel applications					
▪ Life event					
▪ Online blogging website					
▪ Books, newspapers					
▪ Other (Please specify) _____					

- Q14. A). To what extent online platforms have influenced your **planning** to visit Bali? (1 = no influence, 5 = strong influence) You can indicate the level of influence by ticking the appropriate box)

	1 No influence	2	3	4	5 Strong influence
▪ Social network					
▪ Online travel communities					
▪ Video sharing					
▪ Photo sharing					
▪ Other (Please specify) -----					

- B). Please specify the name of the mostly influential online platform:

Searching for the information

- Q15. When your **actual planning** for the current trip to Bali has started?
- More than 3 months ago
 - 2 to 3 months ago
 - 1 month ago
 - Less than 1 month ago
- Q16. A). Which following **type of information source** were important for you **when planning** your trip to Bali? (Please select one or multiple answers below)
- Previous experience
 - Family, friends recommendations
 - TV, radio, magazines
 - Travel guides
 - Travel review websites
 - Social network websites

- Other online websites
- Mobile travel applications
- Other (please specify)

➤ B). Please specify the name the most important type of information source:

Making the final choice

- Q17. Have you considered any alternative destination when **planning** your trip to Bali?
- No
 - Yes (If yes, specify which destination)_____

- Q18. To what extent the following **activities** were important for you **when planning** your trip to Bali? (You can indicate the level of importance by ticking the appropriate box)

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very important
▪ Adventure tourism					
▪ Sun, sand, surf tourism					
▪ Dining experience					
▪ Sightseeing					
▪ Shopping					
▪ Eco tours					
▪ Visiting museums					
▪ Organized local tours					
▪ Rural villages (Local communities)					
▪ Specific events					
▪ Other (Please specify) _____					

- Q19. To what extent the following **elements** were important for you **when planning** your trip to Bali? (You can indicate the level of importance by ticking the appropriate box)

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very important
▪ Services and facilities					
▪ Safety					
▪ Activities offered					
▪ Government or independent rating					
▪ Quality of information offered					
▪ Quantity of information offered					
▪ Image of the destination					
▪ Expenses					
▪ Other constraints					

Purchase

- Q20. How did you book your trip to Bali?
- Booking by online travel agent
 - Booking via booking platform
 - Booking via specific destination website
 - Booking by traditional travel agent
 - Booking by phone
 - Other
- Q21. **During your current stay** in Bali, have you engaged in any activities that were not planned prior to the trip? (If selected 'No' please disregard the next question)
- No
 - Yes

- Q22. A). During your current stay in Bali, to what extent the following source of information have influenced your decision for activities? (1 = no influence, 5 = strong influence)
You can indicate the level of influence by ticking the appropriate box)

	1 No influence	2	3	4	5 Strong influence
▪ Accommodation providers					
▪ Local people					
▪ TV, Radio, Magazines					
▪ Travel guides					
▪ Street advertisement					
▪ Tour guides					
▪ Local service operators					
▪ Social Media					
▪ Mobile apps					
▪ Other (Please specify) _____					

B) Please name the most influential information source during your current stay in Bali:

- Q23. If you might have any comments to add please leave them below:



Appendix M: The questionnaire (Chinese translation)



我是 Mindaugas Gluchovskis, 现在是荷兰萨克逊应用科技大学的一名学生。

我的论文是有关巴厘岛的旅游活动。您的意见将帮助我的客户 ICS Travel group 改进他们的服务。为了提升服务质量, 我们将会问您一些有关巴厘岛旅行计划的问题。您的信息会被匿名分析, 并且只为公司和教育目的。如果您有更多问题, 请联系我 mgluchovskis@yahoo.com 或者 ICS Travel group 邮箱 info@is-indonesia.com。

非常感谢您的支持。

选择性问卷

- Q1. 您是中国人吗?
是
不是
- Q2. 您的年龄?
- Q3. 您的月收入高于或者低于 5300 元?
高于
低于
- Q4. 您制订了旅行套餐还是各自独立的旅行计划?
旅行套餐
各自独立
- Q5. 您来巴厘岛的目的是?
商务
娱乐

其它因素

- Q6. 您的性别
男
女
- Q7. 您这次旅行的伙伴有 (请选择一项或多项)
独自旅行
和伴侣
和孩子
和朋友
和亲戚
和同事
其他 (请写明)

➤ Q8.您在过去的 12 个月里出国旅行多少次？

- 没有出国旅行在过去 12 个月里
- 一次出国旅行在过去 12 个月里
- 2 次出国旅行在过去 12 个月里
- 3 次出国旅行在过去 12 个月里
- 4 次以上出国旅行在过去 12 个月里

➤ Q9. 您计划在巴厘岛停留多久？

➤ Q10.您一天之内的旅行经费是多少？

- 0 - 1,377 元
- 1,378 - 2,755 元
- 2,756 - 4,133 元
- 4,134 - 5,510 元
- 5,511 - 6,888 元
- 6,889 元以上

旅行需求

➤ Q11.您是什么时候开始考虑现在巴厘岛旅行？

- 超过 3 个月前
- 2 至 3 个月前
- 一个月前
- 少于一个月前

➤ Q12.请您说明一下为什么会选择巴厘岛旅行？

请选择一项或者多项

- 没有原因
- 因为文化
- 因为健康和休闲
- 因为冒险
- 因为时尚
- 因为能学习新技能
- 个人原因
- 其他（请列举）

➤ Q13. 以下因素在多大程度上影响了您目前巴厘岛的旅行计划？（ 1 =无影响， 5 =非常强影响）您可以通过勾选适当的方框来表示影响程度）

	1	2	3	4	5
	无影响				非常强影响
▪ 家人或者亲戚朋友推荐					

▪ 旅行社					
▪ 销售人员					
▪ 旅行展会					
▪ 公共活动					
▪ 网上广告					
▪ 电视，广播，杂志					
▪ 社交媒体					
▪ 手机旅游应用					
▪ 生活事件					
▪ 网络博客					
▪ 书籍，报纸					
▪ 其他（请明示） -----					

- Q14. 网上平台在多大程度上影响了您访问巴厘岛的规划？（1 = 无影响，5 = 非常强影响）您可以通过勾选适当的方框来表示影响程度）

	1 无影响	2	3	4	5 非常强影响
▪ 社交网络					
▪ 网络旅行贴吧					
▪ 分享的视频					
▪ 分享的照片					
▪ 其他（请明示） -----					

- 通过勾选适当的方框来表示影响程度

信息搜索

- Q15. 目前的这项旅游计划您是什么时候开始规划的？
 - 超过三个月前
 - 2 至 3 个月
 - 一个月前
 - 少于一个月

- Q16. 以下哪种类型的信息对您计划您的巴厘岛旅行很重要？（请在下面选择一个或多个答案）
 - 以前的经验
 - 家庭，朋友推荐
 - 电视，广播，杂志
 - 旅行指南
 - 旅游评论网站
 - 社交网站
 - 其他在线网站
 - 手机旅游应用程序
 - 其他（请表明）

- 通过勾选适当的方框来表示影响程度

最后决定

- Q17. 当您在计划巴厘岛旅行的时候是否考虑过其他目的地？
 - 没有
 - 有（请明示哪里）

- Q18. 您在计划巴厘岛旅行时，以下活动对您影响的重要程度如何？（您可以通过勾选相应的方框来表示重要性）

	非常重要	不重要	一般	重要	非常重要
▪ 冒险旅行					
▪ 阳光，沙滩，冲浪					
▪ 潜水					

▪ 观光					
▪ 购物					
▪ 环保旅游					
▪ 博物馆					
▪ 当地旅游					
▪ 农家村落（当地社区）					
▪ 具体的活动					
▪ 其他（请明示） -----					

- Q19. 您在计划巴厘岛旅行时，以下因素在多大程度上影响到您？（您可以通过勾选相应的方框来表示重要性级别）

	非常不重要	不重要	一般	重要	非常重要
▪ 服务及设施					
▪ 安全性					
▪ 安排的活动					
▪ 政府或独立评级					
▪ 提供的信息质量					
▪ 提供的信息数量					
▪ 目的地的形象					
▪ 花费					
▪ 其他					

购买

- Q20. 您是怎么预定这次巴厘岛旅行的？
- 网上旅行代理
 - 订购平台
 - 当地网站
 - 传统的旅行社
 - 电话预定

- 其他

➤ Q21. 在目前您在巴厘岛期间，您是否从事任何没有在旅行计划之中的活动？（如果选择“否”，请忽略下一个问题）

- 没有
- 有

➤ Q22. 目前您在巴厘岛期间，以下信息在多大程度上影响了您旅行计划的改变？（1 = 无影响，5 = 非常强烈影响）您可以通过勾选适当的框来指示影响程度）

	1 无影响	2	3	4	5 非常强烈影响
▪ 提供的住宿					
▪ 当地人民					
▪ 电视，广播，杂志					
▪ 旅游指南					
▪ 街边广告					
▪ 导游					
▪ 当地服务提供商					
▪ 社交媒体					
▪ 手机引用程序					
▪ 其他（请明示） -----					

➤ 通过勾选适当的方框来表示影响程度

➤ Q23. 如果您有其他意见请写在下面



Explanation of the questionnaire

Question	Possible answer	Derived from
Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5 – Selection questionnaire		Selection questionnaire, chapter 3.4
Q6. What is your gender?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Male ▪ Female 	Operationalization – Demographics
Q7. What is the composition of your group during this trip? (Please select one or multiple answers below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Single traveller ▪ Traveling with partner ▪ Travelling with child(ren) ▪ Travelling with friends ▪ Travelling with relatives ▪ Travelling with colleagues ▪ Other (Please specify) 	Literature review – Chapter 2.2.2
Q8. How many times have you travelled abroad within last 12 months?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I did not travel abroad within last 12 months ▪ I travelled 1 time within last 12 months ▪ I travelled 2 times within last 12 months ▪ I travelled 3 times within last 12 months ▪ I travelled 4 times or more within last 12 months 	Literature review – Chapters 2.2.1, 2.2.2
Q9. How many days do you plan to stay in Bali?	Open space	Literature review – Chapter 2.2.1
Q10. How much do you spent per day during your current trip?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 0 – 500 renminbi ▪ 501 – 1,000 renminbi ▪ 1,001 – 1,500 renminbi ▪ 1,501 – 2,000 renminbi ▪ 2,001 – 2,500 renminbi ▪ 2,501 renminbi or more 	Chapter 2.2.1
Q11. When did you first considered your current trip to Bali?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than 3 months ago ▪ 2 to 3 months ago ▪ 1 month ago ▪ Less than 1 month ago 	Chapter 2.2.2, Appendix K – Operationalization

Q12. What was your main motivation to travel to Bali?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No motivation Motivation for culture Motivation for health and relaxation Motivation for adventure Motivation for fashion Motivation for personal development Motivation to visit friends and relatives Other (Please specify) 	Swarbrooke and Horner (1999), Chapter 2.1.3
Q13. To what extent the elements below have influenced the planning of your trip?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations of friends, relatives, family members Travel agents Sales person Tourism fair Public event Online website advertising TV, radio Social media Mobile travel applications Life event Online blogging website Books, newspapers, magazines Other (Please specify) 	<p>Appendix K – Operationalization – Travel stimuli. Schmoll (1977)</p> <p>Appendix H – Communication mix</p>
Q14. To what extent online platforms have influenced your decision to visit Bali? (1= no influence, 5= strong influence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social network Online travel communities Video sharing Photo sharing Other (Please specify) 	Appendix K – Operationalization – Travel stimuli (Low, 2005)
Q15. When your actual planning for the current trip to Bali has started?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 3 months ago 2 to 3 months ago 1 month ago Less than 1 month ago 	Chapter 2.2.2, Appendix K – Operationalization – Use source of information
Q16. A). Which following type of information source were important for you when	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous experience Family, Friends recommendations 	Appendix H – Communication mix

<p>planning your trip to Bali? (Please select one or multiple answers below)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TV, Radio, Magazines ▪ Travel guides ▪ Travel review websites ▪ Social network websites ▪ Other online websites ▪ Mobile applications ▪ Other <p>(Please specify)</p>	<p>Schmoll (1977)</p>
<p>Q17. Have you considered any alternative destination when planning your trip to Bali?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No ▪ Yes (Please specify the destination) 	<p>Appendix K – Operationalization – Evaluation of alternatives</p>
<p>Q18. To what extent the following activities were important for you when planning your trip to Bali?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adventure tourism ▪ Sun, sand, surf tourism ▪ Dining experience ▪ Sightseeing ▪ Shopping ▪ Eco tours ▪ Visiting museums ▪ Organized local tours ▪ Rural villages (Local communities) ▪ Specific events ▪ Other <p>(Please specify)</p>	<p>Chapter 2.2.1 Chapter 2.2.2 Appendix G</p>
<p>Q19. To what extent the following elements were important for you when planning your trip to Bali?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Services and facilities ▪ Safety ▪ Activities offered ▪ Government or independent rating ▪ Quality of information offered ▪ Quantity of information offered ▪ Image of the destination ▪ Expenses ▪ Other constraints 	<p>Appendix K – Operationalization – Evaluation of alternatives (Schmoll, 1977) Chapter 2.2.2</p>
<p>Q20. How did you book your trip to Bali?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Booking by online travel agent ▪ Booking via booking platform 	<p>Chapter 2.2.2</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Booking via specific destination website ▪ Booking by traditional travel agent ▪ Booking by phone ▪ Other 	
Q21. During your current stay in Bali, have you engaged in any activities that were not planned prior to the trip?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No ▪ Yes 	Chapter 2.1.3
Q22. During your current stay in Bali, to what extent the following source of information have influenced your decision for activities? (1= no influence, 5= strong influence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accommodation providers ▪ Local people ▪ TV, Radio, Magazines ▪ Travel guides ▪ Street advertisement ▪ Tour guides ▪ Local service operators ▪ Social Media ▪ Mobile apps ▪ Other (Please specify)	Appendix H – Communication mix Chapter 2.1.3

Table M.1 Explanation of the questionnaire

Appendix N: Online tourism agencies market share 2015

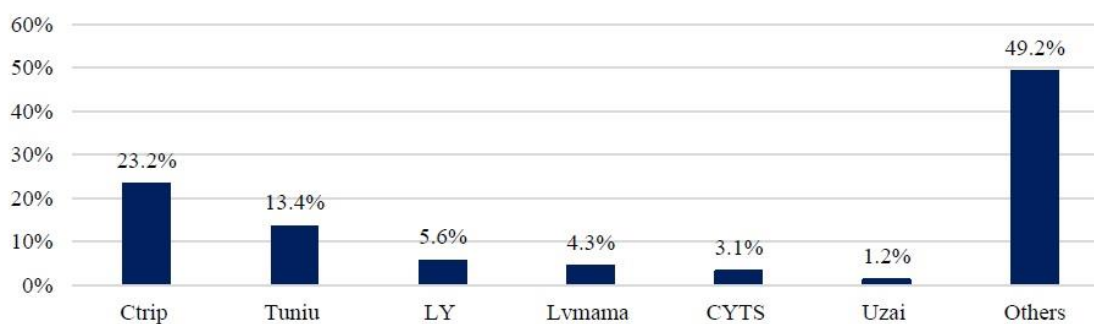


Figure N.1 Online tourism agencies market share (iResearch, 2015)

Appendix O: Mood board - Adventurer's escape to Bali



Appendix P: Results

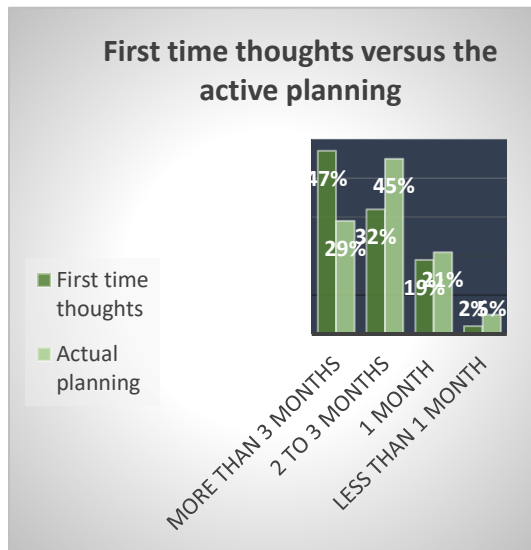


Figure P.1: First time thoughts in Comparison to actual planning of the trip

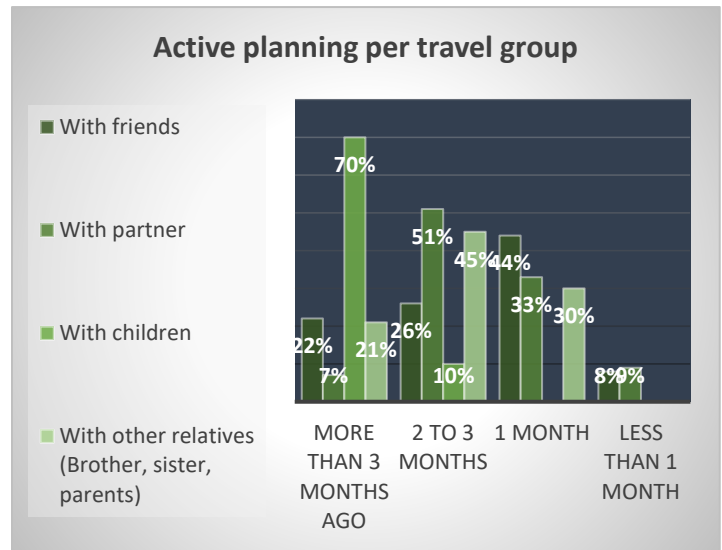


Figure P.2: Active planning per travel group

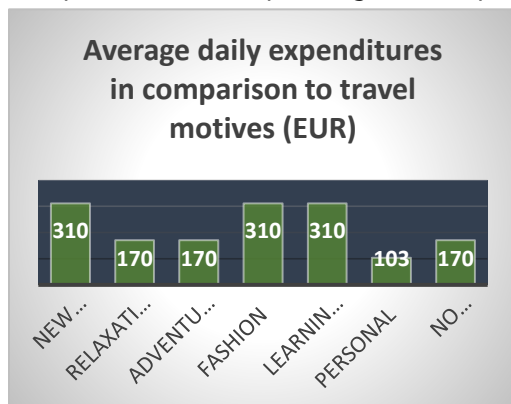


Figure P.3: Average daily expenditures in comparison to travel motives

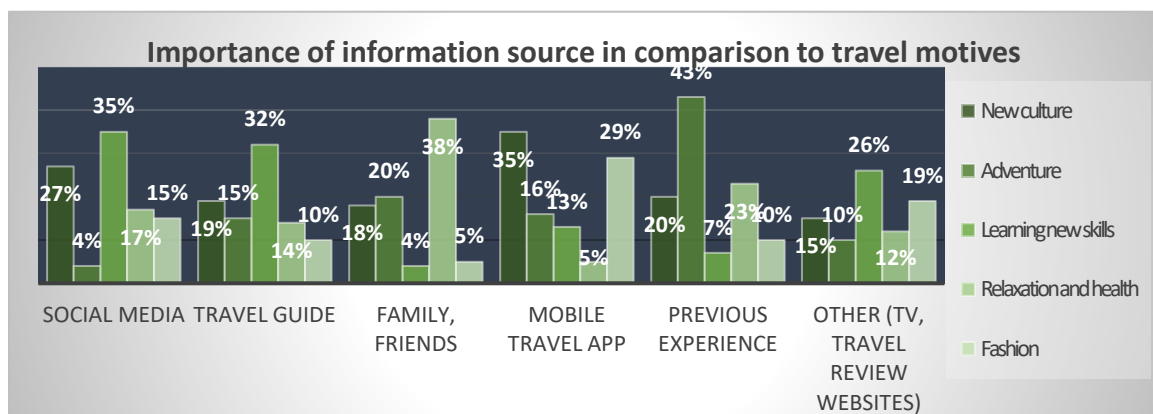


Figure P.4: Importance of information source in comparison to travel motives

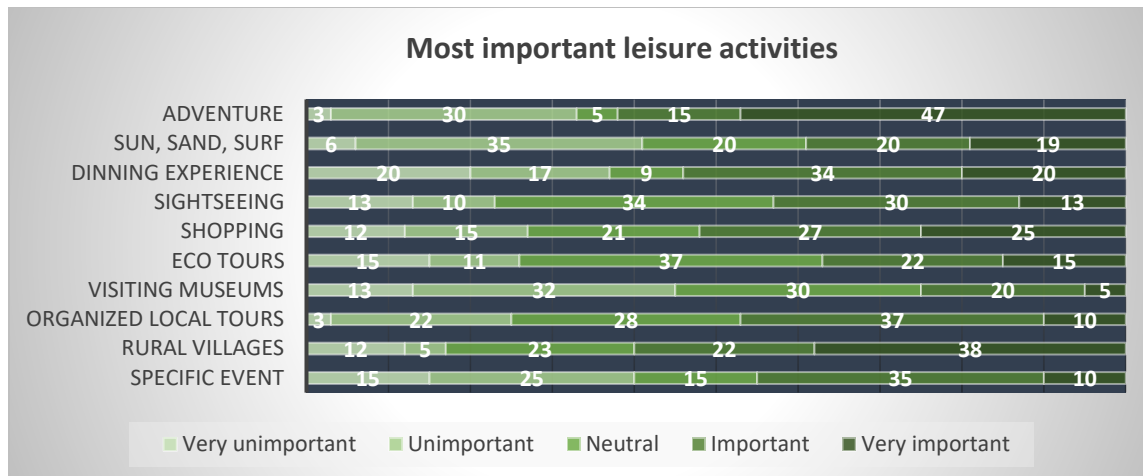


Figure P.5: Most important leisure activities

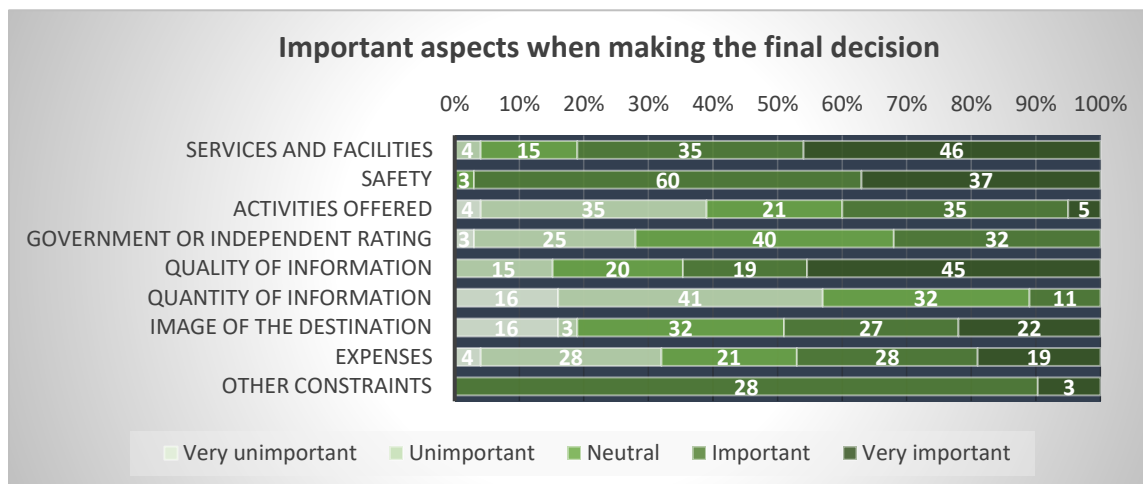


Figure P.6 Important aspects when making the final decision

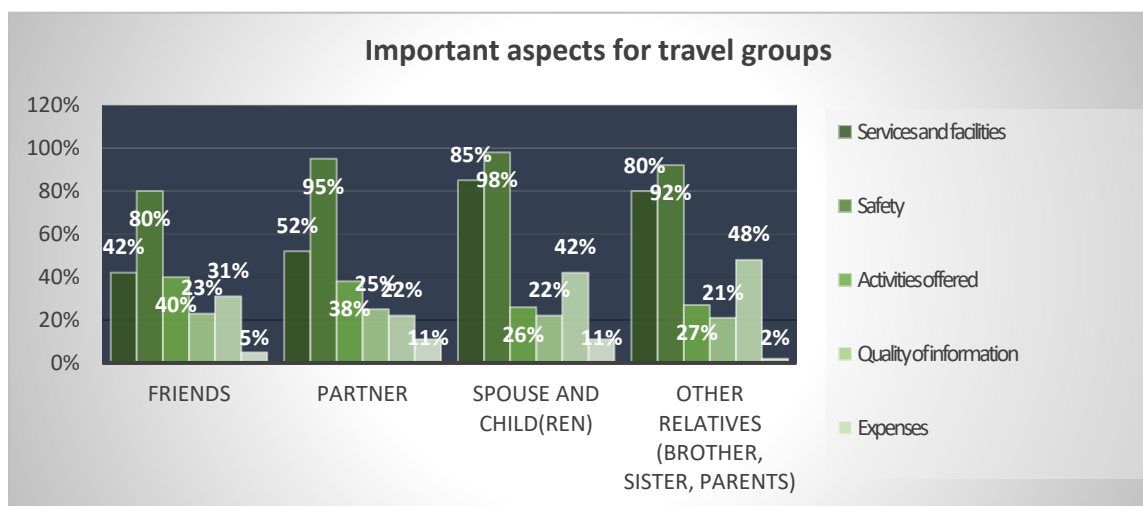


Figure P.7: Important aspects when making a final decision for travel groups

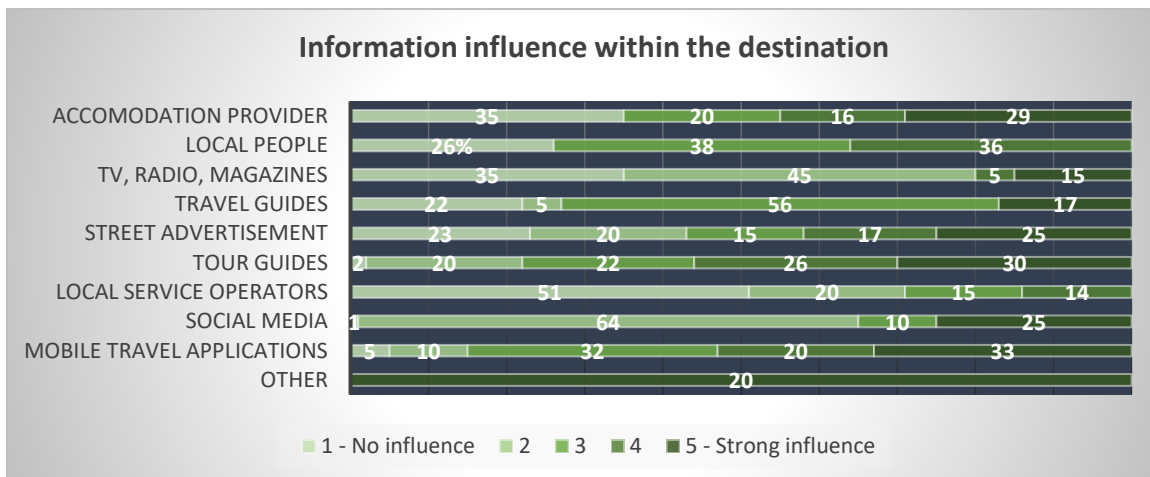


Figure P.8: Information sources influence within the destination

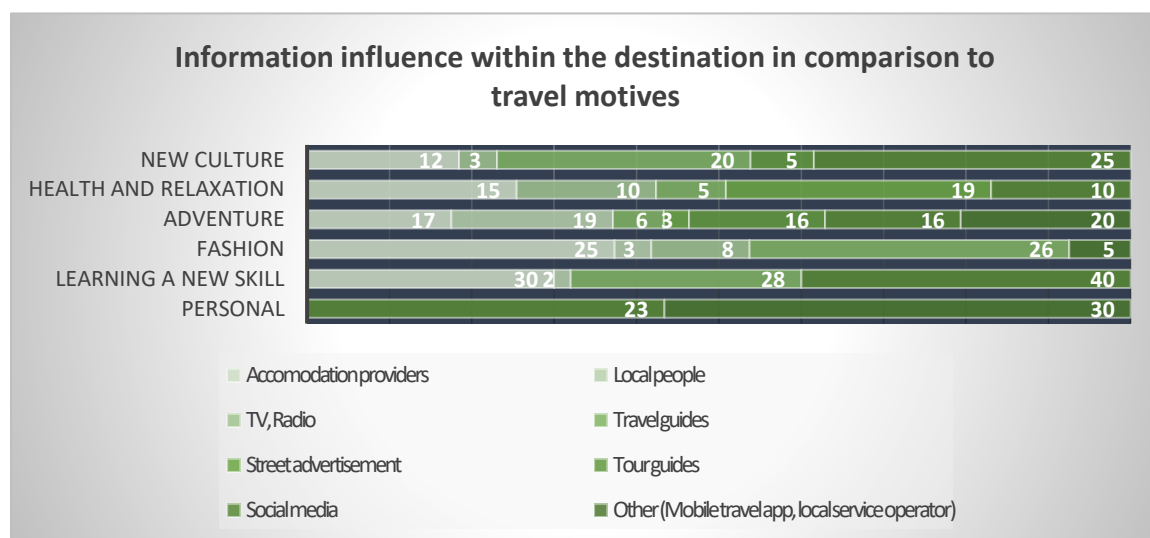


Figure P.9 Information influence within the destination in comparison to travel motives

Appendix Q: Bali map



Figure Q.1 Bali map

Appendix R: Marketing Communication concept planning

2017	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Planning phase												
Employee 1 Evaluating the questionnaire							H					H
Monitoring the sales and overall objectives												
Employee 1 & Trainee 1 Test of the concept in QQ Live							H					H
Collect the feedback from the users												
Based on customer's feedback, make a necessary adjustments in promoting new marketing communication concept												
Find a blogger in Ctrip, Agoda, eLong, Mafengwo, Qyer, Lvping, Mofang												
Compile a round trip, contract a bloggers and supervise the tour												
Period of Chinese blogger stay in Bali												
Contact a potential DMCs in China												
Contracting the suppliers followed by a regular contacts												
Employee 2 Contact a video editor and advice on creating a video							H					H
Contact an IT web designer												
Help to translate the website												

- Presentation
- Execution weeks
- H - Holidays

Appendix S: Gantt chart

Week	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	VAK	1.8	1.9	1.10	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	VAK	VAK	2.7
Planning phase																				
Introduction																				
Objectives of the project																				
Secondary research																				
Contact with the client																				
Field Research																				
Questionnaire development																				
Travel to Bali																				
Week	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	VAK	1.8	1.9	1.10	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	VAK	VAK	2.7
Data collection																				
Research part																				
Analysis of gathered data																				
Primary and Secondary research analysis																				
Answer research question																				
Reflection on validity and reliability of the research																				
Advice																				
Evaluation of alternatives																				
Formulating advice based on results																				
Conclusion of the advice																				
Afterword																				

Table T.1 Gantt chart

Appendix T: Methodological Framework

V.1 Research strategy

In order to determine research strategy, Brotherton (2008) highlights three types of research strategies, namely descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. According to Brotherton (2008) descriptive research investigates the group of people, can provide a clear context of the situation, clarifying sequence in set of stages. Additionally, descriptive research aim for attempt to describe or identify current issue (Ethridge. 2004). The purpose of this assignment was to define the TPB process of independent Chinese travellers in Bali, therefore the research is descriptive in nature. Independent Chinese travellers was selected target group that the researcher gained the information (Reid, 2014).

Quantitative research aims to collect measurable data for statistical analysis, while qualitative research aims to provide an in-depth knowledge of certain situations (Brotherton, 2008). In order to determine the process of population, and consider it as a valid and representative indications of the population, certain number of the respondents was reached. When exploring different variables and influence of different factors at large-scale, quantitative research is applicable (Reid, 2014). For this reason, the researcher has selected descriptive quantitative research strategy.

V.2 Empirical research design

The chosen research strategy as mentioned previously was descriptive in nature and aims for quantifiable data. As Rubin and Babbie (2010) argues, quantitative research includes methods such as experiment or survey, gathering numerical information, in this case preferences of Chinese travellers in Bali and comparison of the insights, gathered from each decision making stage. Besides, study was aiming for the outcome from a large scale independent Chinese traveller sample in order to characterize and interpret the findings of TPB process. Brotherton (2008) argues for survey research that this method allows statistical manipulation of outcome, what alternatively can make comparison of the results easier to achieve. The selected method eventually aims for generalizable data, what is unlikely to be achieved with the case study, since it is rather limited to a small scope (Brotherton, 2008).

The surveys can be descriptive or analytical in nature (Brotherton, 2008). Analytical survey focus on explanations for underlying relationships (Brotherton, 2008). The descriptive survey was considered as a most appropriate for this study due to its purpose of recording the facts such as characteristics of the sample and relating it to their preferences in each decision-making stage. Furthermore, Brotherton (2008) describes that surveys can be conducted on two basis, namely cross-sectional and longitudinal. Cross-sectional basis was the most realistic for this study, due to limited amount

of time and resources for this project. Besides, survey design is considered as standardized procedure, ensuring less probability for systematic error. Although, Brotherton (2008) argues that survey method may limit the respondent by providing standardized guidelines of the questions limiting the freedom for the answers, therefore rising the concern of overall data validity.

V.3 Research method

In order to measure the complexity of study from different point of view and increase overall validity, triangulation method was used (Cohen & Manion, 2000). Secondary research by means of literature review, ensured that valuable knowledge regarding TPB process and important characteristics of independent Chinese traveller were defined (Brotherton, 2008).

Due to availability of the respondents, consideration of the given time frame and large-scale of this study, primary research was carried out by means of descriptive face-to-face survey. Therefore, former Saxion University student, Taoran Feng, who is native Chinese, helped to translate the questionnaire to Mandarin language, which was pre-tested with another native Chinese student. In order to avoid the errors, the researcher ensured that the questionnaire is mutually exclusive, exhaustive, specific and clear before utilizing it on the field research (Reid, 2014; Brotherton, 2008). Although, the chosen research method is considered more expensive than for instance online questionnaire, the main reason for choosing face-to-face survey was firstly due to less effort in time, secondly, ensuring that respondents were actually in Bali. Due to absence of administrative record of Chinese staying in Bali, distance interviewing via telephone was not considered as a feasible research technique for this study. Digital distribution or post questionnaires, would not ensure whether the sample reached the intended population, leading to selective sample and raise of concerns of non-response bias (Brotherton, 2008).

As face-to-face data collection method was chosen for this research, semi-structured questionnaire was set up. Although the options for the answers tend to be constrained, structured questionnaire allows the researcher to collect more reliable data from large-scale surveys, since it is structured in a consistent manner and collected data from the sample is statistically quantifiable (Brotherton, 2008). Unstructured questions were selected to specify used communication channels. The questionnaire was established on Qualtrics tool, where respondents were requested to fill in the answers on provided tablet device. The device to fill in questionnaires was used for no additional costs. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier a volunteer tour guide, who is fluent in Mandarin-English languages helped to conduct the field research. The volunteer was clearly given instructions, based on the information in the following paragraph, how the questionnaire has to be filled in. In case the respondent did not know how to answer, the tour guide have helped me by translating the question.

V.4 Sampling plan

The population of this research is Chinese travellers and the sample was selected as independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali Island. As described in Chapter 1: The Client information, ICS focus mainly on middle-upper class individual travellers. Thus, assignment investigates the segment of

Chinese outbound market who are middle-upper class and travel independently. The definition of independent Chinese traveller can be found in Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework.

Due to absence of an administrative record about independent Chinese travellers in Bali, no sampling frame could be applied. Therefore, the participants were selected by using non-probability convenience sample to collect primary data, due to relevance for the project (Brotherton, 2008). On one hand convenience sampling saved costs and time efforts. On the other hand, the chosen method often tends to be biased, since the sample was selected by researcher's choice. When selecting the sample, any error in the sample selection would multiply when the results are generalized back to the population (Brotherton, 2008). There are few steps that can minimize data bias when using convenience sampling, namely, using more data, diversifying, and aiming for sample representativeness (Skowronek & Duerr, 2009). Regarding usage of the data, as indicated earlier, timeframe and costs for the project are applied, therefore collected data cannot exceed these limitations.

In terms of diversity, selection of the potential locations to conduct the research were selected, which can be found in *Appendix L*. Considering the location for the field research, Ms. Angelika Pangemanan was consulted, who is a local tour guide, working in the field in Bali for 18 years and has an experience working with Chinese leisure travellers. In her point of view, these 3 locations are the most suitable locations for such a survey.

Regarding the representativeness of the sample, certain criteria for the location was established and evaluated under positive (++) and negative (--) score. According to the total of positive scores, Marriot hotel was selected as option 1, theme park 'Bali Safari Marine' as option 2, 'Golden Lotus' restaurant as option 3.

ICS travel group in Bali has an allotment contract with Marriott hotel Seminyak, which according to the contract accommodates several Chinese groups a month, a separate hospitality desk is dedicated for ICS staff at the hotel's lobby. The location was well used to conduct the research, as it is largely representative regarding the selected population. Furthermore, guests can feel comfortable and relaxed while filling in the questionnaire.

Alternatively, researcher has also considered option 2, 'Bali Safari Marine' theme park, which recently was added under ICS suppliers list. The theme park was willing to cooperate by giving a permission to conduct a research in their lobby premises. Leisure attraction places ensures relaxed ambience where travellers feel comfortable and are willing to participate in the research, taking the required time to complete the questionnaire. The least considered option 3 was 'Golden Lotus' Chinese restaurant, due to its limited accessibility.

With regards to diversity of the sample, all of the 3 locations mentioned earlier were considered as potential places for collecting the data to avoid the constraints of one time and one place. For example, only choosing Marriott hotel, would not be as reliable as considering other locations as well, since it may include only hotel's members, or certain type of traveller. Furthermore, in favour of representative data, researcher took special care to collect a sample that is similar to the target

population under additional criteria. Verhoeven (2015) explains that by having established a certain selection principals, such as criteria that meets characteristics of targeted population. Therefore, 5 selection questions of the questionnaire were set as a selection questions, which can be found in *Appendix M*.

The criteria, linking with the company's mission was based on the view of the client. Aiming for quota chance of selection of 50 percent male and 50 percent female, the participants were kindly asked on a voluntary basis to fill in the questionnaire, by explaining the purpose of the research. Only if the participant completed first 5 questions with a positive answer, only then the actual questionnaire was presented.

With regards to calculating the sample size, confidence level, interval and number of targeted population were considered. According to The Central Statistics Agency (2015), 1.3 million Chinese have visited Indonesia, presuming Bali as a primary destination. Currently 44% of them are demanding personalized service and the number is on a rise (Hernandez et al., 2015). For this reason, estimating the result of 572 thousand targeted independent Chinese travellers population in Bali, 6.5 percent margin of error and 95 percent confidence rate amount required for sample was estimated 228 (Sample Size Calculator, 2012). Applying the quota, 114 male and 114 female who match the predetermined criteria considered to be representative sample size of the targeted population. However, due to availability of the tour guide only 140 questionnaires were collected. Extended field research would mean high risk in external validity, which might cause bias of the respondents due to incapability communicate on my own in Mandarin language (Brotherton, 2008). After cleaning some incomplete questionnaires, final number of 122 were analysed.

V.5 Methods of data analysis

In order to evaluate the results, large-scale quantifiable data method was selected. The descriptive analysis used as a specific type of analysis to gather the knowledge about independent Chinese travellers in Bali. This segment was compared to their preferences in the decision making, highlighting the significance in certain travel behaviour pattern.

The researcher was mostly interested to find out, which influences are mostly encountered during the process, dividing the questionnaire into TPB process related phases. For example, to answer research question 'What defines the independent Chinese traveller, particularly travelling in Bali?' the researcher looked at demographics, different travel group set up, frequency of travelling motivations and other aspects. The collected data was compared to the variables such as preferred leisure activities within different composition of travel group, motivation involvement in the decision, expenditures, usage of different information sources used prior and during the trip. This type of analysis is referred as bivariate analysis (Brotherton, 2008). The insights then are compared with existing data in the literature, which will draw a compatible conclusions for necessary changes in communication strategy.

Most popular large data comparison software SPSS was applied in order to gather the insights from the obtained results (Brotherton, 2008). Qualtrics software directly generated the data from

provided results to the SPSS statistical data analysis. After the data was collected, researcher evaluated 5-point Likert scale outcome from different answers (Brotherton, 2008). Likert scale allowed a range of answers that can truly reflect respondent's opinion, instead limiting the respondent to 'agree' or 'disagree' answer regarding the issue (Brotherton, 2008).

The descriptive analysis of collected data was used in order to define personal characteristics of Chinese travellers in Bali. Followed by TPB process, questions explored each stage aimed towards main influences, preferences, and sequence of importance in that stage. Answers provided necessary knowledge to answer 1st research question: *What is travel purchase behaviour process of independent Chinese travellers coming to Bali?*

Appendix U: Elaborated evaluation of the alternatives

Alternative 1 – Adventurer's escape to Bali

Time – Since Bali attracts mainly nature tourism lovers, and ICS current promotion is partially focused on adventure travellers, the changes in the communication strategy would take less time and effort. Only a few catering companies in Bali are specializing in adventure and a unique dining experience concept, therefore the time required for contracting should not be too extensive. The criteria was scored with +/+.

Money – Money needed for rearrangements with the current suppliers, contacting new potential Chinese tour operators as well as suppliers for activities and catering, new design in the promotion, require certain investments, therefore the criteria was scored with +/- . After an initial start, a combination of adventure activities with a unique selling point of dining experience in a wild remote areas would potentially bring a return on investment, although losses at first will be inevitable.

Resources – The adjustments would mainly require staff who can communicate in Chinese language. As an alternative, hiring native Chinese students as a part of their curriculum would reduce amount of costs required, therefore, the criteria was scored with +/+ . Training should be organized within the office in Bali by human resources department, which will introduce trainees how to communicate effectively and consistently with a customer based on the adjustments that were made in the concept.

Alternative 2 – Respire a different Asian culture

Time – Culture aspects are highly involved in Bali's tourism destination branding amongst various tourism stakeholders, as well as partially in the current ICS communication campaign, therefore less time and effort is required. However, this concept involves higher number of tourism suppliers, to be contacted, evaluated, negotiated and confirmed. The concept must represent 'off the beaten tourist track' concept, which will give a belief of being served individually for a great value-for-money. In order to find the suppliers that match the criteria for this concept will take a significant amount of time. Therefore, the criteria was scored with +/-.

Money – Similar to the alternative 1, various inspections, calls to the suppliers, changes in online as well as offline promotion will require additional financial resources. Therefore, the criteria was scored with +/-.

Resources – Once implemented, it would not require additional staff. However, the staff, who can handle communication in Mandarin will be required. Similarly to the alternative 1, that could be accomplished by hiring a native Chinese students as a part of their curriculum. The criteria was scored with +/+.

Alternative 3 – Representative office setup in China

Time – This project is at the very beginning, therefore request for budget from ICS headquarters, procedure of finding a suitable office in foreign country, registration of relevant documents for the legal procedures and reaching potential target market will involve considerable amount of time. Therefore, criteria was scored with +/-.

Money – Considerably large amount of additional initial investment would exceed the current budget, dedicated for a marketing purposes. Additional budget would need to be requested from ICS headquarters, in order to consider this alternative. Initial investment budget should clearly determine what is expected period for a return on investment. ICS already have some ideas for such a project, however currently the investment exceeds the budget, therefore criteria was scored with +/-.

Resources – Hiring additional Chinese native experts would be necessary for implementing this alternative. Only with a support of ICS headquarters the option would be considerable. If the headquarters of ICS are willing to make an investment, and cooperate with the other local tour operators it would lower financial resources needed to maintain the office. Due to low feasibility, the criteria was scored with +/-.