

RUSSIAN TRAVEL MARKET INBOUND!

**A study on the Russian tourists and the
destination branding of Twente**



BACHELOR THESIS

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7th September, 2016

Deventer, the Netherlands

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(Quick scan retake with changes to the content)



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Class:	ATH4IP01
Place of publication:	Handelskade 75 7417 DH Deventer
Year:	2016
Client:	Bayuca Travel
Module:	T.HBS.37179: Thesis W
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Place and date of distribution:	Deventer, 7 th September 2016

Preface

This exhaustive thesis has been written for the duration of seven months. This report is considered an “overhaul” version of the one which was previously which was handed-in. The majority of the information drastically changed. I would like to express my token of gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Theunissen for being there and helping me find my previous flaws, in order to improve on my mistakes. He was not only an examiner but was also involved in providing me throughout the process with valuable tips, hints and acting as a mentor. Without his support, most probably the final result of this research would have been vastly different. I would personally like to thank Mr. Verwijmeren as well, for being the research counsellor and helping me out with the research design formulation and suggesting some valuable tips on the survey distributed to the Russian travel market.

Next to this, I personally would like to thank Mrs. Yuricheva and Mrs. Barkel – my clients for devoting their time to reviewing how my progress with the report was going. Second to that, I would like to express my gratitude towards Mrs. Anna Yuricheva and my dear friend Mila Karamanova for taking the time to translate the questionnaire to Russian and both of them helping out with spreading it to the Russian tourists. Without their support, the distribution of the survey would not have been this successful as I would have only been able to distribute it in English. I would also like to thank all those people that helped me out in spreading the survey on Facebook to their Russian friends and acquaintances. Furthermore, sincere acknowledgments to the respondents that had taken part in this survey and devoted valuable time.

Other very important and supportive people were my parents and friends who pushed me to move forward and focus on my goal to deliver advice suitable for the client. Mrs. Bosch, who was my study career counsellor, was also very cooperative in actually helping me out to find this thesis topic in the first place via Mrs. Barkel.

Thank you all!

Emil Dimov

Sofia, August 3, 2016

Summary

Russian travel market inbound

The Russian travel market is increasingly growing. For this reason, the tour operator Bayuca Travel sees this as a potential opportunity and would like to attract the aforementioned market to the region of Twente, the Netherlands. Bayuca Travel seeks advice on the ways to achieve this. The research objective of the report was to find out the existence of a match between the Russian traveller's needs and wants and what the region of Twente currently offers as a destination. Hence, two central research questions were formulated in order to gain insight on both parties:

- ❖ *What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination branding?*
- ❖ *What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding destination preferences?*

In order to begin answering these questions, four relevant core concepts were derived from a literature review. The core concepts are as follow: destination branding, destination identity, destination image, Russian traveller characteristics. Furthermore, the core concept marketing plan was included in order to bring the advisory part of the report to a strategic level.

Two research designs were utilized throughout this report in order to answer the two central questions. Firstly, it was important to gain an insight into the Russian tourist's characteristics regarding their destination preferences. For this questionnaire to be conducted, secondary desk research was applied on the destination branding efforts, destination identity, and destination features of the region of Twente. The researcher corresponded via email with the marketing manager of Hof van Twente which is one of the tourism offices responsible for promoting the destination.

A web-based questionnaire was successfully distributed to 142 Russians in Russian. Numerical data was collected regarding their relationship status, gender, age, income, and level of education. Furthermore, the survey addressed questions about their traveling motivations, accommodation preferences, and the reason for visiting a destination.

The questionnaire included all Twente features from which the respondents were able to rate. The results showcased that there is a partial match between the destination and the Russian tourists. The majority of respondents, who are interested in the destination's features are in the age range of 16 – 26. They prefer to travel with their partner, friends, and family with children. All the travel groups have an affiliation to the historical attributes of the destination. The advisory objective was to contribute Bayuca Travel with recommendations on various options to lure the Russian travel market to Twente. Three advice possibilities were looked upon and later on evaluated. This was done in order to choose the one which was most feasible and provided return on investment.

The option for answering the management question for Bayuca Travel is to create a historical themed dynamic package labelled as the "Historical Avenue of Twente" for couples without children. Travelers can create their own package tour going through a list of activities taken from the highest rated destination features. By having the option of adding new activities, added value is generated for the tourist's experience.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background description of the organisation

Bayuca Travel is a specialist in organising unique travel experiences for its clients. The tour operator/consultancy foundation was founded in 2009 by tourism entrepreneurs Anna Yuricheva and Christa Barkel. Their intention is to spread knowledge and professionalism to the Eastern European hospitality industry. The foundation is specialised in arranging unique travel trips for Dutch tourists to the former Eastern European bloc countries such as Russia, Latvia, Bulgaria, Slovenia and others. Bayuca Travel has a diversified product portfolio ranging from the arrangement of study trips, training session trips, cruises, and wellness. Furthermore, the company designs concepts which boost the tourism mobility between Eastern and Western Europe (A.Yuricheva, personal communication, February 20, 2016). The overall objective of the foundation is to develop, support and promote its expertise and consulting services to tourism related companies. The foundation annually participates in major projects aimed at improving the social and economic advantages of the Eastern European travel market by encouraging Dutch travellers to visit Eastern Europe. Sustainability is one of the core values of the tour operator. Therefore, Bayuca Travel promotes its tourism products in a sustainable manner striving to find the balance between people, planet, and profit. When taking this into account, the travel organiser focuses on minimising the negative consequences of its activities on the environment. Furthermore, Bayuca Travel's core values emphasise on selling unique propositions to its clients. This focus enables the foundation to boost the economic benefits of Eastern European destinations while taking care of sustainability.

1.1.1 Mission

Bayuca Travel aims to offer unique touristic products and services to experienced travellers throughout destinations situated in Eastern Europe. The tour operator always takes the environment into account and operates with respect to the local character of a destination. By adding 'colour' to the products and services, the travellers are able to contribute to the local economy while enjoying a memorable experience.

1.2 Reasoning for the research

According to a market scan conducted by the NBTC (Holland Marketing, 2015), inbound tourism in the Netherlands has been steadily increasing over the last decades. In the year 2012, there were over 12.2 million tourists visiting the destination for holiday or business reasons. Out of these, 160, 000 travellers were from Russia (NBTC, 2015). This PAX number is forecasted to be 240, 000 by the year 2020, with an 8% yearly growth rate.

The client is especially interested in learning if there is a match between the Russian travel market's needs and wants, and what the region of Twente currently offers as a tourism destination. Twente is a non-administrative region in the eastern Netherlands (Wikipedia, 2011). The destination attracts many tourists from other parts of the country for its landscape which reminds of forests and pastures. The destination does not rely on tourism but instead it focuses on agriculture. The reason why this region is the central research topic is because of a request made by Bayuca Travel. The client wishes to gain insight on whether the place is suitable for a Russian tourist. The tour operator is keen on obtaining figures and statistics about the possible match between the destination's offerings and the Russian traveller's wants

and needs. Bayuca Travel hopes to achieve a higher level of market share and be the first tour operator to attract at least an appropriate segment of the Russian travel market showing interest to the region of Twente. The way of attracting the travel market is to advise the travel organiser with a suitable strategic marketing of a product. The tour operator is particularly interested in understanding the ways of attracting the aforementioned Russian travel market to the region of Twente. With this information in mind, the management question is formulated:

How can Bayuca Travel attract the Russian travel market to visit the region of Twente?

1.3 Objectives of the advisory part

The objective for the advisory part is to find a suitable option on the way of attracting this travel market to destination Twente. A prerequisite for coming up with options is to obtain facts about the Russian tourists in the research part. This information is used throughout the advisory part. A step-by-step marketing plan will be provided to Bayuca Travel in order to attract this market. Bayuca Travel does not seek advice for coming up with a solution to a bottleneck, due to the reason that there is no issue that needs to be dealt with. This advisory part consists of two advice questions:

- ❖ *What are the possible options that would lure the Russian travel market to the region of Twente?*
- ❖ *Which one of the options is most suitable for Bayuca Travel in order to attract the Russian travel market to the region of Twente?*

1.4 Objectives of the research part

The objective of the research is to gain an insight whether there is a match between the demands of the Russian travel market and what the region of Twente currently offers. This is a crucial step to acquire information from both parties in order to transition to the advisory part of the report. Without this insight, it would not be possible to answer the advice questions. Two central research questions are formulated.

1.5 Central research questions and sub-questions

1.5.1 CQ: What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination branding?

Both the central research question and the sub-questions are formulated with the help of the literature review about destination branding and destination identity. Destination branding and destination identity are two interchangeable core concepts dealt with when a tour operator is interested in attracting a new travel market to a destination. The aspects of the sub-questions mentioned below help to answer the central question:

Sub-questions

- ❖ *What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of promotional material for its tourism products?*
- ❖ *What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination identity?*
- ❖ *What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of the most highlighted tourist recreational activities?*

1.5.2 CQ: What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding destination preferences?

Both the central research question and sub-questions were formulated based on the literature review regarding the core concepts – Russian tourist characteristics, destination image, and destination branding. Those were the chosen concepts because they provide extensive source of information. The

information is necessary for developing a survey, able to trigger results about the requirements of the travel market. The insight is used to compare the results gathered from the previous central research question. These sub-questions were answered by distributing questionnaires to the Russian tourists and ultimately, the central question was as well answered.

Sub-questions

- ❖ *What are the characteristics of the Russian traveller profile?*
- ❖ *What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding their accommodation preferences for tourism purposes?*
- ❖ *What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding their motivation to visit a particular destination for tourism purposes?*
- ❖ *What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding their most frequent reason of visiting a particular destination for tourism purposes?*
- ❖ *What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding their interest in a destination's features?*
- ❖ *What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding their tourism recreational requirement?*

Motivation for choosing the questions – Establishing two central questions made the strategy of the dissertation clearer by targeting two valuable stakeholders with a different research design method. The questions were all related to each other because each answer of the questions brought the report a step closer to answering the management question.

1.6 Reading guide

The following study consists of eight chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the organisation, the reasoning behind the study carried out and how the project is structured. The research questions and objectives are stated in this chapter.

Chapter 2 is labelled as the theoretical framework and includes a literature review of all core concepts that were applicable in this study. Moreover, the search methods are elaborated and utilized in finding the right information.

Chapter 3 consists of a methodological section explaining how the data was acquired, who the targeted population was, and which research design was used to reach this sample.

Chapter 4 contains the execution of the field research, the gathering of all necessary data and the analysis of the results.

Chapter 5 provides conclusions to the research part as well as answering all the research questions.

Chapter 6 provides a discussion on the reliability and validity of the data results.

Chapter 7 is labelled as advice recommendations and compares three options. The most appropriate one is chosen.

Chapter 8 provides a strategic marketing plan on the chosen option. Furthermore, the PDCA cycle is utilised in order to implement the advice. Moreover, the financial implications are elaborated.

2. Theoretical framework

The following chapter deals with the theoretical framework. A literature review was necessary in order to fully grasp the knowledge necessary for the researcher to provide a coherent answer to the management problem. Relevant information over available theoretical concepts regarding destination branding, destination image, and destination identity were looked upon. These core concepts destination image and Russian tourist characteristics were applied in the survey design, whilst destination branding and destination identity were utilised in the secondary desk research. Those core concepts are very similar to each other and used interchangeably as a tool when trying to attract travellers to a destination. The core concept marketing plan was introduced in the theoretical framework in order to formulate the advisory part on a strategic level.

The objective of the research was to gain an insight whether there is a match between the demands of the Russian travel market and the offerings of the region of Twente. The research part aimed at answering the following research questions:

- ❖ *What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination branding?*
- ❖ *What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding destination preferences?*

2.1 Search Methods and AAOCC application

Please refer to Appendix A and Appendix B.

2.2 Results from the literature research

2.2.1 Destination branding

Ritchie and Ritchie (1998) point out that destination branding is “a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination. Furthermore, it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination. It also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience” (as cited in Blein, Levy & Ritchie, 2005, p.329).

Tourism destinations consist of interchangeable services and products bound together under a brand name within the same geographical area. Kerr (2006) points out that destination branding had previously focused on tourism products and calls for a “more holistic perspective, location or place brand, taking into account all aspects of a location” (as cited in Kozak & Baloglu, 2011, p.154). The geographical boundaries of a destination can range from small towns to nations. Another common definition is that travellers perceive the destination as a whole entity under a brand name. An example of such misconception is Istanbul or Amsterdam being destinations for Europeans. For the Russian market, Europe is seen as the destination. A destination brand represents the core essence and enduring characteristics of a destination. Usakli and Baloglu (2011) state that destination branding is a relevant concept, due to the fact that travellers would opt for recommended brands that match their own self-actualization. The above-mentioned occurrence is named the self-congruity theory. *For secondary information on destination branding, please refer to Appendix C.*

2.2.2 Destination image

The destination image is the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of a place (Kotler, et al., 1993).

Past studies on destination image lead to an indication that there is a level of influence on the tourism behaviour. The destination image is an important part of the customer-based brand equity models and plays a catalytic role in the tourist demand management (Konecnik & Gartner 2007, Boo, Busser & Baloglu 2009).

Milman and Pizam (1995) state that if a destination desires to be potentially successful, first of all, it is necessary for the tourist to have a positive image and awareness of the place. In relation to the hospitality industry, a destination brand image consists of cognitive (perceptual) and affective (emotional) components (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The cognitive evaluation refers to beliefs and knowledge of a place or object, whilst affective evaluation is about feelings and emotions about a place or an object. Um and Crompton (1990) claim that travellers who have not previously visited a place are more likely to be critical about their choice selection. Kotler, Haider and Rein (1993) state that it is possible for a destination to have either a positive, negative, weak, or an unclear image. Sirgy and Su (2000) introduced the self-congruity theory to the tourism field, in order to formulate an explanation regarding the relationships between the self-concept and destination image. Their theory suggests that self-congruity is the match between the destination's image and the traveller's perception regarding the actual and ideal self-image.

Furthermore, Sirgy and Su (2000) gave the proposition that tourists not only base their evaluation on the symbolic features of a destination but additionally, they look at characteristics such as price, the level of service quality, and the variation of activities within the destination. Beerli and Martín (2007) conducted a study that led to the insight that the stronger the match between a person's self-concept and the destination image, the more likely the tourist would like to visit the destination. However, there is a loss of power on the actual and ideal self-congruity. The reason is the fact that there is less influence when a tourist has already visited the destination. *For secondary information on destination image, please refer to appendix C.*

2.2.3 Destination identity

Brand literature makes a clear distinction between brand identity and brand image. Research points out that the destination identity is how the brand strategists would like the brand to be perceived. In other words, this is how the supplier's (destination) version of the brand personality looks like. Aaker (1996) defines brand identity as "a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain" (p.68).

Aaker (1996) further elaborates that:

Brand identity should help establish a relationship between the brand and the customer by generating a value proposition involving functional, emotional or self-expressive benefits. (p.68)

Brand identity consists of core and extended identity (Aaker, 1996). The core identity is constantly remaining as the brand is trying to attract new markets and products. The key components of it are that it contributes to the brand uniqueness and value proposition of a destination. The core destination identity should clearly incorporate the characteristics of the destination. It is not possible for the core identity to be changed immediately. However, the extended identity helps the core identity to be

strengthened by implementing various communication strategies. *For secondary information on destination identity, please refer to Appendix C.*

2.2.4 Russian tourist characteristics

The Russian tourist's characteristics are defined as the cultural and social blueprint of a certain population. This includes age, educational background, income, the reason for visit, destination preferences, and size of the travel group. This statement serves as a representation of them. There are many motives for travellers expressing the need of visiting a destination.

In a case study conducted by Lehtinen (2014), the goal was to improve the knowledge of the Russian travel market. In the study, the tourists were approached via interview and email questionnaires concerning their wants and needs regarding a destination. As it turned out, the Russian tourists are no exception in the self-cognitive matter. When they plan on going to a vacation, they seek destinations that offer multiple activities and experiences. The experiences lived are most commonly shared with family and friends after the trip in order to realise the self-actualization. If the services and activities in the travel destination do not meet the Russian consumers' expectations, they feel the trip has not succeeded. Furthermore, the research revealed that there is a relationship between a bigger group of passengers and longer vacations. Concerning the choice of accommodation, large Russian groups are in favour of choosing spacious living places such as cottages, apartments and bigger hotel rooms. Their tendency is to utilise as much as possible from the offerings of the accommodation sites such as on-sight activities. This leads to the insight that they prefer to spend more time with each other at their accommodation place.

Lehtinen (2014) claims that the Russian tourists, coming from the high class, have higher service quality expectations and prefer to enjoy all-inclusive tourism offers. They are willing to pay more for an exceptional service. The rating of a destination is highly important in their minds, not only for accommodation purposes but for the destination as a whole entity. This is directly in-line with the destination image which plays an important role in the critical success factor of a destination. Even though it is of utmost importance for all Russian tourists to share their travel experiences with their friends, the higher class tends to have the need of feeling appreciated and to boost its personal status.

Lehtinen (2014) points out that the Russian travel market is very price sensitive and, even though they might have a higher income, they are in favour of finding out the best offers available. From her interview analysis, Lehtinen (2014) found out that word-of-mouth and recommendations are very important factors for the final decision making. The opinion of friends and family is highly favourable whenever somebody is looking for a reference on possible destinations. Following her interview sessions, Lehtinen (2014) found out that there are three types of Russian travellers that can be distinguished – couples, families with children, and a group of friends.

For secondary information on the Russian travel characteristics and tourists characteristics in general, please refer to Appendix C.

2.2.5 Marketing plan

A marketing plan is a coordinated process that establishes a link between the organisation's goals and resources and its marketing opportunities. In other words, the organisation strives in making the best use of its resources. Holloway (2004) elaborates that the first important step to be undertaken is to have knowledge of the goals and resources which are available, as well as to keep an eye on the opportunities that can be exploited by the organisation. *For secondary information on marketing, please refer to Appendix C.*

➤ Previous knowledge on the customer

The first part of a marketing plan is to clarify who are the consumers of the tourist package and what are their characteristics. Time is necessary to be spent in describing the target audience. This information leads to an insight on the ways of reaching those potential customers and how to maximise profit.

Setting objectives

The second step of a marketing plan is to set up objectives. Typical objectives sought by travel companies are:

- Achieving sales growth within a given period of time
- Increasing the income of the organization by a given percentage within the period
- Increasing the current market share by x per cent within a period of time
- Measureable increase on Return on Investment by the company

The objectives are the backbone of decision-making and need to be formulated SMART.

Holloway (2004) advises that it is not suitable to work on many objectives at once, due to the danger of creating conflict between the strategies.

Scan the business environment

It is important to know how easy it is for a new target market to be allowed to visit a particular destination. Holloway (2004) states that in some countries, the entry of the market is controlled by the government legislation. A suitable model that deals with a marketing scan of the environment is the DESTEP analysis. It can be applied by any tourism company wishing to learn more about the competitive environment, consumer demand, the economic influences, and the changing cultural factors.

- **SWOT analysis**

After concluding the broad analysis of the business environment, it is important to evaluate the present position of the company. The review is undertaken by using a technique labelled as the SWOT analysis. For this reason, any internal processes are left out. In terms of weaknesses, tour operators should be conscious about their competitive position and mention the disadvantages of their pricing, promotional terms or scope of destinations.

- **Choice of a marketing tactic**

The marketing mix is one of the most important elements of a marketing plan. Kotler (2013) defines it as “the set of controllable tactical marketing tools that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market” (p.76). The tools consist of four variables, commonly referred to as the four P’s: product, price, place, promotion.

The product consists of tangible and intangible elements. Holloway (2004) points out that the intangible products could add value to the overall experience for the customer. Price refers to the money paid for the service by the consumer. Moreover, the price is the numerical figure of the willingness to provide the service to the traveller when taking into account various elements such as cost and sales volume. The place variable is controversial because it is defined as the place where the purchase had taken place and the means on how the product has been delivered. However, in the hospitality sector, this becomes confusing because some theorists argue that place refers to the destination of the tourists. In order to make it clear, place will be defined in terms of the distribution channels. Promotion is the technique used to communicate the prices and products to the marketplace. Examples of this are advertising, sales promotion strategies, public relation activities, and the use of ICT (information and communication technologies) to reach the target market.

- **Strategic planning**

When a company is done with evaluating its marketing position, there are three directions that can be undertaken:

- 1) Low price leadership – The price is reduced in favour of selling more.
- 2) Product differentiation – Products are specialised and not offered by any competitors. Holloway (2004) states that the focus is on quality. This justifies the higher pricing for the tourism package.
- 3) Market focus – In this case, the idea is to concentrate solely on one specific market. This is referred to as market segmentation. The advantages of using such an approach, are that the company vastly reduces the competition. By reducing competition, the market becomes less price-sensitive, which in turn boosts profit. Holloway (2014) recommends small travel agents to develop their marketing strategies based on specific specialisation such as a geographical region, type of activity or the market which is served.

- **Controlling the market plan** – Constant monitoring is crucial for the success of a marketing plan, as in any other project. A tool for doing this is the Balanced Scorecard which deals with the financial, the internal, customer and learning perspective (Mackay 2004).

It is very critical to be decisive when thinking about the initial investment budget. It is important to consider how much money will be allocated to the marketing and promotional material, as well as staff costs.

2.3 Operationalisation

The destination branding and the Russian tourist characteristics were operationalised in Appendix D and E respectively and are in-line with the gathered information from the literature review. It should be important to note that identity and image have been included as components of destination branding.

3. Research Methodology

This chapter deals with the data collection methods which were based on the two types of central research questions asked. The research strategy, as well as the research designs were elaborated. These methods were in favour of the empirical research. The first central question was answered by means of desk research and an email interview. The second central question was answered by means of a survey design. The survey design was the dominant research data collection method. Each one of the designs consisted of sampling units; therefore, a sampling plan was proposed and the methods of data analysis were extensively elaborated.

3.1 The research strategy

The following composed strategy for the empirical research evolved around a survey design and a desk research with an email interview. This study was in favour of both techniques of acquiring knowledge, due to the complexity of the original central question and the population which was targeted. The empirical study originally had only one central question:

To what extent is there a match between the demands of the Russian travel market regarding the region of Twente and what the destination currently offers?

As seen in the central question, it was not possible to use only one research design, because conducting qualitative research to the tourists would have taken an enormous amount of time to generalize their requirements. On the other hand, conducting a survey to the region of Twente will not give a deeper insight into the core essence of the destination and its offerings; therefore, it cannot be determined whether there is a match between the two parties or not. This leads to an impact on the management question. In such case, it cannot be answered fully and accurately.

The first step of the strategy was to conduct the desk research regarding the destination identity of the region of Twente. It was important to find relevant sources on the various destination features which are offered in the aforementioned region. Secondly, a short email correspondence with a destination branding tourism office for the region of Twente was required in order to gain more insight into the branding and the core essence of the destination. After acquiring the necessary information regarding the destination, it was then possible to proceed with the survey design. The combination of the quantified data gathered by the sample and the qualitative opinion of Hof van Twente served as the answer whether there was a match between the requirements of the Russian travel market and the offerings of the region of Twente as a tourist destination.

3.2 Research designs

3.2.1 Desk research

The desk research was chosen as the secondary research design. It is often considered as a low-cost alternative to a field research. The main motivation behind this choice of opting for a desk research is the holistic approach that needs to be taken into account in order to learn all about the branding efforts of the destination. This design is appropriate for the exploratory phase of the study and is used to answer the central question: *What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination branding?* The only way to truly gain an insight into the destination characteristics of the region of Twente was to gather website information on what the various destination branding organisations highlight and say about the place. Furthermore, the official tourism websites of Twente were looked at to find an insight

into the destination's core attractions which are promoted. This was done in order to learn about the DNA of the destination. Conducting the desk research enabled the researcher to gain an insight into the identity of the destination, the brand positioning, reasoning behind the slogan, the current branding efforts, and other elements forming the destination. Destination branding as a core concept was operationalized earlier and served as the central topic for an email interview. The topics within destination branding were as follows: destination identity, the most highlighted tourist activities and the promotional material.

The purposive sampling method was selected, in regard to provide a pre-selection criterion which is relevant to the central research question.

The sampling selection of the research units was based on the following criteria:

- ❖ The person working interviewed should be the branding manager.
- ❖ The organisation is in charge of promoting and branding the region of Twente.

By using the abovementioned criteria, three organisations were selected. The companies were Twente Branding, Beleef Twente, and Hof van Twente, each having a branding manager. Numerous attempts were made to arrange a qualitative interview with Beleef Twente and Twente Branding. However, none of the organisations responded; therefore, only the information from the marketing manager of Hof van Twente was primary used.

Hof van Twente was the only one that was willing to cooperate because the others did not respond either through mail or on the phone. Therefore, it was seen as that they are not interested. The contact person's name was Lianne Niemeyer, who was very enthusiastic and proposed to correspond via email about the destination branding and identity of Twente. *The email correspondence can be found in Appendix N.* Most of the information regarding the destination features had been gathered by conducting the desk research. Nevertheless, clarification and approval of the marketing director was vital. The contact person suggested specific destination attributes, not found on the tourism websites of Beleef Twente and Hof van Twente. The information gathered from interviewing the tourism marketing manager of Hof van Twente served as a basis on the way to approach the Russian travel market population, not only in the questionnaire, but as well in the advisory part. By building up the brand essence of the destination, it was possible to include the destination features of the region of Twente into the questionnaire. All these destination characteristics were labelled as motivational factors for tourists visiting a particular place.

3.2.2 Survey design

Brotheron (2011) expresses that the survey design is used to collect information from a "representative sample" of individuals using the technique "Asking questions". This study was in favour of conducting a survey design due to the desire of gathering numerical information regarding the requirements and opinions of the Russian traveller and to compare if they are interested in Twente's offerings. Verhoeven (2015) refers to the data collected as cross-sectional. The population was Russian tourists who have had no previous experience or expectation about the region of Twente, but the questions asked in the questionnaire included aspects of the DNA of the destination. Another reason for choosing a survey design is that it is a standardized procedure with less room for systematic error with the ability of quantifying the data collected from the respondents.

Furthermore, according to Brotherton (2011), it is easier to design a survey and implement it rather than other empirical studies. The objective comparisons are then easier to be attained. The survey was distributed to the potential respondents by electronic means due to the geographical boundaries and difficulty in reaching the population directly. Brotherton (2011) states that this is a very popular type of survey because an enormous amount of people are surfing the web every day. By distributing the survey digitally, it diminishes the necessity of travelling to Amsterdam or any other major Dutch city where there is a probability of finding the Russian travellers. This reduced the time spent on distributing the questionnaires. Furthermore, it would be easier to reach immediately the desired sample. A postal survey would be cost-ineffective, i.e. sending the questionnaire to Russian residents. Telephone surveys were out of the question, due to the lack of ability to acquire a sample frame from a telephone book and speaking the native Russian language. Face to face surveys were impractical in this matter because it was already very difficult to find Russian tourists in the geographical region where the study had taken place.

It should be noted that there are disadvantages when applying a survey design. Brotherton (2011) points out that, although a survey design is applicable in this circumstance, it is not necessarily the best way of gathering information, because other research designs are more accurate. Furthermore, due to the fixed nature of the questions, there is no room for flexibility, whilst with a qualitative analysis it is possible. Another major disadvantage, pointed out by Brotherton (2011), is that it is not possible to explore the motivation behind a certain answer of a question.

3.3 Data collection method

3.3.1 Web-based questionnaire method

The chosen method of collection is a web-based questionnaire. The reason behind this strategic decision is that the possible sample is most active, and is more likely to fill out the questionnaire. Brotherton (2015) states that, in terms of designing the questions, they need to be unambiguous, comprehensive and contain the measurements that the researcher wants to measure.

The questionnaire design of the web-based survey is straight-forward. The data gathered by the Russian travellers served as a comparison tool about the match between the offerings of the region of Twente as a destination and the tourist preferences. It was designed to assess the destination image, as well as the traveller perceptions of the region of Twente. Furthermore, it assessed the traveller's possible interest in traveling for vacation purposes.

A sample size of 142 people received an online invitation questionnaire from the Russian multi-sided platform vkontakte.com including Facebook. The software program which was used to design the web-based survey is called Qualtrics. Qualtrics comes packed with the possibility of designing the questionnaire and the option of exporting the acquired data into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Qualtrics was chosen, due to the possibility of digitally receiving back the questionnaire once it has been filled out by the respondent. Another advantage of using Qualtrics, is that it automatically creates charts and statistics based on the questions asked, so the work and time to send the data to SPSS is diminished.

The degree of anonymity of the respondent was high. There were many people who opted to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to the Russian population using the most popular social media portal by Russians – vkontakte.com. Sangeet (2013) states that a multi-sided social platform is

an organisation that enables a direct interaction between customers. The questionnaire was available in the mother tongue of the respondents as well as in English. The questionnaire was first written in English due to the inability to remove this option in Qualtrics. *The English translation can be found in Appendix F and the Russian version in Appendix G.* The idea behind spreading a web-based survey in Russian was that more people would be willing to fill it out. However, this effort did not make much of a difference in terms of reachability.

3.4 Sampling plan

The population of this study was Russians travellers. No sampling frame existed, due to the fact that it was difficult to acquire any administrative record of all the Russian users from the websites. Therefore, the only alternative was to opt for a non-probability based strategy having its weak points. *This is elaborated later on in the reliability section 6.1.* Convenience based sampling was chosen as the desired strategy. Persons were deliberately selected for the sake of providing information that cannot be obtained in a probability based way. What this means is that a specific number of the population was chosen based on who is most easily available and willing to fill out the questionnaire while at the same time, complying with predetermined criteria.

The respondents were approached with an inviting message. The message encouraged them to fill out the questionnaire in a hospitable manner. The respondents were addressed either in Russian or English, depending on their preference. However, the criteria for selecting certain people had to comply with the following rules:

- The respondent is Russian, speaks Russian and is able to fill out the questionnaire in Russian. It is accepted to be with a mixed nationality.
- The Russian respondent is interested in filling out the questionnaire and successfully completing it.
- Gender and age do not matter.
- The Russian respondent is part of a travel community page.
- The respondent appears to be interested in travelling, judging by his/her pictures posted.

The size of the realised research sample (142) comprising of a 143,441,282 population, was not very valid. There was an overrepresentation of the adults between the ages of 21 – 29. However, the given sample is still representative to some degree for the younger group. In a correspondence with the research counsellor for the questionnaire, 100 respondents were proven to be enough for such a thesis project. “The outcome of the sample is generalised back to the population as a whole” (Brotherton, 2011). The way the generalisation had taken place was that all respondents received questions about certain aspects that they enjoy or dislike from the region of Twente. The choices that they made from the questionnaire provided truthful generalisation of the younger part.

Invitation to fill out the questionnaire

Please refer to Appendix O.

3.5 Data analysis plan

The data analysis utilisation opted for two different techniques based on quantitative and qualitative information measurements.

3.5.1 Survey data analysis plan

The survey analysis plan was necessary to answer the second central research question: *“What are the current Russian tourist characteristics regarding destination preferences?”* The question consisted of both an independent and dependent variable. The characteristics are classified as an independent and preferences are regarded as the dependent variable. All sub-questions are answered by means of a univariate analysis. Frequency distribution was applied in this case. The mean score was calculated as a measure of central tendency with regards to the rating of the destination features.

The general background information of the respondents was obtained via a univariate analysis. A frequency distribution table was applied. The survey consisted of questions regarding the age, gender, relationship status, and income of the respondents. The variables were nominal, ordinal, and scale. The first part of the questionnaire solely focused on nominal level-based questions in order to determine the adequate demographic profile of the sample. Secondly, there were questions consisting of one more variable, prompting for a bivariate analysis. The different travel group preferences were compared via cross-tabulation.

The analysis for the qualitative aspect which answered the first central research question *“What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination branding?”* relied on using the information from the desk research and the email correspondence. Both sources of knowledge helped out to provide an answer to the sub-questions.

4. Results

The following chapter discusses the most important results gathered from the research. There were two analysis techniques involved in this section. The first part comprised of the desk research regarding the destination branding and identity of the region of Twente. An email correspondence analysis with Hof van Twente has been included in this chapter. The second part was a survey analysis of the respondents that had taken part in the survey. Statistical information and figures were included to provide an accurate portrayal of the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

4.1 Desk research on the region of Twente

The following desk research aims at answering the first central research question which is *“What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination branding?”* The sub-questions were answered with the help of the desk research and the correspondence of the marketing director of Hof van Twente.

4.1.1 Twente offering in terms of promotional material for its tourism products

Twente is a non-administrative region in the eastern part of the Netherlands. The region comprises of fourteen municipalities. The five most well-known are Almelo, Hengelo, Enschede and Hof van Twente. The destination is considered to be the most urban part of Overijssel (Wikipedia, 2011).

Every municipality is promoted by a different tourism organisation. The destination identity is divided between the various parts of the region. Each municipality promotes its part in a different manner. There is a lack of a primary promotional tourism office dealing with the branding of the destination; therefore, the exact extended identity is difficult to be pointed out because of the various communication strategies utilised by the organisations. Furthermore, the recent bankruptcy of the Twente Tourism Bureau had an impact on the division of the DMO's in charge of promoting the destination (L.Wolbering, personal communication, April 22nd, 2016).

They all take part in the marketing and promotional efforts for Twente, having various roles for the different geographical regions that form Twente as a destination. The communication channels used by most of these organisations to promote the different parts of Twente, are via their websites. On the websites, the branding organisations showcase destination features, activities and accommodation options that the traveller might be interested in visiting. Most of the websites do not contain information in English, except the one from the Twente Tourism Bureau, which is still active but not updated anymore.

4.1.2 Destination identity

Even though there is a difference in the communication strategy for the extended identity, the core identity for the region of Twente remains the same. The core identity of the destination is a combination between countryside and city life, branded as the “estate of the Netherlands” (L.Wolbering, personal communication, April 22nd, 2016).

The destination is identified as a place full of pure serenity, beautiful landscapes, meadows, and forests (Visit Twente, 2016). The destination is considered to be the garden of the Netherlands. Furthermore, Wolbering (2016) points out that Twente contains beautiful environments using the metaphor “as time stood still”. Twente is a cultural destination combined with historical elements.

The Twente Tourism Bureau identifies it as “an ideal place for an enrichment in life” (Visit Twente, 2016). Wolbering (2016) identifies Twente as a destination which is “comfortable, sportive, artfully, hospitable, romantic, historical, educational, agricultural, unspoiled, safe, quiet, relaxing, fun and urban”.

4.1.3 The most highlighted tourist activities

The region of Twente offers many forms of tourism activities ranging from cycling, walking tours, museum watching and visiting historical areas. This information was gathered from the tourism websites of Hof van Twente, Beleef Twente and the Twente Tourism Bureau.

The destination features are: windmills, old towns, landmarks, monuments, historical buildings, shopping places, adventure family parks, clubs, beer brewery, drawing centers, picnic areas, art galleries, castles, forests, and horse riding routes. All of these were mentioned by the marketing director of Hof van Twente (L.Wolbering, personal communication, April 22nd, 2016).

Hof van Twente highlights the six castles scattered throughout the destination. The three are Huis te Diepenheim, Nijenhuis, and Westerflier en Warmeloare. All of the above-mentioned attractions are names historical buildings.

Furthermore, another prominent castle, which is frequently highlighted on both the websites and the email correspondence, is castle Twickel. The castle is famous for its beautiful botanic gardens and spacious surroundings. As deduced from the desk research, the historical attractions are the unique selling destination attributes. *For the full email correspondence, please refer to Appendix N.* This information is reoccurring on the websites of the various destination organizations.

4.2 Wishes and demands of the Russian travellers

The quantitative findings aim to answer the second central question: What are the current Russian tourist's characteristics regarding destination preferences?

4.2.1 Demographic profile and characteristics of the Russian traveller

The general profile of the respondents is a mixture of 112 female (79%) and 30 male (21.13%) across all age groups (Figure K.1).

The respondent's age ranged from 16 up to 64. The majority of the respondents are between the age range from 16 to 26 year's old (Figure K.2). The marital status is as follows: 43% single, 19% married, and 38% in a relationship (Figure K.3). Verhoeven (2015) refers to this as a bimodal distribution because it has two peaks as seen in Figure K.3 in Appendix K.

The majority of the respondents are without children (Figure K.4). 25% of the respondents earn more than 100, 000 rubles monthly which is equivalent to 1,330 euro on a monthly basis. 25% have acquired Secondary Education, 43% of the population have obtained a bachelor's degree and 28% have obtained a master's degree (Figure K.5).

With regards to the travel group size, 37% of the respondents travel with their friends, 27% travel with a partner, 17% travel with their parents, 14% travel alone and 6% with a partner and kids as seen in Figure 4.1. Travellers with friends travel the most, followed by those with partners. In terms of self-actualization 51% of the respondents choose a destination if the place reflects the way they see themselves as seen in Figure K.23.

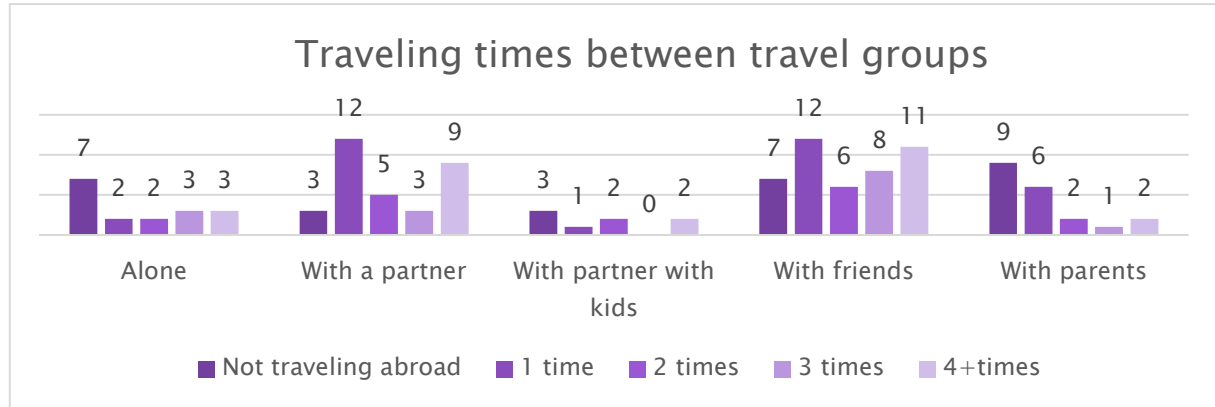


Figure 4.1: Traveling times abroad between travel groups

4.2.2 Accommodation preferences

35% of 98 respondents are interested in cottages and 33% in sunny beach resorts. This validates Lehtinen's (2014) qualitative findings that the Russians are looking for spacious accommodations as seen in section 2.2.4. Figure 4.2 showcases various travel group accommodation preferences.

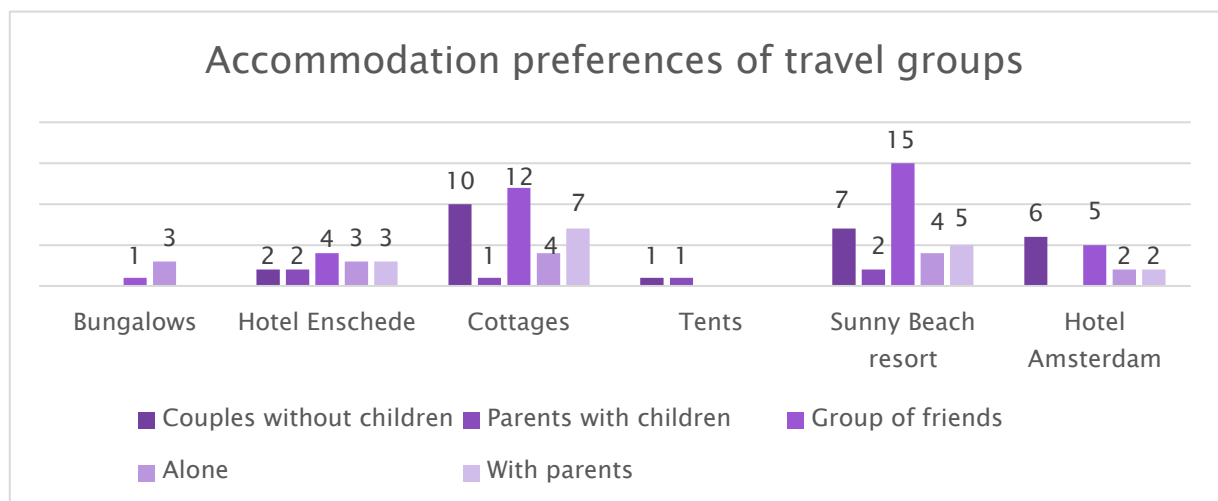
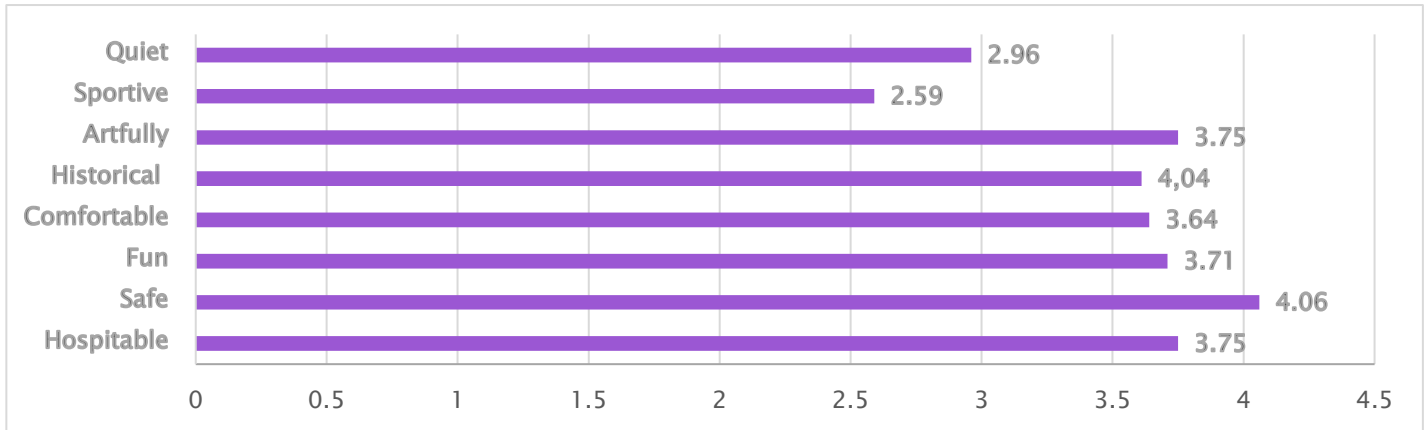


Figure 4.2: Accommodation preferences of travel groups

4.2.3 Motives to visit a particular destination for tourism purposes

The Russian respondents are motivated to visit destinations which are safe, hospitable, artfully, fun, and historical. 81% of the 120 respondents consider safety very important, 79% find hospitality important, and 65% find artful destinations important. They are demotivated in visiting destinations which are quiet and sportive as seen in Figure 4.3. *For a full list of the variables, please refer to Figure K.19.*



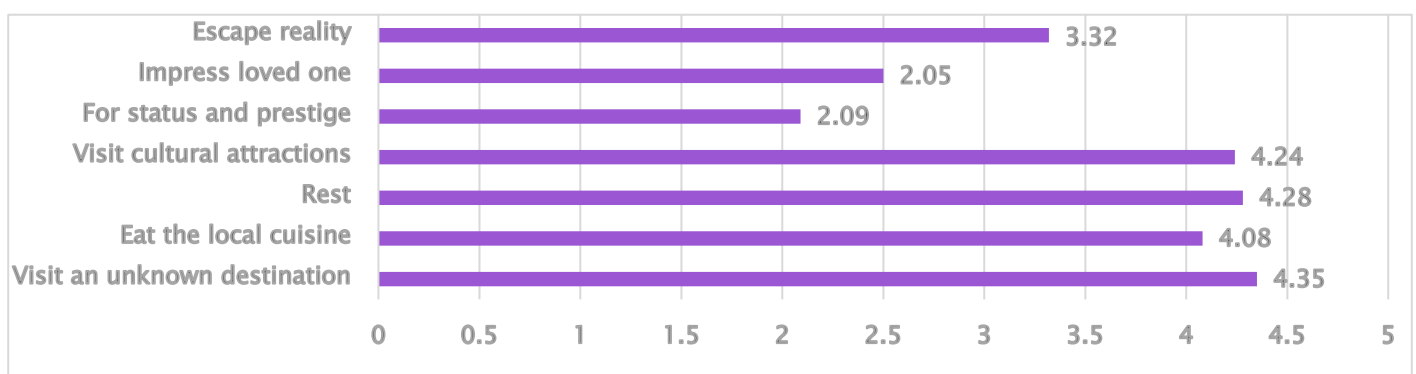
Legend: 1= Very unimportant 2= Unimportant 3=Neutral 4=Important 5=Very important

Figure 4.3: Motives to visit a destination

4.2.4 Reason for visiting a particular destination for tourism purposes

The most frequent reason for visiting a destination for a Russian tourist is the fulfilment of the self-actualization of the respondents through a certain place (Figure K.23). *For more variables, please refer to Figure K.20 in Appendix K.* This is directly in-line with Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott's (2002) theory about aspirational travellers seeking self-actualization. 41% of the N=110 had given this answer. Various reasons of visiting variables were explored in the next question which provides an in-depth insight on the reason of visiting as seen in Figure 4.4. *For a full list of all variables, please refer to Figure K.20.*

94% of the participants agree that they want to travel to a destination they have not seen before. The mean score is 4.35. This study validates the theory of Morgan, Pritchard and Piggot (2002) that tourists are interested in discovering new places rather than escaping reality during their vacations as seen in section 2.2.3



Legend: 1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

Figure 4.4: Reason for visiting a particular place

4.2.5 The tourist interest in the region of Twente destination features

The destination features are broken down into six categories. The categories are labelled as; cultural attractions, tourist activities, nature, historical attractions, inhabitant areas, and accommodation.

As seen in Figure 4.5, the most interesting cultural attractions are events participation, and second to that, art galleries. Drawing centres score as low as 2.7 which means that the respondents are uninterested. The respondents are interested in history as seen in Figure 4.6. This category scores the highest rating. 88% of the respondents find castles interesting and 81% historical buildings.

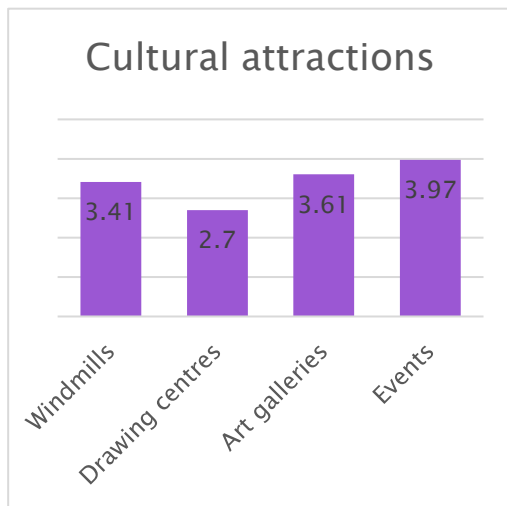


Figure 4.5: Cultural category

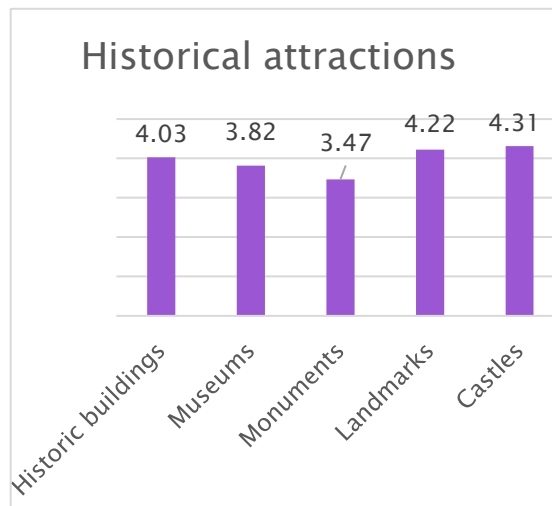


Figure 4.6: Historical category

In terms of geographical characteristics the respondents are very interested in picnic areas and a beautiful landscape as seen in Figure 4.7 and Figure 4.8. Furthermore, they are interested in botanic gardens and trekking paths. Regarding the category “inhabitant places”, the respondents are mostly interested in visiting old towns.

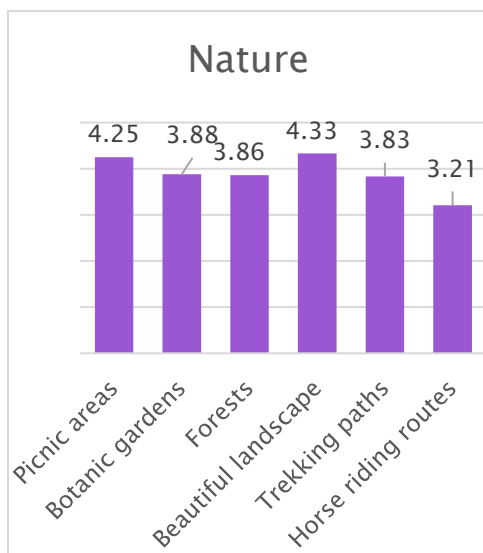


Figure 4.7: Natural category

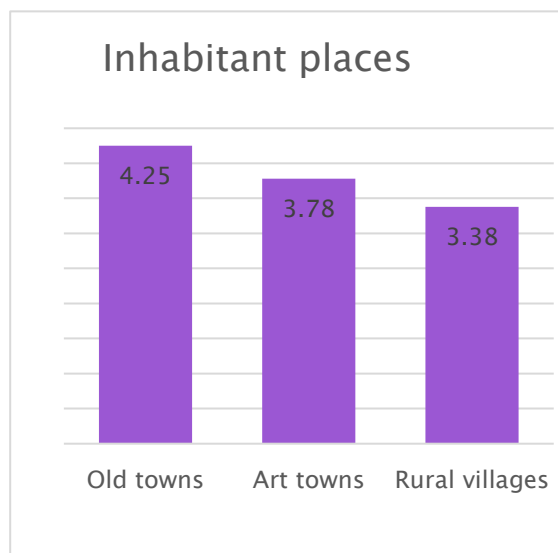


Figure 4.8: Inhabitant category

In terms of tourist activities which are provided throughout the region of Twente, the results showcase a neutral feeling by the respondents. The only positive score is cycling as seen in Figure 4.9. In terms of accommodation features, the respondents showcase mixed feelings. The highest score in this category are hotels with a mean score of 3.63. The respondents find camping farms uninteresting as seen in Figure 4.10.

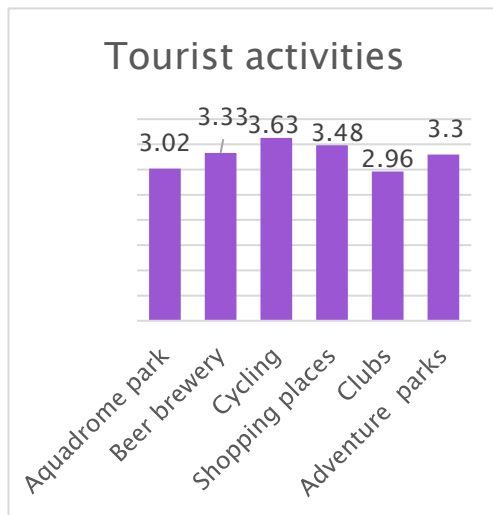


Figure 4.9: Tourist activities category

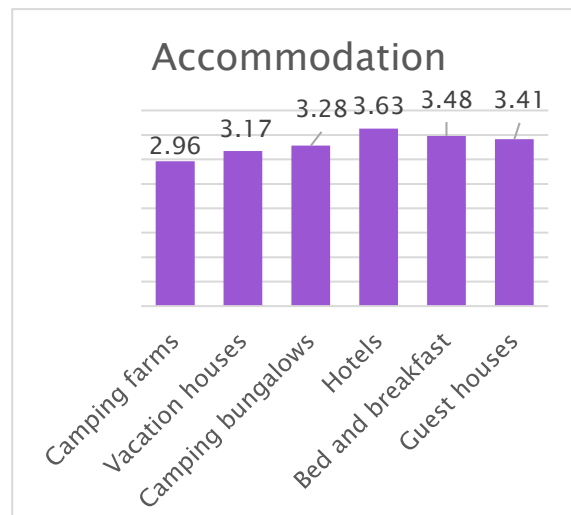


Figure 4.10: Accommodation category

To summarize, there are in total 7 features which fall into a positive category: landmarks (4.23), picnic areas (4.25), old towns (4.25), a hospitable community (4.14), beautiful landscape (4.34), castles (4.31), and historical buildings (4.03). Neutral features are referred to as non-significant destination attributes which fall down with a mean score of above 3. These are pointed out as neutral feelings or indifferent for the respondent whether the features are available or not. Please refer to Figure 4.11 for the most important features to be kept in mind. Various group travel preferences regarding the region of Twente are showed in Figure K.18 and Figure K.21 in Appendix K. In terms of negative features, these are referred to as those destination attributes which fall within the category of a mean score less than 3.

The following are not interesting for the respondents and should be avoided when the destination is marketed towards the Russian travellers: clubs (2.96), drawing centres (2.70), and camping farms (2.96).

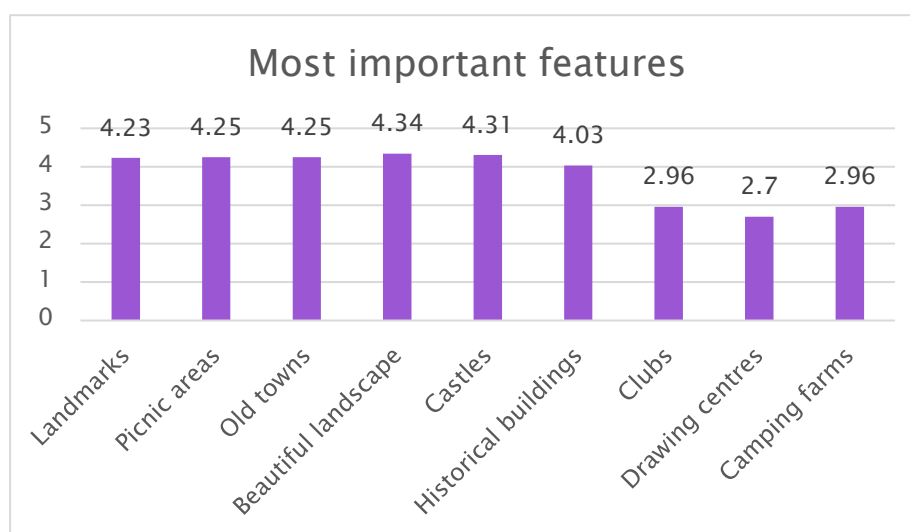


Figure 4.11: Most important features

Out of 120 respondents, 52% agree that there is a match between their wants and what the destination of Twente offers as features, as seen in Figure 12. However, not far behind are 43% of the travellers who have not yet decided whether there is a match or not. Only 2% disagree that there is a match and 3% completely disagree that there is a match. The mean score is 3.45 and is situated in the neutral zone.

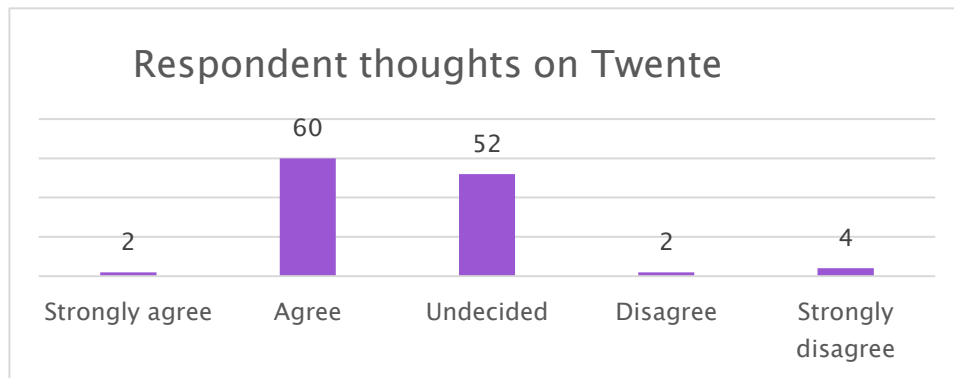


Figure 4.12: Respondents thoughts on Twente

4.2.6 Tourist recreational requirements

As seen in the previous categories, the most interesting recreational activities for the Russian tourists are: events, picnicking, and trekking. Furthermore, a heat map of suitable activities for the Russian tourists was provided. The respondents were able to click on one of the images. As it turned out, 39% of 105 respondents are interested in tanning, 20% in cycling and 25% are interested in boat rides as seen in Figure 4.13.

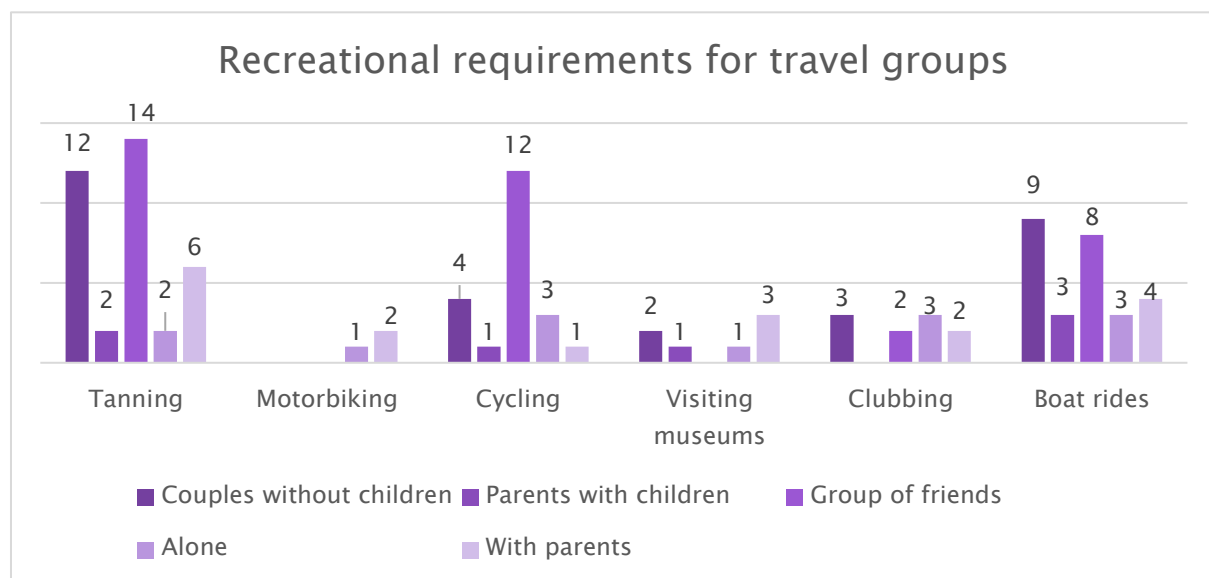


Figure 4.13: Tourist recreational requirements

5. Conclusions

In this chapter, the central research questions are answered with the help of the gathered information. The questions were as follow: “What does the region of Twente currently offer in terms of destination branding”? and “What are the current Russian tourist’s characteristics regarding destination preferences”? The following section serves as a conclusion to the research part of the report and accomplishes the objective of the research. The objective was to gain an insight where there is a match between the requirements of the Russian tourists and the offerings by the region of Twente. The information which was gathered is used in the advisory part.

5.1 The destination branding of the region of Twente

Twente is branded as the estate of the Netherlands. The slogan was used by the Twente Bureau for Tourism which bankrupted in 2015. The destination is promoted by organisations such as Twente Branding, Hof van Twente, and Beleef Twente. They all take part in the marketing and promotional efforts for Twente. Each one has various roles for the different geographical regions that form Twente as a destination. The destination identity is presented to be a combination of country and city life. There is a division between the various parts of the region and each municipality promotes its fragment differently. There is a lack of a primary promotional tourism office dealing with branding the destination as a whole. The reason is that there are various communication strategies used by the organisations. Hof van Twente showcases Twente as an artful, sportive, wide, spacious and clear destination. Beleef Twente presents it as an educationally and historically-centred destination. Furthermore, it appears to be relatively safe. The most popular activities are walking, cycling, and visiting towns. Twente offers a broad range of overnight accommodations such as camp sites, bed & breakfasts, guesthouses, and hotels. It is important to note that a large part of the advertisement campaigns goes to castles.

5.2 The Russian tourist characteristics

Statistical data was digitally collected from 142 Russian tourists. The majority of the respondents consisted of Russians between the ages of 16 to 26 who are either in a relationship or single. 32% consisted of 27 to 42-year-olds. The rest is split into small percentages. The population either travels with a partner, a group of friends or with their family. 43% of the respondents hold a bachelor’s degree or are about to receive one. 28% of the respondents hold a master’s degree. In terms of income, there is a clear separation between those earning less than 30,000 Rubles monthly and those who earn more than 100,000 Rubles. These are two major variations. The population travels from one time all the way to more than four times per year. Large Russian groups are in favour of choosing spacious living spaces such as cottages, apartments and larger hotels, as found from the theoretical framework. There are three types of Russian travellers that can be distinguished: couples without children, families with children, and group of friends.

Tourists are influenced by the rating of a destination. This has an impact on the tourist’s image on the whole destination entity. In terms of destination features, the Russian tourists are interested in exploring the historical attractions of the destination and firstly, the natural attributes.

There is a partial match between the Russian travel market requirement of a destination and the tourism offerings of the region of Twente but awareness needs to be spread in order to attract the aforementioned travellers. The advice needs to be based on highlighting the most interesting features of Twente for the Russian tourists and marketing them towards the travellers.

6. Discussion

The following chapter elaborates on the validity and reliability of the research paper in order to provide a truthful measurement on the quality of it. Validity and reliability are two important aspects in all studies in order to portray the accuracy, dependability, and credibility of the information. The goal of this chapter is to assess the quality of both those aspects in relation to the measurement procedure used to generate the results. In order for the study to be considered valid, it also needs to be reliable.

6.1 Reliability

The research was transparent and included all the elements necessary for a research paper. It took into account all important steps from the methodology section in order to analyse the data. The reliability of the research paper was on a high level. However, numerous sampling frame errors occurred such as when there was a lack of equal division between genders or the fact that there were more young people than old. The female population was more than the male; therefore, it has a direct consequence on the reliability of the study (Brotherton, 2008). The reason for this occurrence was an error made by the researcher, who contacted more females, as he saw that they were willing to fill out the questionnaire more than the male population. Secondly, due to time constraints, it was not possible to wait for an answer or approval of all. However, volume was more important than control of the ones who fill out the questionnaire. In order to reach the desired sample size, the quality of finding the candidates to fill out the questionnaires drastically decreased. Thirdly, there was an evident bias on who was approached due to the non-probability based strategy which was to use the convenience based sampling. This severely hindered the reliability of the study as there was not an available administrative record of all users in vkontakt.com of Russian background.

The measurement instrument, being a questionnaire, was clear of random errors as a consequence of being checked and approved by two research experts. Not all questions were filled out by the respondents, regardless of the safety measurement system implemented by Qualtrics to not allow users to continue to the next question without filling out all aspects. Verhoeven (2014) states that there are times when random errors can occur in a research project. Such case was when respondents had filled out a city name rather than their year of birth due to getting lost in the translation from English to Russian.

Due to the fact that this is a web-based questionnaire designed with Qualtrics, it was possible to retest the reliability of it each time the survey was filled out by a person. A window would open in Qualtrics that provided information on the location of the questionnaire being filled out. If the questionnaire was conducted by a different person with the exact same formulation of neutral questions, the same conclusions would have occurred. According to Brotherton (2008), this measurement instrument is reliable. Moreover, peer examination had taken place and the questionnaire was tested numerous times by the client before being distributed. However, it came as a challenge when the questionnaire was translated to a different language because there was a possibility that some questions were interpreted differently.

6.2 Validity

Brotherton (2008) states that evidence-based information is crucial to rightfully represent whether a research data analysis is valid or not. According to Verhoeven (2015), research should be clear of systematic errors. Moreover, Brotherton (2008) further elaborates that a research design needs to be adequate and appropriate. In order to validate whether this was the case in this research project, convergent validity took place. What this meant was that different theories were compared when developing the theoretical framework, which in turn formed the operationalisation. The operationalisation for destination branding was used as a measurement instrument for the questions sent to Hof van Twente and the design of the survey. Furthermore, the results which were gathered from the questionnaire were very similar to those results gathered by Lehtinen (2014), who used a qualitative research design presented in the literature review. This would mean that triangulation actually had taken place by generating findings on two data collection methods providing similar results which boosts the construct validity. Furthermore, in order to establish construct validity, a statistical factor analysis test was utilised to be able to “claim” discriminant validity. The independent variables of the core concept “tourism characteristics” were reproduced to check a correlation pattern. As it turned out, there are 49 (62%) non-redundant residuals with absolute values greater than 0.05. Moreover, the use of current literature further supported the construct and internal validity. In order to improve it even more, the email interview conducted with the marketing director of Hof van Twente was analysed.

Verhoeven (2014) states that the sample must resemble the population in terms of characteristics that are relevant to the research. Furthermore, external validity is related to the truthfulness. It can be argued that the external validity of the research is limited. Furthermore, the quality of the sampling method is limited. A sample size of 142 people, out of the total Russian population 143,441,282 was too low to be able to generalise the whole population. The respondents were not representative enough. It was very difficult in generalising the total population due to the lack of older respondents that filled out the questionnaire including a lack of respondents below the ages of 16. However, the results can be generalised, to the very least, for the young adults between the ages of 21 to 29 having been the majority that had filled out the questionnaire. This means that some of the results gathered were actually valuable and extremely useful for Bayuca travel because they provided a general ground base for future studies.

In order to improve the internal validity, research design and statistical analysis were primary utilised to achieve this. Brotherton (2008) states that internal validity showcases the truthfulness of the research results from the carried out field research. The conclusions which were found from the quantitative analysis could be traced back to the theoretical framework leading to a contribution in boosting the internal validity. Therefore, this increased the confidence and dependability of the results (Brotherton, 2008).

7. Advice

The following advisory section has been written for Bayuca Travel. In the previous chapters, insight was gathered regarding the destination identity, the branding of the region of Twente, and the Russian traveller characteristics. The conclusion was that there is a partial match between the Russian requirements and Twente's offerings. The following chapter aims at providing various recommendation options based on the research results. Each alternative goes through a certain criteria-based selection and the most feasible, financial, and realistic solution is going to be later implemented via a PDCA planning cycle with the help of a strategic marketing plan.

Over the past months, the research part of the report was conducted. The question that the management team of Bayuca Travel is facing is:

How can Bayuca Travel attract the Russian tourists to the region of Twente?

The management question is answered with the help of the theoretical framework, the desk research on the destination identity of Twente, and the market data acquired from the Russian tourists regarding their needs and wants. With all the information at hand, it is now possible to formulate a suitable advice that could be implemented by Bayuca Travel as a marketing strategy.

7.1 Advice objective and questions

The advice objective is to assist Bayuca Travel with recommendations on the various options available to luring the Russian travel market to Twente. The most plausible option will be elaborated with the help of a strategic marketing plan. In order to achieve the managerial ambitions, the tour operator needs to offer a travel package which is feasible, provides return on investment, is able to spark interest, and captures the attention of the consumer.

7.1.1 Advice questions

Advice question 1: *What are the possible options that would lure the Russian travel market to the region of Twente?*

Advice question 2: *Which one of the options is most suitable for Bayuca Travel in order to attract the Russian travel market to the region of Twente?*

7.2 Management case approach

Three alternatives will be described and later on compared via a criteria-based selection method. The evaluation criteria will comprise of three elements: time needed, financial investment needed, and whether it is realistic or not. This criteria based selection is also used as a benchmarking tool with the intention of determining the most convenient and plausible alternative for Bayuca Travel which delivers the highest added value.

There are three dominant travel groups found in section 2.2.4 and in the survey design: travellers with their friends, couples without children, and families with children. There are certain destination features in Twente which are interesting to some of the travel groups as seen in Figure K.21 in Appendix K. Each one of those travel groups has different preferences regarding the region of Twente. Consequently, a different packaged trip catering their different interests could be designed. The goals are long-term, and it is important for them to be realistic, attainable, and to meet the self-actualization requirements

of the tourists. They also have to provide an accurate reflection on the wants and desires of the Russian travel market.

Gap between the SOLL and IST situation

The current situation is the existence of a significant match between the Russian travel market and the offerings of Twente. However, there is hardly any intention from the region of Twente to attract this market. This is either because the destination is unaware of the possibility of such a potential market or simply because they are not interested in attracting it. At its current state, Bayuca Travel is focusing on the Dutch travel market to travel to Russia. The tour operator is run by two people who respectfully design themed tours for their clients such as “Feel the past”, which can be found on their official website as well as on their Facebook profile.

However, the desired situation comes from the fact that Bayuca Travel is ready to invest up to €25,000 for a marketing plan, specifically based on the thesis outcome, which they had been able to save from selling their trips without taking a loan. It was not possible to acquire information regarding the annual trips sold by Bayuca Travel; however, the tour operator is ambitious and ready to be the first tour operator to attract the aforementioned BRIC country to the region of Twente. The reason is the fact that the thesis client is able to communicate in the traveller’s native language and possesses valuable insight on the market through the researcher’s survey results.

7.3 Description of alternatives




	Option 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historical avenue of Twente – tour dynamic package (4 days)• Target group: Couples without children
	Option 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience Twente (4 days) – normal package• Target group: Group of friends
	Option 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getaway from the crowd (2 days) – tourism campaign• Target group: Parents with children

Figure 7.1: Alternative options

7.3.1 Alternative 1: Historical avenue of Twente

A connection was made between couples without children and the desire to visit historical attractions as seen in section 4.1.3 and Figure 4.6. Therefore, “The historical avenue of Twente” package is proposed to be developed. This is a dynamic travel package which is targeted towards wealthy young Russian couples who travel with their partner. The idea behind this concept is to showcase the historical sightings of Twente to the young culturally interested Russians. This target group is called “culture seekers” formed of people who would like to get immersed in a completely different travel experience. As seen from the data analysis, the respondents had given the highest scores in the historical attractions category. Consequently, the idea is to create a travel package which incorporates the historical features for this target group. Special events should be considered within a cultural or historical spectre since most of the Russian respondents seek self-actualization. A limited availability historical tour of Twente featuring a tour guide will be included in the program. NBTC (2015) states that Russian travellers speak English

fluently; therefore, it would not be a problem for them to have an English-speaking tour guide. This was also acknowledged by the sample approached in the survey.

As requested from the client, the offer will be a “land package”. This means that the travellers will choose the airline company they would like to travel with by themselves. The client has no responsibility on the decision making of the traveller regarding this aspect. However, Bayuca Travel becomes responsible for all land tourism related activities that incorporate the traveller’s experience.

The promotional message for this is: A visit to the past is close!

There will be three categories which form a travel package: accommodation, activities, and features. The traveller gets to choose between predetermined traveling components which in its very core is called dynamic packaging.

Luxurious cottages will be available to accommodate up to two people. The anticipated target group will be joined by their partner. Furthermore, they are interested in staying in an open space location. The core product of this travel package is to visit the historic castles. Huis te Diepenheim, Nijenhuis, Westerflier, and Warmelo make a very important part in highlighting the main features of Twente, since they are renovated castles that portray the historical element of the region of Hof van Twente (Appendix N). Furthermore, castle Twickel will also be included due to its unique culture-historical background and the spacious botanic gardens surrounding the place. At these botanic gardens, it might be possible to create a picnic activity where couples could gather and spend time together. Although the results showcase no interest in cycling in terms of this target group, there will be a cycling tour throughout the visit of the various castles. It should be important to note that this is an optional activity when selected by the client. All these leisure activities could be done during the summer when the Russian population is having their vacation through July – August. At this time, the weather in the Netherlands is also suitable for tanning activities as seen in the results section.

7.3.2 Experience Twente

The core concept behind this travel package is centred on the segmented travel profile “group of friends”. Twente is branded as a destination which is open, spacious, and with beautiful landscapes. Therefore, it is an invitation for friends to spend a relaxing time together in the luxurious cottages of the Hessenheem outdoor centre. With reference to the results, groups of friends are interested in activity-based tourism. This travel group would like to go picnicking, trekking, cycling, and going around the old towns of the region of Twente as seen in Figure 4.13 in the analysis chapter. The central focus for this travel trip is to create an unforgettable experience for the tourists. The research results show that cottages and other spacious accommodations are suitable for this travel group. Therefore, there will be a limited amount of accommodation options that the travellers are able to choose from. However, these options need to be with a high-star rating. The rating of a place is very important in the Russian tourist’s mind as seen in section 2.2.4. Shopping possibilities are integrated to provide a pleasant weekend experience. Since they are very much interested in the safety of a destination, a non-urban place is suitable for them to enjoy their vacation. This package does not include plane tickets.

7.3.3 Getaway from the crowd

The third strategic marketing concept is named “Getaway from the crowd” based on the fact that some of the research results showed that popular destinations are mostly chosen for tourism purposes. This concept is more competitive than the previous two because a large chunk of the Russian travel market is attracted to Amsterdam without being aware that other cities bear similar core features. Competition plays an important role here. That is why a marketing campaign is set out to attract tourists staying in Amsterdam to visit for one or two days the region of Twente. Those tourists travel with their families and children. Just like the previous alternatives, this is a package tour including the most well-known historical sights of the region of Twente. Travel trips to the old towns are also included. The family option will also include a discount for kids. Here, family-friendly accommodations along with family activities will be proposed.

7.4 Identification of the criteria

It is important to identify the criteria based-selection procedure which evaluates the alternatives. The researcher will not favour one alternative over another in order to deliver judgement on the matter. This advice will opt for a quantitative evaluation in which weighted averages will be applied.

7.4.1 Prerequisite criteria

A prerequisite for an alternative to be accepted for evaluation is to meet the following requirements:

- Is the alternative in-line with the mission of Bayuca Travel?
- Is the alternative in-line with the data analysis about the needs and wants of the Russian market?
- Does the alternative showcase the destination identity of the region of Twente?

Explanations about the three prerequisites can be found in Appendix L, as well as a description as to why the alternatives were selected in Appendix M.

7.4.2 Evaluation criteria

After obtaining the necessary information to accept an alternative for evaluation, the criterion for picking the most suitable option is based on the following factors:

- Time needed
- Financial investment needed
- Realistic

Time Needed	Financial investment needed	Realistic
1 = Long-term	1 = High	1 = Unrealistic
2 = Mid-term	2 = Medium	2 = Somewhat realistic
3 = Short-term	3 = Low	3 = Realistic

Table 7.1: Evaluation criteria

Please refer to Table 7.2 for the explanation of the evaluation criteria

Advice	Time needed	Financial investment	Realistic
Historical avenue of Twente	It will take a significant amount of time from the owners of Bayuca Travel to contact the necessary suppliers in order to start packaging the offer. Furthermore, the spread of word-of-mouth between friends takes time in order for them to consider booking such a package. However, the time will be drastically reduced when the clients are packaging their own trips. Therefore, it will be easier for Bayuca Travel to organise such package tours (2).	The cost for organising such a trip could be expensive in relation to the marketing aspect, the amount of calls to the different service providers, and the necessary trips to major tour operator conferences in Russia. This would be cost-ineffective at first. The company might experience a loss in the first year. However, Bayuca Travel will start seeing return on investment after all the efforts made and the establishment between all the parties involved (2).	This option is realistic because it showcases a great introduction experience for the Russian tourists about Twente's background and the historical related activities. The alternative will be feasible if the right tourism suppliers are contacted (3).
Experience Twente	This package is similar to the previous concept but with a broader target group and an ordinary package deal. This is a suitable approach if Bayuca Travel believes to have time to negotiate with more groups of suppliers. This alternative does not allow tourists to choose their preferences since the research part has already shown what they would like to do. Bayuca Travel has to make the effort to manually package the trip ingredients rather than the tourist (2).	In terms of feasibility, the group size is larger; Therefore, financing such a project will take more resources. Human labour is also necessary to achieve the goals (2).	This alternative is somewhat realistic because there is a probable chance that a group of friends will not be as enthusiastic to stay at one place for a long time. They might prefer to travel somewhere else where the weather is sunnier (2).
Getaway from the crowd	This is a marketing campaign aimed at challenging perceptions and opinions. The idea behind this tour is to show that unpopular destinations such as Twente can provide interesting activities. It will take an enormous amount of time to achieve this (1).	Setting out an initial investment budget is necessary here in order to conduct this. Furthermore, extra support is needed from Twente Branding and Hof van Twente. The support is needed because it incorporates a change of the brand suitable for attracting international travellers (1).	It is very unlikely for Bayuca Travel to have any control on the situation, being the only one interested in attracting such a market. If there is cooperation and initiation of Twente Branding, then this would actually be a successful concept that could lead to a plausible effect (2).

Table 7.2: Evaluation criteria explanation

8. Strategic marketing plan

Quantitative research was conducted on the Russian traveller's wants and needs along with desk research on the destination identity, and branding of the region of Twente. Consequently, various alternatives were evaluated and measured. However, the most plausible one is the travel package "Historical Avenue of Twente" which will be written down in the form of a strategic marketing plan.

8.1 Previous knowledge on the Russian traveller

There are three prominent travel groups which were discovered during the literature review and the data analysis: couples without children, families with children, and a group of friends.

The travel group within this marketing plan are "wealthy couples without children between the ages of 16 to 26". This target group is interested in visiting new destinations. They are interested in destinations which are safe and historical. In terms of accommodation, couples prefer to stay in cottages. This group seeks self-actualization fulfilment as seen in Figure K.23.

Why is the following target group important?

- Out of the results, 38% of the respondents have a partner with whom they love sharing the passion for traveling to a new destination (Figure 4.4).
- The historical category of the region of Twente is one of the most interesting destination features for young couples since they had given the highest mean scores for the following destination features as seen in Figure 4.6: historical buildings (4.13), landmarks (4.25), and castles (4.38).
- Couples choose their next destination based on the spiritual connection they have with it and on word-of-mouth from friends (Figure K.23).
- Couples are interested in participating in historical or cultural events (Figure 4.5).
- The results showcase that the majority of respondents who travel with their partner and without children prefer staying in cottages (Figure 4.2). This is because tourists are looking for spacious accommodations.
- The results highlight that these young travellers save money for traveling abroad one time per year for their summer vacation (Figure 4.1). They are the most common travel group engaging in outbound travel. People who travel alone or travel with a partner and kids prefer staying inbound for their holidays as seen in the data analysis.
- Young Russian travellers are fluent in English (NBTC, 2015).
- Couples without children are mostly interested in tanning. If the weather is suitable for such leisure activity during the summer holidays the destination, Bayuca Travel could attract them to visit the destination (Figure 4.13).
- Couples are willing to stay more in a destination if the place offers couple benefits similar to discounts or unique experiences.

8.2 Setting up objectives

Objectives are the backbone for the success of this project. Bayuca Travel wants to realise the following key objectives from the “Historical Avenue of Twente”.

- By the end of the first year of the implementation, at least 45% of the people that have booked a trip should be couples without children.
- By the end of the year 2017, Bayuca Travel needs to have sold 40 package deals with the theme “Historical Avenue of Twente” to its interested clients.
- By the year 2018 Bayuca Travel seeks to witness profitability (return on investment) from the selling of travel packages labelled as “Historical Avenue of Twente”.

8.3 Scan the business environment

8.3.1 DESTEP analysis on Russian travel market

Every organisation is influenced by the macro environment. This means that Bayuca Travel does not have control over the factors which can occur. Having said that, it is recommended for the tour operator to pinpoint those factors. Therefore, a DESTEP analysis is implemented regarding the current state of Russia, in order to use the information for strengthening the marketing concept.

Demographic profile – The Russian population has seen a decline in population from 149 to 142 million. 73% of the population is living in urban areas such as Moscow. 27% is under the age of 25 and 28% of the population is older than 55 years (NTBC, 2015).

Economic – A decline in the economic status of Russia was reported in 2015 falling to -3.50%. This caused a decrease in outbound trips in favour of inbound tourism. The reason for this was the tension between Russia and Ukraine. The Russian ruble lost value against the euro causing a number of local tour operators to shut down their businesses. However, in 2016, the figure has lowered to a negative 1.1% which comes as good news as the economy is slowly stabilising (NBTC, 2015).

Social – Ullrich and Nufferova (2007) state that the Russian middle-class is becoming very individualistic. What this means is that there is an emergence of target groups requiring different needs and wants. People value novelty and well-known brands. This has a direct effect on the current strategies regarding product development initiatives in order to keep up with this new demand. Specifically in the tourism sector, there is a growing diversity pattern of needs because of the various lifestyles which are emerging. These styles need to be accurately met with an introduction to a travel product such as target group oriented tourism.

Technological – The internet usage of the Russian population is constantly growing. There is an estimation of 93 million Russians with access to the World Wide Web, which make up around 65% of the population. The majority of users are younger Russians living in the bigger cities (NTBC, 2015). Online booking is expected to increase significantly in the upcoming years as Russians are still relying on tour operators to offer them travel packages.

Ecological – *Ecological factors are not crucial to be looked upon for this case.*

Political – When the conflict between Russia and Ukraine started in 2014, the EU and USA prohibited some categories of professionals to travel abroad. Many people were not allowed to travel. Therefore, the government offered an alternative focusing on investing in domestic tourism.

8.3.2 SWOT analysis of Bayuca Travel

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Expertise on the Russian travel market		Targets currently the Dutch travel market	
Able to offer packages in the customer's language		Not well-known brand positioning on the Russian market	
Combination of leisure and knowledge		Limited publicity	
Opportunities		Threats	
Growing internet use of the Russian population		A decrease in the economic status of Russia	
Online booking is expected to increase		Domestic tourism in favour of outbound travel	
Russian market relies on tour operators		Political tensions between Russia and the Netherlands	

8.4 Marketing tactic

Table 8.1: SWOT analysis of Bayuca Travel

A proper marketing tactic is crucial for delivering successful results when selling the travel packages. The 4 P's of the marketing mix will be involved in this process in order to bring the advice to a strategic level. This will assist Bayuca Travel with expanding their business operations, which in turn leads to growth in revenue.

Product – The product which is recommended for Bayuca Travel to introduce to the market segment “Russian couples without children” is a theme tourism package labelled as the “Historical Avenue of Twente”. As the name reveals, the concept of the package tour is a tailor-made travel experience containing the historical aspects of the region of Twente. Customers will have the option to design their own travel package within a variety of available options. Such options are accommodations, historical activities, and other tourist activities. The above-mentioned services offered by Bayuca Travel are taken from the data analysis results. This is in relation to the most appealing destination features for couples. This form of packaging system is often referred to as dynamic packaging. The package tour will be introduced to the market throughout 2017 after being successfully well-promoted and positioned. The marketing campaign will start in March 2017 utilising all the distribution channels to brand the product.

Place – Bayuca Travel will utilise multiple distribution channels catering the needs and wants of their clients. First of all, the distribution will be direct. The reason for this strategic decision is the fact that Russian travellers need to consult with the travel agents regarding their trips. The nature of the buying behaviour is straightforward; therefore, a web design for the tourism package “Historical Avenue of Twente” is highly recommended to sell the services directly to the consumer. When Bayuca Travel directly reaches the target group, the market will value the recommendations of this tour operator. The target of booking via the website is set out to be 20%, for the upcoming summer 2017.

The second appropriate distribution channel is via a wholesaler such as Booking.com. Approaching such a partner is highly necessary because the above-mentioned platform has already established contact with the desired travel market. The Russian market browses the Internet for their next holiday. This is an opportunity to include the package deal “Historical Avenue of Twente” to Booking.com’s system. Couples could gain an interest in this offering by reading the offer. The best-case scenario is that the target group actually books and select their own dynamic packaging through the internet web page of Bayuca Travel. Nevertheless, having more than one distribution channel is crucial in acquiring market share; therefore, more packages could be sold to accomplish the objectives of Bayuca Travel.

Price – Bayuca Travel will not compete on pricing with other travel agents within the region of Twente as it is the first tour operator interested in bringing the Russian travel market to the aforementioned destination. However, the Russian market is very price sensitive as seen in section 2.2.5, searching for good deals regardless of the fact that the target group is made out of wealthy couples. Therefore, it is recommended to offer limited special offers for this target group at the beginning of April 2017. Up to 30% discount rate of the whole price is advised to be implemented in order to ensure attracting the right market at the beginning of April 2017. Moreover, the pricing needs to correspond to the high quality service standard provided by Bayuca Travel and is dependent on the choices that travellers have selected their package tour.

Promotion – Sending out the right message is crucial in reaching the market the proper way. Therefore, it is advised that Bayuca Travel invests in a website to promote the theme package “Historical Avenue of Twente”. It is not difficult to set up a website because there are platforms that do this allowing the tour operator to design the interface based on their preferences. Moreover, the membership fee is not very expensive.

Moreover, Bayuca Travel already has a running website regarding the travel tour “Feel the past” which aims at targeting the Dutch market to travel to Russia. It is possible to stick to the above-mentioned formula and create a website which serves the Russian market (the information would be in Russian). There will be a difference between the two websites especially when the respondent clicks on the “Historical Avenue of Twente”. They will see the core product and the pricing of it but will have the option of clicking on different images of bonus offerings in order to build up their travel package, according to their wishes. *Please refer to Appendix Q for a showcase of the website.* This builds a new customer type of experience. Furthermore, collection of emails is crucial in order to build a solid customer relationship; therefore, at the bottom of the web-page users will have an option of signing-up for newsletters/Bayuca Travel’s marketing communication instrument. This would help to distribute suitable offers for them for later products.

The second communication channel is via the social media websites: Vkontakte and Facebook. Both, Facebook and Vkontakte, have an advertising feature which enables the company to either target their ads towards specific characteristics of the users or advertise in tourism community pages. Subscribers could see the offer as a normal post. The bigger the targeted audience, the higher the click price will get. The desired clicks/views will be achieved faster. The reason for this decision is that the Russian customers use Vkontakte daily for networking purposes and for looking at tourism offers. They do this when they plan their next trip as seen in section 2.2.4.

Running an own page is helpful to make the people interested visiting the web page in order to learn more about the product. Furthermore, those social media platforms provide the possibility of advertising the offers to specific customers set out in a geographical area based on certain characteristics, which Bayuca Travel could greatly benefit from when targeting couples.

Another recommended distribution channel, although time-consuming is video-creation. Video publishing is a remarkable tool in spreading awareness of Bayuca Travel’s offers throughout the digital world. The addition of interactive videos on the website is recommended for getting the customers excited about the package tour. It is possible to publish videos which can be tagged by exactly anticipating the key-words that the target group might use when searching for such information. The

video will appear higher in the search engine. Moreover, the person watching the video might consider checking the website of Bayuca Travel. There will be a reference link at the bottom of the video for direct access to the website. This sums up the overall goal for this promotional campaign. All promotional activities need to be linked in order to emphasize on trust as well as to improve the market positioning.

Last but not least, the participation in the international tourism fares in Russia for networking. Otdykh Leisure is one of those fares that brings international travel companies, hotels, and resorts together; therefore, it provides the highest chance of market penetration. It is held annually from the 21st of September until the 24th of September. The fare is organised in Moscow.

8.5 Strategic planning

In terms of planning, Bayuca Travel will opt for a market focus direction. The marketing decision is to target Russian couples without children. Bayuca Travel will position itself as a premier, high-end historical themed package tour provider tailoring the wealthy Russian traveller who travels abroad with a partner.

The strategy aims at raising awareness amongst the crowd about the services offered, which in turn would beneficially establish a loyalty fan-base. This fan-base will spread the word-of-mouth to their friends. The following message will be sent to the target group: "A visit to the past is close". When the message is integrated throughout all distribution channels, it reinforces both the brand name and the brand identity. The distribution and promotion needs to be in-line with the value proposition. The value proposition is the option of the tourists to select their preferred activities from a list available on Bayuca Travel's website. This strategy makes the trips feel more exclusive and tailor-made.

Tourists will be able to select luxurious cottages or hotels based on the wishes of the clients. The meal plan will include a buffet and gourmet cuisine for two. The idea is to showcase typical Dutch food from the region of Twente. The Russian travel market is interested in eating the local cuisine as pointed out in the field research.

The activities will be based on the destination identity of the region of Twente. There will be historical activities incorporating walking tours. A tour guide will be hired to show around old towns such Delden, Diepenheim, and Hengevelde. When tourists select a town to visit he/she will get the opportunity to experience history. If a client wishes to visit Delden he/she will have the option of hearing about the history of the infamous local murderer Huttenkloas.

Furthermore, the client will have the option of participating at the annual Hoftedagen which is a folklore event where Russian couples will be able to enjoy theatre performances and listen to music. Additional offerings will be romantic picnicking activities for two. Tourists will have the opportunity to get tanned during the nicer weather. A predetermined activity which is the highlight of the historical theme is the visit to the six Twente castles. Bayuca Travel will conceptualise on the fact that they are the first tour operator to promote an unpopular Dutch destination to the Russian travel; therefore, the tour operator needs to brand the destination as an exciting and buzzing place. This brings a competitive edge over other tour package providers solely focusing on the bigger cities such as Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam.

8.6 Control of the marketing plan

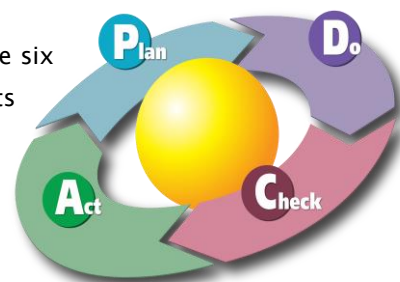
It is recommended for Bayuca Travel to look into the proposed financial plan for the year in order to evaluate the outcome of the marketing instruments. Furthermore, an included activity is to check the estimated forecasted sales with the actual ones. If a certain marketing activity does not contribute to attracting customers, it should be eliminated or improved in such a way that it will be improved for the upcoming year. The goal is to invest the money wisely on the advertising activity in order to bring the appropriate travel market. Another way of controlling the marketing plan's success is to actually distribute surveys conducted with the current customers. The Balanced Scorecard is introduced to determine the effectiveness of the marketing activity as seen in Figure 8.2.

	Critical success factor	Objective	Key performance indicator	Desired outcome in 2018
Financial perspective	Break-even	Successfully manage to break-even in the second year after the introduction of the product	Positive selling numbers after a after a year	Earning more than the initial investment
Customer perspective	Consistent package quality and theme	Consistent momentum on high-quality travel packages to the clients	Positive review remarks from the customers of Bayuca Travel	More than 10 positive testimonials on Bayuca Travel's website and the social media platforms
Internal process perspective	Customer management	The clients booking through Bayuca Travel's website	20% booking in 2017	100% booking via website
Learning perspective	Employee capabilities	Successful raise of knowledge understanding of the Russian market	Skills obtained	New travel package introduced and market intelligence

Table 8.2: Balanced Score Card

8.7 Historical Avenue of Hof van Twente implementation plan

The product alone is a travel package which contains the core product (visiting the six castles) while also including additional services desired by the young Russian adults such as visiting botanic gardens, and picnicking. However, the meaning behind it is to offer of a historically accurate experience of the region of Twente conceptualising on the destination's core strengths and features. As seen in the theoretical framework, a service is an intangible product. This calls for an accurate portrayal of the region of Twente to the Russian travel market. In order to come in terms with a successful product delivery, the PDCA-cycle will be utilised to help break-down the steps that need to be undertaken for the next 3 years (Mutinga, 1998). There are four different phases that are used to carefully implement the marketing strategy: Plan, Do, Check, and Act.



8.7.1 Plan: Identifying and establishing the objectives

An operational plan of such a marketing plan is fundamental for the product to be successful. A strategically well-written plan enables the founders of Bayuca Travel to keep track and to accomplish the given objectives and goals.

The following elements are necessary to be utilised in the plan:

- **Value proposition** – It is highly important to send out a clear message to the tourism content is about, what the offering behind it is, and what are the tourist's expectations.
- **Objectives** – Objectives possess a clear explanation; therefore, it is feasible to be known whether they could be met or not. Such an example could be "By x date, Company X will attract at least 20 people to book a dynamic package to the historical sights of Twente".
- **Timeline** – It is highly important to keep track of the important vacation days of the Russian tourists. As seen in the theoretical framework findings, the Russian tourists tend to travel for many days and are excessive spenders. The weather and conditions are better in the region of Twente during the summer; therefore, this advice is suitable for a July – August offering. The data results showcased that Russians are enthusiastic tanners and seek warmer destinations; therefore, it is an appropriate time to introduce such a package to them. This has to be marketed adequately because the competitiveness level is the highest at this time between various destinations (countries).

In order for this travel package to work and stand out as something unique, it is necessary for Bayuca Travel to undertake a certain amount of steps in order to make the Russian travel market interested in purchasing this product. Collaboration with various stakeholders plays a vital role. There are certain stakeholders which take part in this as seen in Appendix P.

Firstly, it is important to create a brainstorm session on how to negotiate with the lodging providers, the travel companies, and other tourism suppliers. This helps to formulate a strategy on attracting the tourists to the accommodations and the other service related suppliers. It is important to work with the cultural organisations that run the historical attractions because the market's needs have to be met. With the implication of a dynamic packaging travel tour, Bayuca travel is responsible for making the calls to these suppliers, convincing them about the benefits of attracting such a foreign travel market. Furthermore, it is advisable to negotiate on the commission rate and the deals about dynamic packaging. The various stakeholders require a different kind of treatment; therefore, the stakeholder quadrant is utilised in order to visualize what to do with each tourism supplier. It is estimated that at least 2 hours need to be devoted for establishing network connections with each supplier. In this process Christa Barkel and Anna Yuricheva will act as negotiators finding the best deals that work for both parties. The planning phase takes the most amount of time. However, the invested time is worthwhile when they start selling the packages.

Bayuca Travel is playing the role of a wholesaler being in-charge of providing its customers with various package options. This is solely based on the idea that the customer has the freedom to select whatever suits him as an activity.

An interaction website needs to be developed that does not reveal the pricing of the separate components. The final price is revealed when the components are bulked together. The combination of packages is not limitless; therefore, only a certain amount of options are available. This will be closely consulted with the suppliers. *Please find an example of a promotional package in Appendix Q.*

Furthermore, planning needs to be established in order to reach the consumers online about their needs. It is recommended for Bayuca Travel to create an account on the most popular Russian social networks. The deals which are showcased will attract the younger population. The most popular distribution tool

for promoting services for Russians is social media as seen in section 2.2.4. It is possible for Bayuca Travel to provide help in Russian to the suppliers dealing with the accommodation since they do not have any information available in English. With this in mind, there are more possibilities to reach the travel market and to sell more packages. Engaging posts need to be considered in order to promote the destination attributes of Twente in an accurate manner. This contributes to a positive destination identity and image. This leads to an increase in the awareness level of the Russian market and in the interest in visiting such a destination.

8.7.2 Do: Developing and measure

The second phase is to implement the plan. The following marketing activities need to be utilised:

- The launch of the new website – The website needs to be created by the end of February.
- The official Bayuca Channel Social media profile – The official social media profiles need to be developed in order to start writing engaging posts regarding the “Historical Avenue of Twente”. Special offers and deals for couples will be published on the website in April.
- The fare visits and the brochure designs for the packages – A visit to the Otdykh Leisure fare is planned at the end of September. The In Tour travel fare will be visited in March 2017. The exhibitor will get a chance to appear on the Russian television to promote its products. However, costs are high for such fare. This is one of the most effective ways of positioning the tours. It is necessary to network with the customers at these conventions.
- The setup of the official YouTube account – The account needs to be created by the end of February. Video promotional content will be published from March regarding theme tour.
- The collaboration with Booking.com (optional) – Collaboration could be established with the travel platform in order to easier reach the customers only if desired by the client. However, commission will be charged on each sold package.

This phase requires the highest attention and time due to the necessity of market exposure. People need to start buying the packages. It is crucial in this phase to measure the distribution channel's effectiveness in reaching the desired segment. This helps to understand whether the direction which is undertaken is delivering the forecasted results. Furthermore, the Balanced Scorecard will be applied as a model in order to measure the effectiveness of the project. Measuring the success of the strategy is very crucial, provides a clear framework, and overall blueprint of the progress. The critical success factors, objectives, and key-performance indicators are elaborated in section 8.6.

8.7.3 Check: Evaluation and constant reviewing

As mentioned in the “do” phase, a criterion needs to be met for understanding whether the proposed recommendation is beneficial or not. After every tour has been completed, a performance review will immediately take place. In this phase, a brainstorm session will occur between the founders of Bayuca Travel. The topic will be about certain issues or bottlenecks that have occurred throughout the traveller's experience. Customer satisfaction needs to be regularly reviewed before providing another client with a package tour. This can be either checked in the testimonials section, the Facebook posts, or the rating which is calculated by Booking.com. After the customer experience has ended after the tour, it is important to know how the people feel about the destination image. Such a decisive factor will have an effect on the want to return again to the region of Twente or to stop using the services provided Bayuca Travel.

The above-mentioned actions help to provide a higher service quality. Moreover, this helps to determine whether the process goes smoothly and problems which have occurred, are fixed. An annual monthly check-up on the Balanced Score Card is vital to keep track whether the goals are close to be achieved.

8.7.4 Act: Documentation of the results, information on the process changes

The final phase of the cycle is to improve the bottlenecks that could emerge throughout the check-up phase. Corrective and preventive actions are taken into account in order to fully take control and prevent the bottleneck from appearing. Staying updated with the Russian youth travel trends is necessary so that new products could be created.

8.8 Budgeting (Financial implications)

The following section will provide financial insight on the costs that will occur for Bayuca Travel in order to implement the historical themed package tour. The cost of the initial investment will be €5,618. The rest of the investment is based on the purchase from the supplier side which will not be included in the initial investment. The requirement for Bayuca Travel is profitability. A very important aspect that needs to be taken into account, as requested by the tour operator, is the working hour invested.

8.8.1 Tour package price

The projected income will be estimated by selling 40 package tour trips in 2017. Therefore, one package trip for 2 PAX will be looked upon as an example of a dynamic package in order to later calculate the payback period. Figure 8.3 shows how much a trip would cost a customer with such options.

Accommodation		
Luxurious lodge Buitencentrum Hessenheem + incl service cost for 2PAX		€338
Tourist tax	€1.05 per day x 2 persons x 4 nights	€8.40
Total:	15% commission of accommodation = €50.70	€346
Activities		
Orange Museum	€4x2 persons	€8
Twickel castle tour+ walkthrough garden	€4 x 2 persons	€8
Bicycle tour (Six castles cycling tour)	€9.50 x 2 persons	€19
Luxurious Picnic	€10 x 2 persons	€20
Goor's historic museum		€0
Swimming pool de Mors	€3.60 x 2 persons	€7.20
Total:	15% commission excl. picnic = 6.33	€62.20
Transportation		
Europcar Auto hire	10% commission rate of transport=44.9	€449
Bayuca Travel Service fee charge		€90
Total price		€947.20

Table 8.3: Price cost of a trip

Bayuca Travel will earn from commissions of accommodation, transportation, and activities an amount of €197.09 for one package. The desired gross profit margin is 25%. It is important to keep in mind that this is just an example of a dynamic package that the customers design themselves. The addition of more package options leads to higher revenue margin, added value, and responsibility for Bayuca Travel.

8.8.2 Investment plan

Each employee hourly cost for Bayuca Travel is €50. This covers salary and insurance. The tour operator consists of two people; therefore, the mean cost is $50+50/2=€50$. Any additional marketing person in charge is €45 per hour. The tour guide cost is set out to €35. The online marketer is in charge of optimising the website, posting content on Vkontakte and Facebook for Bayuca Travel, and responding to questions regarding the package offerings. Table 8.4 provides an insight on the investment plan.

Type of activity	Amount	Person in-charge	Cost
Moscow travel fare (2016)	Reservation for 2 days	Anna Yuricheva	Needs to be determined
Hotel stay	3 nights booking	Anna Yuricheva	€159
Flight ticket	20 th of Sept – 23 th of Sept	Anna Yuricheva	€415
Personnel costs	8 hour shift for 3 days	Anna Yuricheva	€1,200
Website	Yearly registration fee	Christa Barkel	€200
Website package tour design	3 hour shift (one time)	Website designer	€135
Online presence	3 hour daily shift	Online marketer expert	€135
You Tube video	6 hour shift (One time)	Video editor	€270
Facebook advertising	Pay per click – 2500 clicks	Christa Barkel	€220
Vkontakte targeted advertising	Pay per click – 2500 views	Christa Barkel	€260
In tour market travel fare (2017)	Registration fee	Anna Yuricheva	€400
Hotel booking	4 nights booking	Anna Yuricheva	€68
Flight icket	10 th of Sept – 14 th of Sept	Anna Yuricheva	€286
Personnel costs	8 hour shift for 4 days	Anna Yuricheva	€1,600
Supplier networking	2 hourly supplier contact	Christa Barkel	€100
Tour guide per package	2 hour shift per tour	Tour guide	€70
Package set-up	1 hour per package	Anna Yuricheva/Christa Barkel	€50
Auto hire	Yearly cooperation fee	Christa Barkel	€50
			Total: €5,618

Table 8.4 Investment plan

8.8.3 Profit and loss statement

An estimation is set for the number of packages that will be sold. In 2017, there will be 40 tour packages sold to 2 PAX per group in order to reach payback in 2018. If Bayuca Travel sells 40 tour packages, they will have a return on the investment. Figure 8.5 will elaborate more on the profit and loss statement.

+Revenue
Accommodation €50.70x40 €2,028
Service fee charge: €90x40=€3,600
Picnic activity €13x40=€520
Other activities €6.33x40=€253.2
Auto hire: €44.9x40=€1,796
+Gross profit: €8,197.20
- Operational costs
Fixed costs:
Travel guide: €70x40=€2,800
Vacation house Hessenhem: 40 cottages booked in advanced: €70
Package setup: €50x40=€2,225
-Total: €2,870
-Variable costs:
Picnic: €7x40 = €280
-Total: €2,505
Net profit: €2,822.20 Payback will be €5,644.4 at the end of 2018.

Table 8.5: Profit and loss

9 Advisory conclusions

This chapter includes the concerns of Bayuca Travel regarding the management question and the advice questions.

The management question was as follows: *"How can Bayuca Travel attract the Russian travel market to visit the region of Twente"?*

With the establishment that there is a likely match between the offerings of the region of Twente and the Russian tourist's wants and needs, it was important to think of alternatives that would successfully attract subgroups. In order to consider any of the options, a prerequisite criterion was necessary in order to check whether the option was: in-line with the mission of Bayuca Travel, in-line with the results found from the survey design, and last but not least, does the option accurately portray the destination identity. Furthermore, it was important to compare the options based on certain criteria: Time needed, financial investment needed, and level of feasibility.

This benchmark revealed that creating a dynamic package labelled "Historical Avenue of Twente" targeted for wealthy couples without children, is the most suitable solution in attracting the Russian market. In order to deliver the project to a strategic level, a marketing plan was utilized to showcase each one of the steps necessary for Bayuca Travel to deliver a successful campaign. The financial implications could be found within the marketing plan. Consequently after the marketing plan was outlined, the PDCA cycle was introduced in order to put the steps into action.

Afterword

This thesis is the most challenging and demanding assignment I had ever written at the Saxion University of Applied Sciences. This is an improved version of the previous report.

Before the kick-off introduction, I was not very sure what was expected of me. All I knew was the fact that I had to write an advisory report. I believed I had knowledge regarding what was necessary for every aspect because I had received high grades on my previous reports. However, this obnoxious thinking caused blindside. This caused the failure of the thesis. An overhaul of the project was necessary to deliver the report to a bachelor's degree standard. I participated in all the lectures that prepared us for the various parts. During this time, I realised that this dissertation is a combination of previously learnt subjects at Saxion for the past two years. I started to visualise each one of the thesis chapters as study gates that I had to pass. This was the only way of making me inspired in writing this paper.

I felt very shocked and worried when I received the bad news about not passing the first report. Previously, I had high expectations that I was delivering a worthy thesis with added value for the client and the Hospitality Business School. After I received the news, I could not accept the fact that it was a weak report regardless of the fact that I had yet to hear the feedback. I could have reacted differently at that time if I was not stressing about graduating on time.

The sudden strive for starting the master's degree had taken its toll and all I thought about was the solution to the cause of the problem. The feedback meeting which I had with the first examiner opened my eyes. At last it was possible for me to hear out from another person what they think about the report and where my flaws were in order to deliver the next paper to a higher standard. Studying at Saxion is about teamwork and the group projects always gave chances to team members to provide feedback to each other. However, this was not the case here because of the individualistic nature. I was alone in my own thoughts, reading my paper from 9 to 5 while thinking that I had done a great job. Back then I could not see my flaws. In the meetings with the first examiner, I was constantly boasting about the progress of the report, whilst not actually sending any coursework for feedback. It turned out that I was able to express my thoughts better in front of a person rather than on paper which gets them convinced that I am doing a good job. Consequently, the report was vastly different than what was expected. This left both examiners and the client unpleasantly surprised of the outcome. If I was earlier precautious about my way of thinking, I could have delivered a better thesis.

There was a valuable lesson I learned when writing this report. This was never to wait for a person to respond to a message. It is wiser to directly call the person. Nonetheless, a whole research design idea got scrapped because I was rejected when calling Twente Branding and Beleef Twente. Therefore, the questionnaire could not be started. This drastically slowed down the process leaving me idle for about a month after the thesis defence proposal. Looking at the situation now, it would have been wiser to stop wasting time for a response and find another company. Nonetheless, I decided to take matters into my own hands. My initiation to contact Hof van Twente helped met to hand-in the thesis on time, regardless of the fact that it was mediocre.

As far as the communication with the people involved, everything was running smoothly. The client was very friendly and supportive throughout the whole process. Whenever I had a question or wanted to learn something more about Bayuca Travel, both Mrs. Yuricheva and Mrs. Barkel were more than helpful to provide me with information. The communication was formal, I was constantly trying to provide both of

them with an update on how the report was going. I am not really sure if this engagement of mine bothered them at some point but I was really eager to deliver a proper insight for them, instead of not involving them at all.

The same goes towards my first examiner who was more than helpful and supportive throughout the whole thesis. His guidance and feedback helped me to improve so much and he always steered me to the right direction. Almost every week we held appointments together to discuss the progress on the various chapters. His arguments were constructive and straight to the point. It should be important to note that when he told me about the failure of the thesis, he immediately wanted to set up a meeting together about the feedback. I highly appreciate the fact that he was willing to leave a gap in the weekend to discuss about the report. He knew that at this point, I was struggling with what needed to be changed but as soon as he provided me with an extensive one hour feedback, the weak points of the report, started to appear in my head. He devoted time and effort and served as a mentor throughout this process. In the initial thesis proposal I wrote that my wish was to have an examiner who is supportive and motivating. Mr. Theunissen fulfilled this criteria perfectly. Although I did not have that much contact with my second examiner, Ms. Pushkarskaya as well provided me with highly valuable feedback and support after the thesis defence proposal examination. I learned important aspects about the Russian characteristics from her which I included in the questionnaire.

Even though, at times there were bottlenecks and it seemed as there was no way to continue writing, I still tried to push forward to deliver a quality advice for Bayuca Travel. Challenges tend to appear every day and without having the will to face those obstacles, it would not be possible to close this study chapter. I had learnt about my previous mistakes and set out a learning point for next time which is not to be as obnoxious and overconfident of my performance and always seek feedback.

It is very important to evaluate the relevance for the tourism industry with this project. There is indeed a connection because there are not that many available research projects or insights available regarding the travel motivations and characteristics of the Russian travellers. From what has been found in the theoretical framework, it is concerning more about the general traveller profile. Up until now, only Lehtinen (2014), provided a qualitative insight on the Russian tourist's preference. Furthermore, there was not an available project that deals with figuring out whether there is a match between the Russian travel market and the offerings of a destination, such as the region of Twente. Information is power and the destination of Twente could benefit economically when the tour operator brings international tourists. Another relationship with the tourism industry, is that the company is working in the tourism sector.

The advice which is provided for Bayuca Travel, helps to strengthen the tourism sector, as well as to increase outbound tourism from Russia to the Netherlands. This project contributes to building up a general profile of the Russian traveller by means of statistical facts and figures. The insight gathered is not particularly theory breaking or phenomenal but indirectly delivers knowledge to the tourism industry. The results highlight the Russian traveller preference to travel to destinations not because they want to escape reality or to achieve status and prestige but rather for eating the local cuisine or visiting a destination they not seen before. Furthermore, the core concepts are relevant for every organisation wishing to attract a new market. The marketing plan is a universal approach, and each one of the steps could be undertaken by every company. The survey could be used for every project dealing with obtaining information about a new market, therefore DMO's could greatly benefit from it.

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Appendix A: Search methods

The following section described the most important methods of searching in an effective and efficient manner. All scientific material that were used for the study, complied with the AAOCC criteria for evaluating web page sources. *An example of the AOCC criteria applied is found in Appendix B.*

Google, Science Direct and Springerlink were the search engines that were used in order to boost the validity of the literature review. Furthermore, knowledge books had been read from the Saxion University of Applied Sciences library to enhance the time needed to find the right information from the various literature sources.

Another common search method applied by research professionals for systematic literature studies is the snowball method which was utilized in this study and was greatly beneficial in finding relevant information from one source, to another.

The utilization of key search terms was as well apparent in this literature search cycle (University of Colorado, 2011). Key terms that were used are as follows:

- destination image AND destination identity
- destination image OR destination branding
- tourist characteristics*
- Russian travel market profile
- destination image OR destination identity

Most of these search terms were successful in leading to the desired information that was needed.

Destination Branding: Insights and Practices from Destination Management Organizations

CARMEN BLAIN, STUART E. LEVY, AND J. R. BRENT RITCHIE

Although the concept of branding has been applied extensively to products and services, tourism destination branding is a relatively recent phenomenon. In particular, destination branding remains narrowly defined to many practitioners in destination management organizations (DMOs) and is not well represented in the tourism literature. Consequently, this study has three goals. First, it attempts to review the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of branding as conveyed by leading authors in the marketing field. Second, it seeks to refine and enhance the definition of destination branding (acceptable to and understood by tourism destination managers) to more fully represent the complexities of the tourism product. Third, and most importantly, it seeks to improve our understanding of current destination branding practices among DMOs. The findings indicate that although DMO executives generally understand the concept of destination branding, respondents are implementing only selective aspects of this concept, particularly logo design and development.

DMOs, whose jurisdictions may cover a country, state/province, region, or specific city or town, are a critical component of the tourism industry. The DMOs for towns and cities of all sizes, including large urban centers, or what we term "city states," frequently take the form of convention and visitor bureaus (CVBs). This study will specifically examine these DMOs, whose major purpose is to market their destination to potential visitors, both individuals and groups, to provide economic benefit to the community and its members. DMO members may include hospitality-related entities such as hotels, restaurants, tour operators, governmental bodies, and indeed any individual or firm that directly or indirectly supports tourism. For example, attractions, gas stations, retail outlets, city officials, transportation companies, incentive planners, airlines, and universities are all potential DMO members. DMO marketing expertise and coordination of marketing and sales efforts often make the organization a valuable resource for many of its members.

and in a *Journal of Brand Management* special issue (Hall 2002; Harrison 2002; Kotler and Gertner 2002; Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2002). Despite all of these comprehensive works, our knowledge of destination branding remains poorly understood and is often misunderstood by practitioners. In an attempt to provide further clarity, this article provides a theoretical review of branding, presents an informed definition of destination branding, and delivers the results of an empirical study that examined how destination management organization (DMO) executives interpret and apply, albeit sometimes narrowly, branding in their own marketing efforts.

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Journal of Travel Research, Vol. 43, May 2005, 328-338
DOI: 10.1177/0047287505274646
© 2005 Sage Publications

Clearly, the ultimate goals of destination branding are identical to several important DMO objectives, namely, to attract visitors and expenditures to their respective destinations. As DMOs already have a general understanding of destination branding, an important revelation of this research is that DMOs should more fully and actively include local

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Step 2: Checklist of AAOCC

Accuracy and Authority of the website

- Who is the author? – Carmen Blain, Stuart E. Levy and Brent Ritchie.
- Who publishes the website? – Pikslar.com – An online community that brings together the same minded, creative people.
- What is the URL and what does this tell you about the publisher of the site? – .com which means that this is a top level domain of commerce that publishes scientific materials or articles to inspire its audience.
- What qualifications does the author have? – Carmen Blain, MBA, is a consultant with Praxis Group in Calgary, Canada. Stuart E. Levy is a doctoral candidate in marketing and tourism management at the Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary. J.R. Brent Ritchie is a professor of tourism management at the Haskayne School of Business and is the chair of the World Tourism Education and Research Centre, University of Calgary.
- Is the information verifiable? – Yes, it was originally published by Sage Publications.
- Is the text free of errors, well written and cited properly? – Yes

Objectivity of the web document

- Is the page a mask for advertising; if so, how might the information be biased? – No
- Why was the page written (motives)? – To examine DMOs, whose major purpose is to market their destination to potential visitors, both individuals and groups, to provide economic benefit to the community and its members. The concepts of destination branding are explored.
- Who is the intended audience? – Destination Management Organizations and other hospitality-related entities.
- Are opinions backed by accurate facts and information? – Yes

Currency of the web document

- When was it produced? – 2005
- How many dead links are there? – None
- Is the information outdated? – No, many researches still refer to this information.

Coverage of the web document

- Is there breadth and/or depth to the topics covered? – Yes, all parts of a study are included.
- Is the information free or is there a fee to obtain information? – There is no fee to obtain this information.
- Are you able to view the page or is software missing? Is that software free? – There is no software.

Appendix C: Study on past research

Destination branding

Gilmore (2002) points that the brand must “capture the spirit of its people”. The brand essence is the DNA of a destination. It includes 3 to 4 core values which form the so-called DNA. They are normally single words which are always mentioned in destination marketing communications.

A brand includes both rational and emotional elements. The rational attributes define and explain the enduring characteristics of the destination. On the other hand, the emotional factors give the feeling of the brand. This is all based on the tourist’s perspective

Gilmore further states that brands need to be “aspirational, inspirational, challenging, differentiated, and translatable to different audiences.” This is of utmost importance, due to the fact that there are a vast majority of stakeholders involved in a brand with their own objectives and visions.

Research points out that while it is possible to alter the perception of a destination, it is impossible to change the core characteristics of it, such as climate and the geographical region. These intangible characteristics are deeply ingrained in the tourist’s preference of a destination. Usakli & Baloglu (2011) state that destination branding is a relevant concept due to the fact that travelers would opt for recommended brands that match their own self-actualization. The above mentioned occurrence is named the self-congruity theory. According to Morgan and Pritchard (2004), most scholars prefer the brand-building process for destination development. Hudson and Ritchie (2009) further made a proposition of a four step process of creating a “destination brand experience” (as cited in Kozak & Baloglu, 2011, p.158). The process consists of an assessment of the destination’s current situation, the development of a brand identity and brand promise, the communication of the brand promise and the measurement tools for determining the effectiveness of the brand-building implementation.

Destination image

Destination image is considered to be in close proximity to brand image. Brand image is how the clientele perceives the brand (Nandan, 2004). In economic terms, brand image is formed out of three types of interconnected associations that consumers hold perceptions on: product attributes, benefits, and attitudes (Keller, 1993). Low and Lamb (2000) refer to brand image as the symbolic and functional gains of a brand. Current research showcases that the image of a destination can vastly affect its success. If there is a comparison of destinations in a similar level of attractiveness, then the decision factor of the choice of a destination would go to the one which has the least negative perception. However, Selby and Morgan (1996) argue that the comprehensive destination image tools are an effective way of showcasing the strengths and weaknesses of a destination. Due to this reason, travellers want to have more than one experience, and therefore it can be stated that there is a close relationship between the tourism related facilities contributing to the formation of the overall image of the destination. According to Fakery and Crompton (1991), the image of a place can be affected by the familiarity of the tourists within the destination and the information provided by the media and travel journals.

The research investigation points out that destinations are constantly compared, and in order to have a competitive position, it is necessary to have a positive and favourable image of the destination because it is one of the “pull” factors for tourists.

Destination identity

Aaker (1996) further states that brand personality is part of extended identity, not core identity. The most successful brands are in-line and linked to the core and extended identities.

Joachimsthaler and Akker (1997) suggested that in order to adequately give a description of the ambitions of a brand, at least six to twelve dimensions of a destination need to be included. It is highly recommended by the authors that one of these dimensions, differentiates the tourism destination from another one. In some circumstances, it is possible for a destination to have several brand identities which helps a destination to be branded across many markets. Even though if there are multiple identities, research theorists are convinced that the core identity stays in-line, in favour of consistency.

Russian tourist characteristics

Morgan, Pritchard and Piggot (2002) discuss that consumers make use of brands in order to showcase lifestyle statements. This is in-line with the self-cognitive theory. The people opt to make a purchase based on their personal beliefs of who they are and what they would like to be. It is important to note that the tourism destinations are formed by tangible and intangible assets. (Qu, 2011). Tangible assets are the geographical features, attractions and historical places. The intangible assets consist of the culture and history (Kozak and Baloglu 2011). There are many motives for travellers expressing the need of visiting a destination.

According to Pyo, Mihalik and Uysal (1989), the tourist motivation is multidimensional. The journey of the tourist involves eating, staying at a hotel, going shopping, communicating with the locals. In other words, it does not compromise of one single product but rather there is a vast amount of components each provided by different companies to make the experience of the tourist memorable.

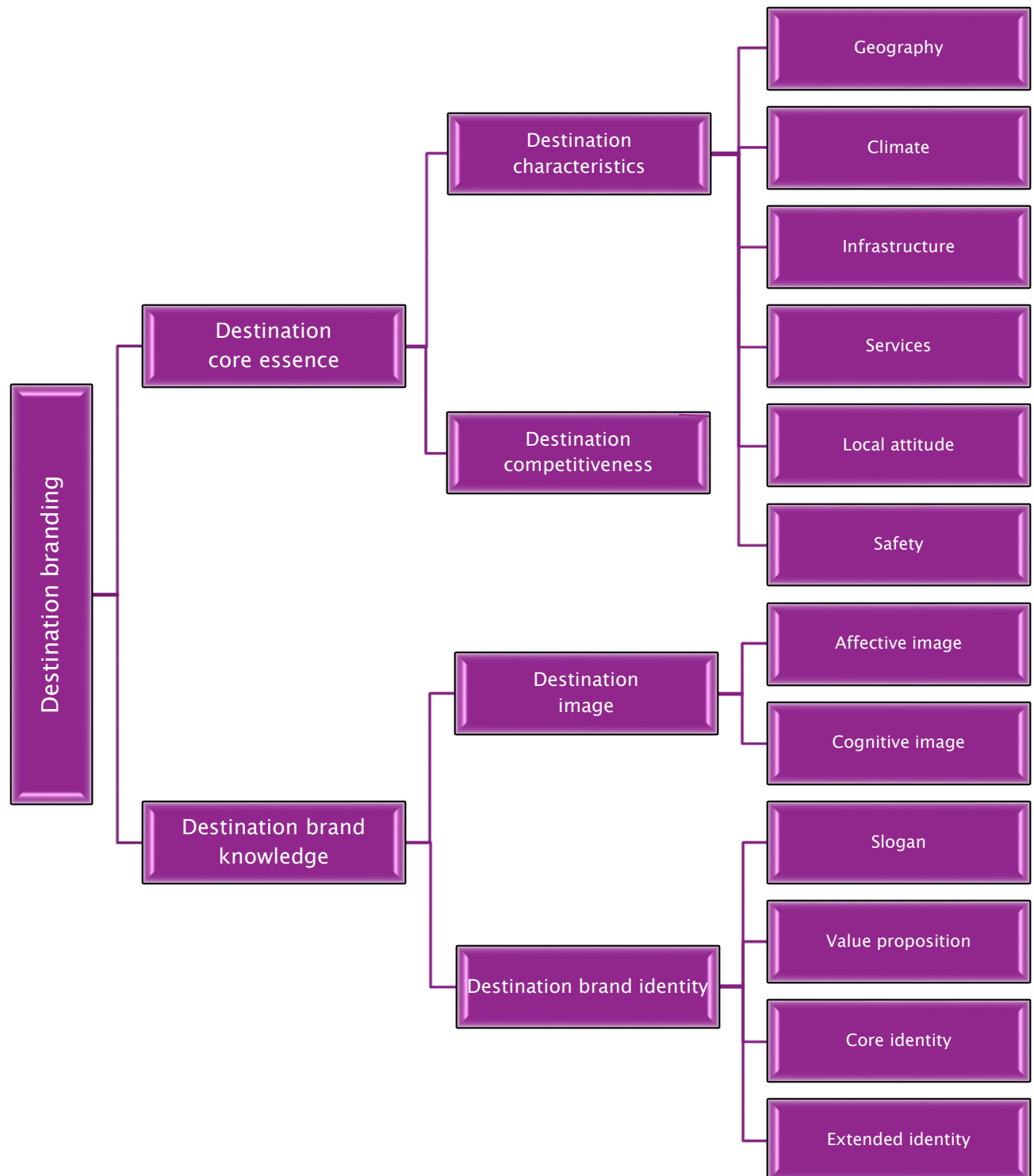
Tourists are interested in discovering new places rather than escaping reality during their vacations (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggot, 2002). This is a vastly changing pattern than how it was viewed two decades ago. Coltman (1989) presents the elements of a destination such as natural attributes or attractions that make a contribution on the tourist's experiences. Morgan, Pritchard and Piggot (2002) as well point out that tourists are "aspirational" and that they are constantly seeking self-actualization" throughout the means of their travel choices.

Consumers tend not to choose a place to stay, whenever they do not feel sure about it or the service provided. However, destinations that have been good for the tourists, are highly likely to be visited again by them later. Eventica (2009) states that the Russian travel market values novelty. If a destination is correctly marketed to the correct audience as the new holiday buzz destination, it will succeed in the Russian marketplace. The Russian travellers look on the internet, listen to word of mouth and consult travel agents when planning their trip. However, according to a survey carried out by Global Market Institute (2005), it has been found that the internet users opt for personal recommendations even though travel agents have bargaining power with their brochures. Over 300,000 Russian luxury travellers travel abroad yearly and spend with their friends on average €1,500 per day on accommodation.

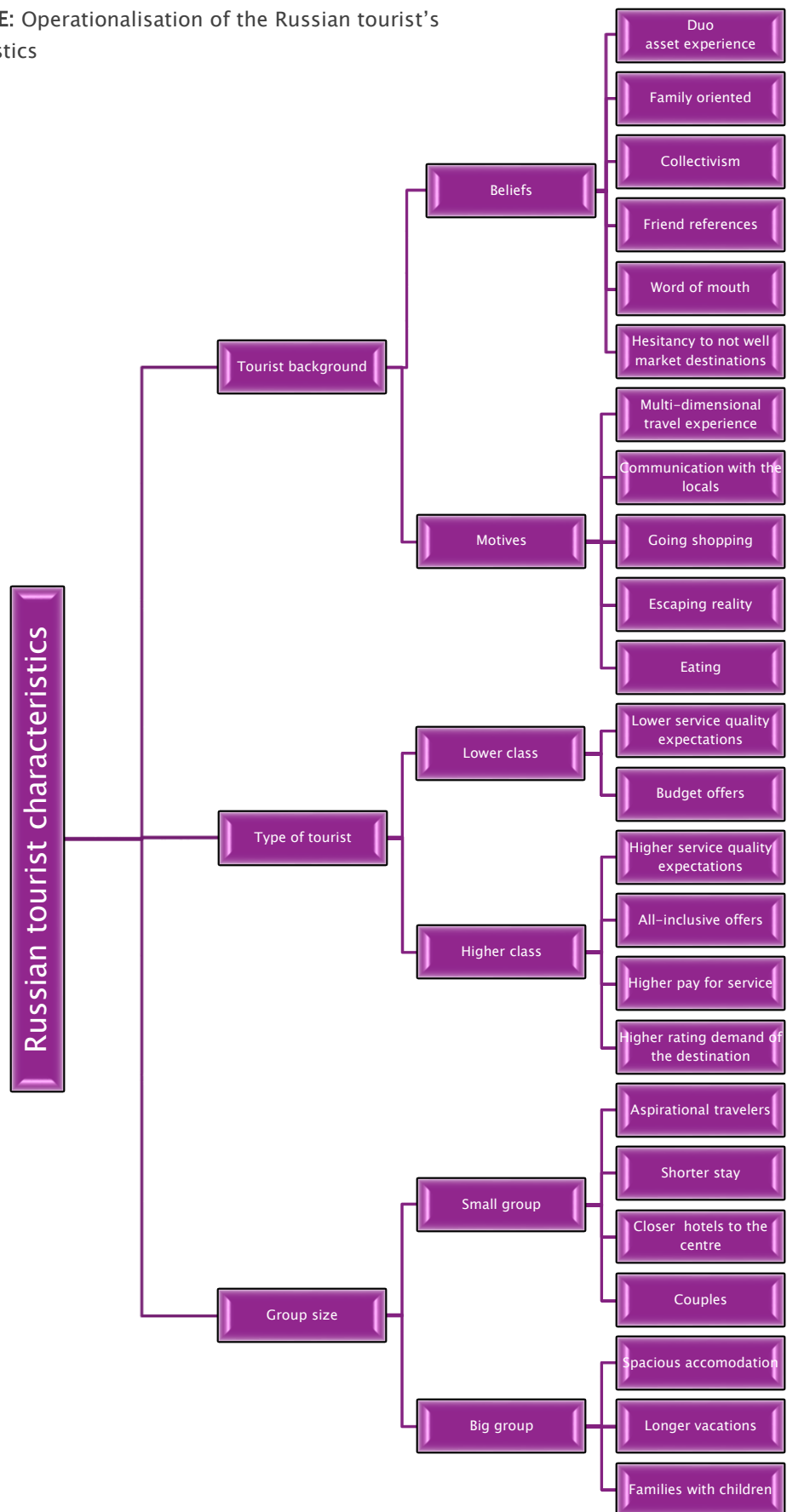
Marketing plan

The Chartered Institute of Marketing (2001) defines marketing as the management function which organizes and directs all those business activities involved in assessing customer needs and converting customer purchasing power into effective demand for a specific product or service, and in moving that product or service to the final consumer or user so as to achieve the profit target or other objective set by the company or other organization. Kotler (2002) defines marketing as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want by creating and exchanging products and values with others. According to Holloway (2004), all tourism organisations, no matter the size, endeavour in marketing activities.

Appendix D: Operationalisation of destination branding



Appendix E: Operationalisation of the Russian tourist's characteristics



Appendix F: English translation of survey on the Russian tourist market

First of all we would like to thank you for taking part in this survey! The reason why you are contacted is because we would like to hear from you regarding your destination preferences. We are a Dutch non-profit tourism organization which is interested in the Russian travellers who travel to international destinations. This questionnaire will contain a Dutch destination that you may or may not be familiar with. Based on your beliefs, motives and preferences, you will fill what feels right for you. Your input is highly appreciated and the information that you will provide, will help us to understand how you feel and what is the image about the destination that we are offering to you. Since time is a valuable commodity for every person, this survey is estimated to take no longer than 5 minutes. Your response is voluntary and would be kept confidential! Responses will not be identified as individual. They will only be analysed as a group in which you are taking part in. Thank you very much again for your collaboration!

Before filling out the questionnaire, we encourage you to click on the image below in order to be enrolled to get the chance to win these two traditional Dutch gifts! Mark green if you are interested or double click for red if not uninterested. At the end of the questionnaire, you can provide your email address, so we can contact you personally if you are the winner and send you the gift!

N.B. The criteria for winning is to fill out the whole survey!

The following questions will provide us with some background information about yourself.

Q.1 Are you?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Q.2 In which year are you born?

(Open space)

Q.3 What is your relationship status?

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married
- ☐ In a relationship

Q.4 Do you have children?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q.5 If so, do they still live with you?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q.6 What is your combined annual household income?

- ☐ Less than 30,000
- ☐ 30,000 – 39,999
- ☐ 40,000 – 49,999
- ☐ 50,000 – 59,999
- ☐ 60,000 – 69,999
- ☐ 70,000 – 79,999
- ☐ 80,000 – 89,999
- ☐ 90,000 – 99,999
- ☐ 100,000 or more

Q.7 What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

- ☐ Doctorate degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Bachelor degree
- ☐ Secondary education
- ☐ Primary education

The following questions will provide us with information about your destination preferences.

Q.8 How many times did you travel abroad last year?

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2 times
- ☐ 3 times
- ☐ 4+ times
- ☐ I don't travel abroad

Q.9 Have you ever visited the Netherlands before?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐

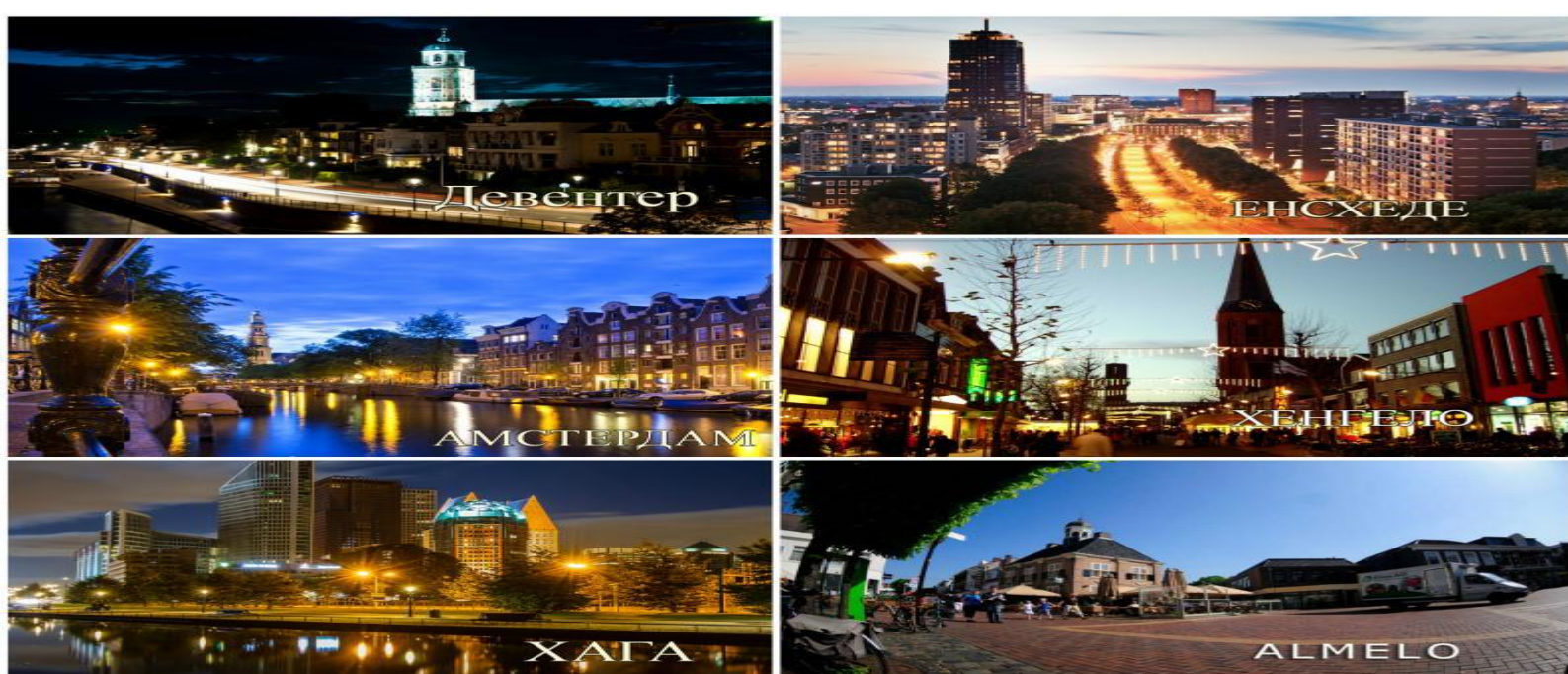
Q.10 I travel to a foreign destination:

- ☐ Alone
- ☐ With my partner
- ☐ With my partner and kids
- ☐ With my friends

Q.11 Please read each of the following statements. Click how important the following factors are to motivate you in visiting a destination for a short brake (2 to 3 days):

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very important
Comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relaxing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Urban	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quiet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unspoilt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agricultural	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educational	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Romantic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q.12 If you were offered one of those Dutch tourism cities to visit, which one would you choose? Deventer, Amsterdam, the Hague, Hengelo, Enschede or Almelo. Please click on the one you are interested in.



Q.13 What was the reason for picking a particular choice? One answer possible

- ☐ The popularity of the destination
- ☐ The city has a good reputation as a destination
- ☐ The image that the destination showcases
- ☐ The city satisfies my wants as a destination
- ☐ There is something special about the city as a destination
- ☐ I can trust the city as a holiday destination

Q.14 Please read each of the following statements. Click how interested you would be in visiting a destination which has the following features in order to consider a short break (i.e., 2– 3 days).

	Very uninterested (1)	Uninterested (2)	Neutral (3)	Interested (4)	Very interested (5)
Windmills (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Old towns (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Museums (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landmarks (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monuments (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historical buildings (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping places (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adventure family park (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clubs (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aquadrome parks (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beer brewery (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Drawing centers (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vacation houses (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Camping bungalows (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picnic areas (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art towns (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Castles (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Botanic gardens (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forests (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rural villages (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q.15 The previous question symbolizes what the Twente region offers as a destination. Do you consider if there is a match between your wants and the offerings there?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

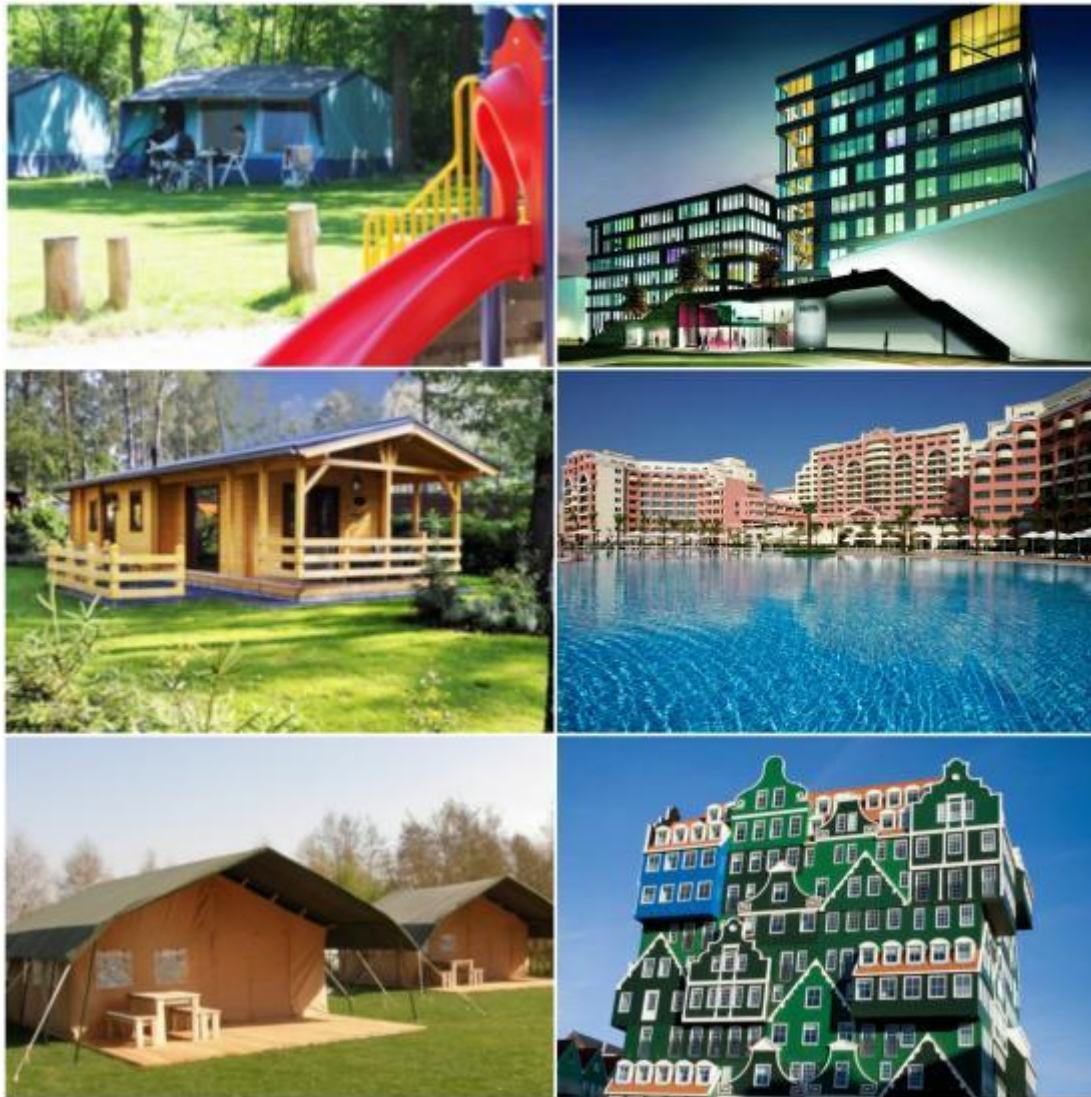
Q.16 If you were offered one of those activities, which one would you choose? Click on the image that you like the most.



Q.17 Why do you travel to a foreign destination? Please rate the following statements based on your motives.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
To visit a destination I have not seen before (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To eat the local cuisine (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To go shopping (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To meet new people (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To communicate with the locals (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To rest (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To be with the family (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To visit friends and relatives (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To impress my loved one (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For status and prestige (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To escape reality (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To visit cultural attractions (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q. 18 If you had to choose between one of those accommodations, which one would you click on?



Q.19 For how many days would you stay?

- ☐ For one day (1)
- ☐ For two days (2)
- ☐ For three days (3)
- ☐ For more than four days (4)

Q.20 The reason why I choose a particular destination is because: One answer is possible

- ☐ A friend recommends it (1)
- ☐ It has a good rating in the social media (2)
- ☐ It is very popular at the moment (3)
- ☐ It has a positive word of mouth by the travel agent (4)
- ☐ It provides me with self-actualization fulfillment (5)
- ☐ Other (Please specify) (6) _____

The following questions will provide us with information about your travel behavior

Q. 21I prefer to choose a certain destination that:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree or disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Reflects the way I see myself (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reflects the way I think others see me (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reflects the way I would like to be seen by others (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reflects the ideal way I would like to see myself (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q. 22 How can a destination persuade you to stay for more than one night?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Broaden range of activities (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family friendly resorts (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Couple deals (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be exciting (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer deals (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer this survey! Your input was highly appreciated and now we are giving you the chance to win the price! Please leave your email address below:

Appendix G: Russian questionnaire translation

Здравствуйте,

Благодарим Вас, что решили пройти наш опрос. Данное исследование направлено на рассмотрение предпочтений туристов в выборе места туристического пребывания. Bayuca travel, голландская некоммерческая туристическая организация, интересуется русскими туристами, путешествующими по Европе. В этом опросе упоминаются Голландские города, которые возможно Вам известны.

Ответьте на вопросы в соответствии со своими убеждениями, мотивами и предпочтениями. Ваши ответы очень важны для нас и помогут нам понять, что Вы думаете о предлагаемых городах. Этот опрос займёт не более 5 минут, поскольку мы ценим Ваше время.

Также, Ваши ответы будут абсолютно конфиденциальны и останутся анонимными при анализе результатов. Ещё раз благодарим Вас за участие!

Прежде, чем приступить к заполнению опроса, предлагаем Вам нажать на картинку снизу. Тем самым Вы можете выиграть два традиционно голландских подарка! Поставьте зелёным, если Вы заинтересованы, или нажмите два раза на картинку до красного, если Вас это не интересует. В конце опроса Вы можете оставить Вашу электронную почту, чтобы мы смогли связаться с Вами и прислать Вам подарок, если Вы окажетесь победителем.

Примечание: для того, чтобы выиграть подарок, Вам необходимо заполнить ВСЕ опрос.

Следующие вопросы направлены на общие сведения о Вас

Вы? Мужчина Женщина

В каком году Вы родились?

Ваше семейное положение?

- ☐ Не в отношениях
- ☐ Женат / Замужем
- ☐ Встречаюсь

Есть ли у Вас дети?

- ☐ Да
- ☐ Нет

Если есть, живут ли они ещё с Вами?

- ☐ Да
- ☐ Нет

Каков месячный доход Вашей семьи (в рублях)?

- ☐ Меньше 30,000
- ☐ 30,000 – 39,999
- ☐ 40,000 – 49,999
- ☐ 50,000 – 59,999
- ☐ 60,000 – 69,999
- ☐ 70,000 – 79,999
- ☐ 80,000 – 89,999
- ☐ 90,000 – 99,999
- ☐ 100,000 и больше

Какой у Вас уровень образования?

- ☐ Докторская степень
- ☐ Степень магистра
- ☐ Степень бакалавра
- ☐ Среднее образование
- ☐ Начальное образование

Следующие вопросы предоставят информацию о Ваших туристических предпочтениях.

Сколько раз Вы были за границей в прошлом году?

- ☐ 1 раз
- ☐ 2 раза
- ☐ 3 раза
- ☐ 4+ раз
- ☐ Я не был(а) за границей

Вы когда-либо были в Нидерландах?

- ☐ Да
- ☐ Нет

Я путешествую за границей в основном:

- ☐ Один / Одна
- ☐ С супругом / супругой
- ☐ С супругом / супругой и детьми
- ☐ С друзьями

Пожалуйста, ознакомьтесь с каждым из следующих утверждений. Укажите, насколько следующие факторы важны для Вас при посещении туристических городов в течение короткого времени (от 2 до 3 дней):

	Совсем не важно	Не важно	Нейтрально	Важно	Очень важно
Комфортный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Весёлый	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Расслабляющий	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Городской	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Тихий	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Безопасный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Естественный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Сельскохозяйственный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Познавательный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Исторический	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Романтический	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Гостеприимный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Художественный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Спортивный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Просторный	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Если бы Вам предложили посетить один из этих голландских туристических городов, какой бы Вы выбрали? Девентер, Амстердам, Гаага, Хенгело, Энсхеде или Алмело. Пожалуйста, выберите один вариант:



Почему Вы выбрали именно этот город? Возможен один вариант ответа:

- ☐ Популярность этого направления
- ☐ Город имеет хорошую репутацию
- ☐ Впечатляет фотография
- ☐ Город удовлетворяет мои потребности
- ☐ В городе есть что-то особенное, что привлекает меня
- ☐ Я верю, что город может быть хорошим местом отдыха

Пожалуйста, ознакомьтесь с каждым из следующих утверждений. Укажите, насколько Вы заинтересованы в посещении туристического направления, имеющего следующие особенности, на короткий срок пребывания (т.е. 2– 3 дня):

	Совсем не интересно	Неинтересно	Нейтрально	Интересно	Очень интересно
Ветряные мельницы	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Города с богатой историей и средневековой архитектурой	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Музеи	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Достопримечательности	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Памятники	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Исторические здания	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Торговые точки	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Семейный парк развлечений	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Клубы	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Аквапарки	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Пивоварня	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Центры творчества	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Дома отдыха	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Бунгало	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Места для кемпинга	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Площадки для пикников	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Галереи искусства	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Мероприятия	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Живописные города	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Замки	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ботанические сады	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Леса	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Сельская местность	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Красивый пейзаж	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Отели	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ночлег и завтрак	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Гостевые дома	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Езда на велосипеде	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Маршруты пешего похода	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Маршруты для верховой езды	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Гостеприимное общество	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Предыдущий вопрос содержит то, что регион Твенте предлагает туристам. Считаете ли Вы, что Ваши желания совпадают с предлагаемыми вариантами отдыха?

- ☐ Совсем не согласен
- ☐ Не согласен
- ☐ Еще не решил
- ☐ Согласен
- ☐ Полностью согласен

Если бы Вам предложили один из этих видов деятельности, какой бы Вы выбрали? Нажмите на изображение, которое Вам нравится больше всего.



Почему Вы любите путешествовать за границу? Пожалуйста, оцените следующие причины, исходя их собственных мотивов.

	Совсем не согласен	Не согласен	Еще не решил	Согласен	Полностью согласен
Чтобы посетить неизведанные мной места	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Чтобы попробовать местную кухню	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ради покупок	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Чтобы встретиться с новыми людьми	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Пообщаться с местными жителями	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Чтобы отдохнуть	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Побыть с семьей	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Посетить друзей и родственников	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Чтобы произвести впечатление на любимого человека	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Для статуса и престижа	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Чтобы уйти от реальности	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Посетить культурные достопримечательности	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Если бы Вы выбирали один из следующих вариантов размещения во время отдыха, какой бы Вы



выбрали? Нажмите на одну картинку:

Сколько дней Вы бы провели в этом месте?

- ☐ Один день
- ☐ Два дня
- ☐ Три дня
- ☐ Больше трех дней

Почему Вы выбрали именно этот вариант? Возможен один вариант ответа:

- ☐ Друг рекомендовал
- ☐ Данный вариант имеет высокий рейтинг в социальных сетях
- ☐ Данный вариант очень популярен на данный момент
- ☐ Туристическое агентство рекомендовало
- ☐ Помогает мне актуализировать себя
- ☐ Другое (Пожалуйста, укажите что) _____

Следующие вопросы предоставят нам информацию о Вашем туристическом поведении

Я предпочитаю выбирать туристическое место, которое:

	Совсем не согласен	Не согласен	Затрудняюсь ответить	Согласен	Полностью согласен
Отражает то, каким я себя считаю	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Отражает то, каким, на мой взгляд, видят меня другие	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Отражает то, каким мне хочется, чтобы считали меня другие	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Отражает то, каким я хочу себя видеть	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Что в туристическом городе заставило бы Вас остаться дольше одной ночи?

	Совсем не согласен	Не согласен	Затрудняюсь ответить	Согласен	Полностью согласен
Широкий выбор вида отдыха/развлечений	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Семейные курорты	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Акции для влюбленных пар	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Захватывающие места	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Другие скидки	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix H: Inspirational destination branding questionnaire:

SECTION A: In this first section, we are interested to find out what is important to you in selecting a destination for a short break or longer holiday.

Q1. Please read each of the following statements. Circle how important you believe the following are when selecting a destination for a short break (2–4 days) or longer holiday (5+ days).

The destination should be:	Short Breaks (i.e. 2–4 days)					Longer Holidays (i.e. 5+days)				
	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Comfortable	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Exciting	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Relaxing	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Dynamic	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Quiet	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Cosmopolitan	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Safe	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Urban	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Unspoilt	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Natural	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Educational	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Fun	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Q4. Please circle your level of agreement with the following statements:

I prefer to choose a short break and/or longer holiday that:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Reflects the way that I see myself	1	2	3	4	5
Reflects the way I think others see me	1	2	3	4	5

Q2. Please read each of the following statements. Circle how important you believe a destination to have the following features are when selecting a destination for a short break (i.e., 2–4 days) or longer holidays (i.e. 5+ days).

The destination should have:	Short Breaks (i.e. 2–4 days)					Longer Holidays (i.e. 5+days)				
	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Surf and sand	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

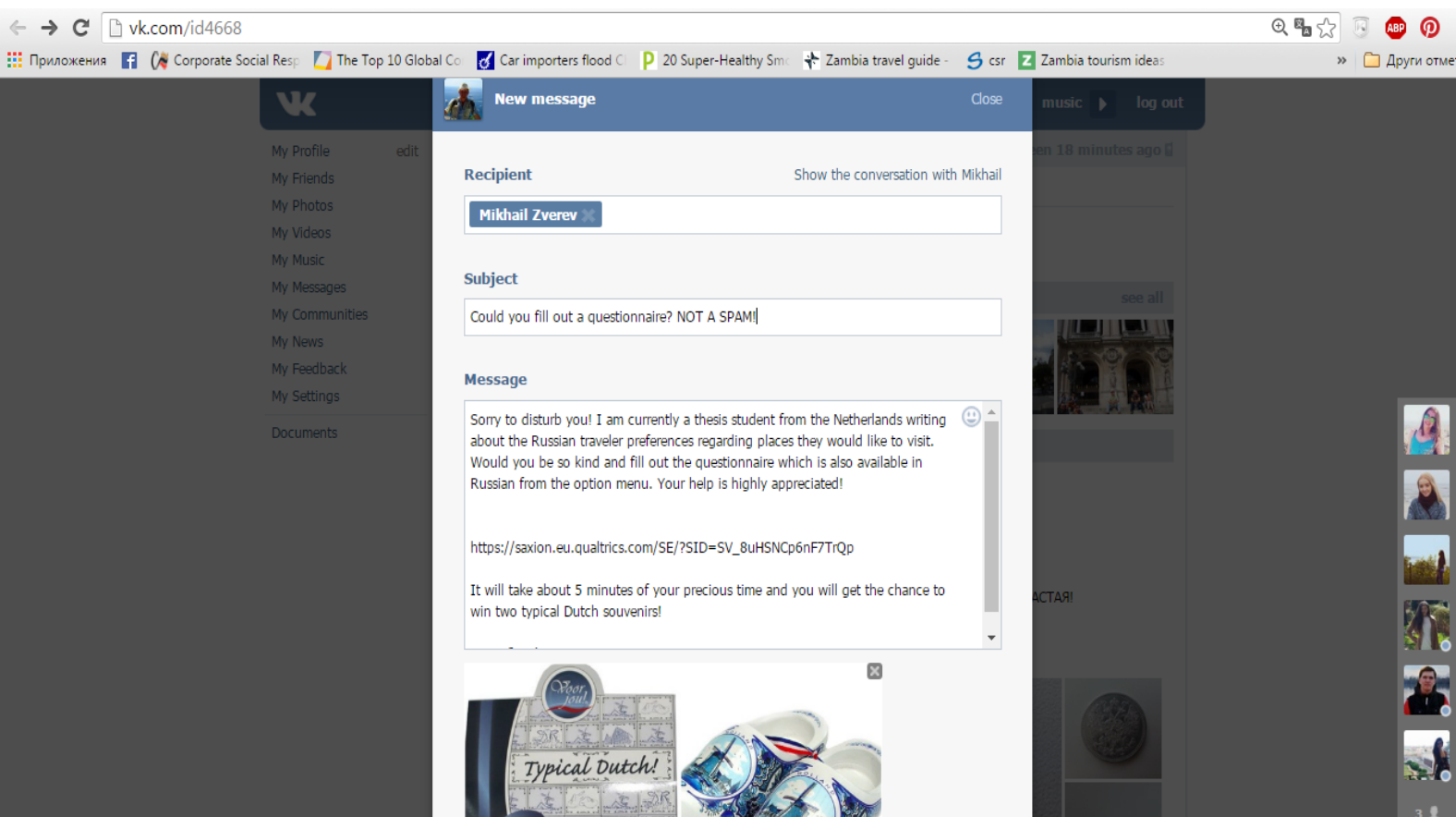
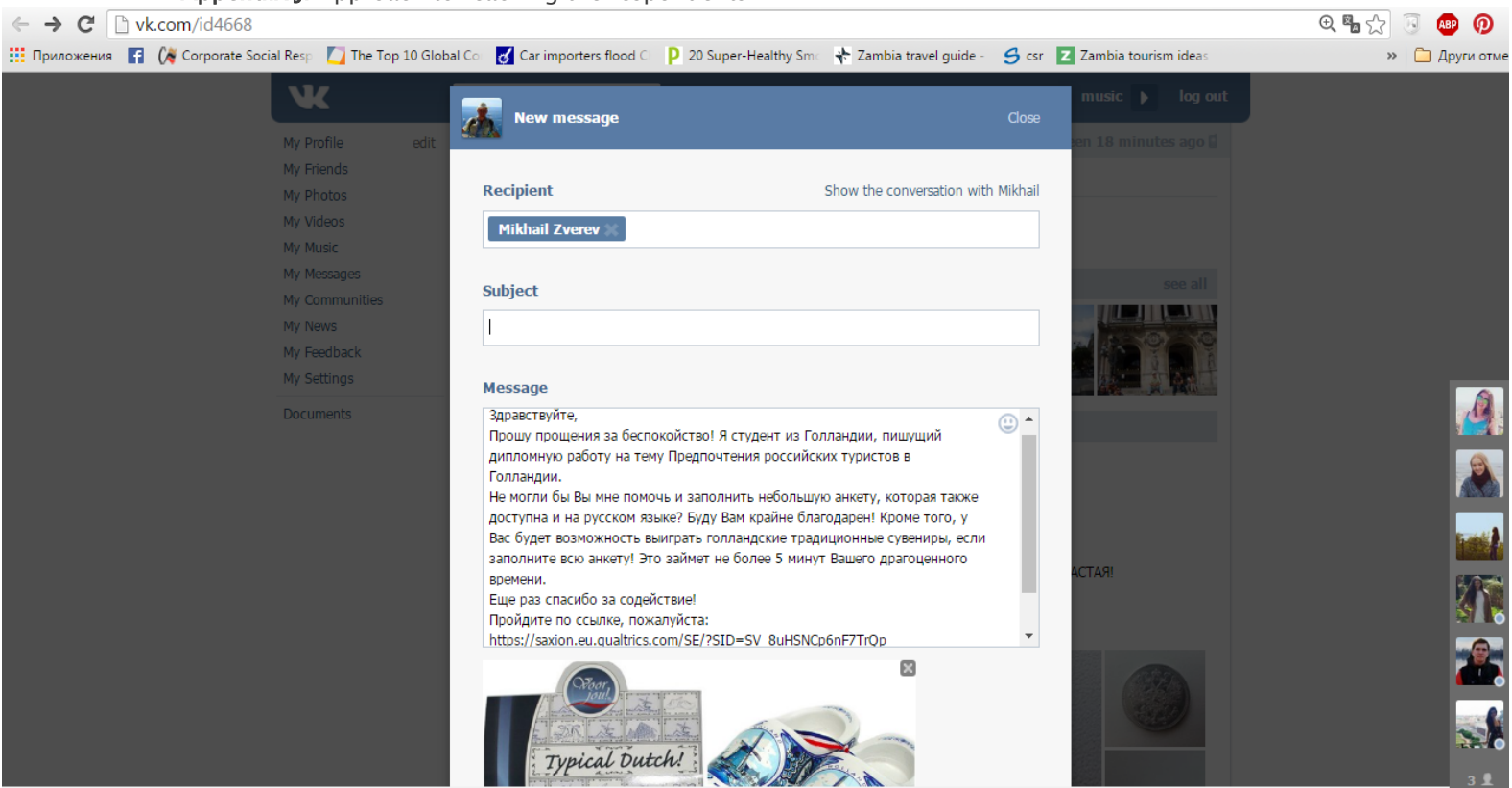
Good shopping	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Good restaurants	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Spectator sport	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Nightlife and entertainment	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Theatres and cinemas	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Sport facilities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Golf-courses	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Outback landscape	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Good accommodation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Q3. How could a destination persuade you to stay an extra night?

Appendix I: Factor analysis

Factor label	Factor 1: Recreational activities	Factor 2: Resting and relaxation	Factor 3: Personal Values	Factor 4: Social experiences	Factor 5: Enriching and Learning experie nces
Entertainment	.789				
To have fun	.698				
To spend time with my family	.421				
To be part of recreational activities	.414				
To do something out of the ordinary	.285				
To break away from routine of everyday life		-.818			
To break away from everyday pressure		-.815			
To break away from everyday surroundings		-.790			
To rest		-.698			
To relax		-.611			
Influence of family			.912		
Influence of children			.829		
Influence of friends			.778		

Appendix J: Approach to reaching the respondents



Appendix K: Quantitative results in graphs

Demographic profile

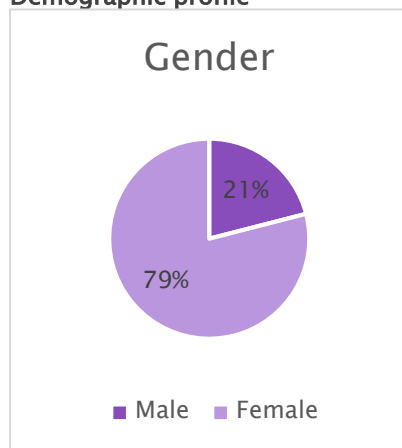


Figure K.1: Gender

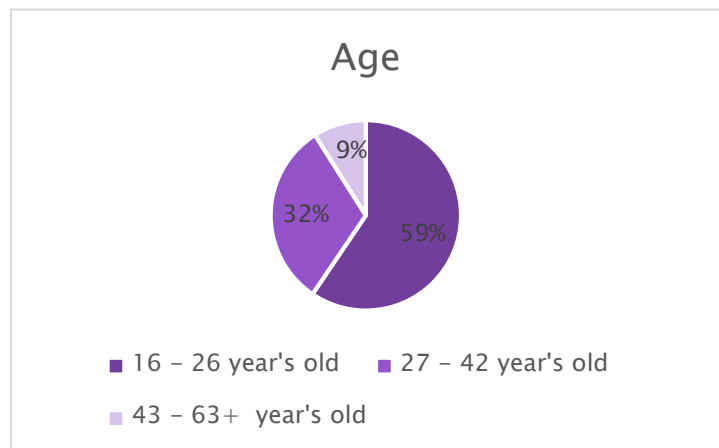


Figure K.2: Age

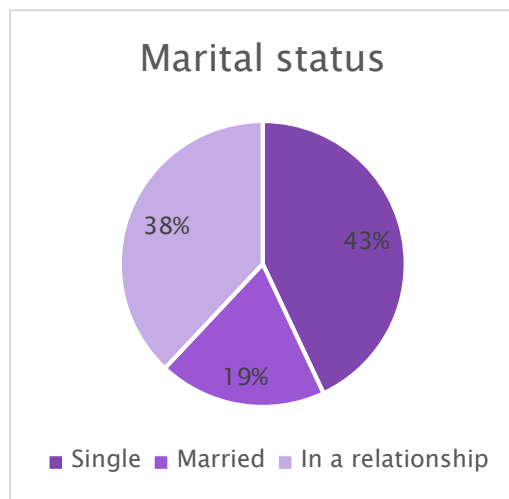


Figure: K.3 Marital status

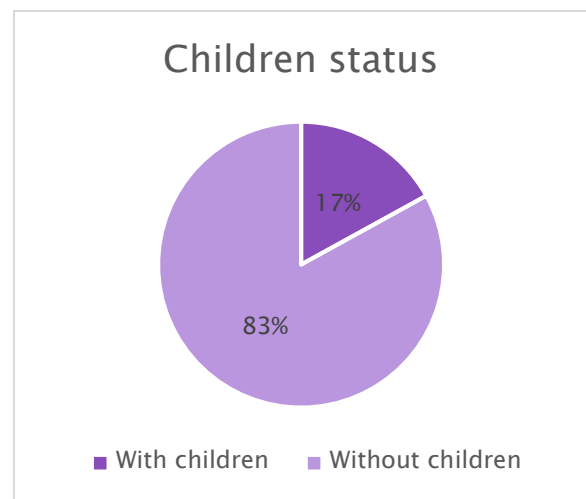


Figure K.4: Children status

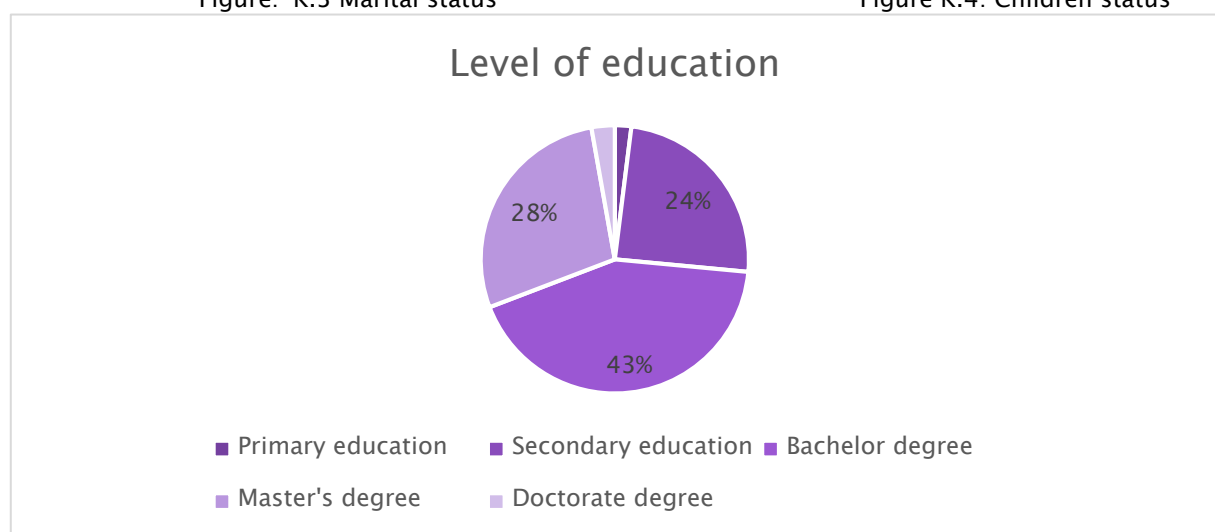


Figure K.5: Level of Education

Wishes and demands

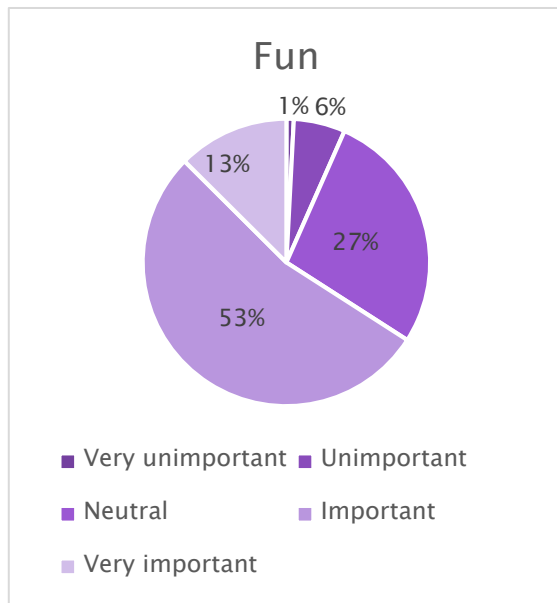


Figure K.6: Fun factor

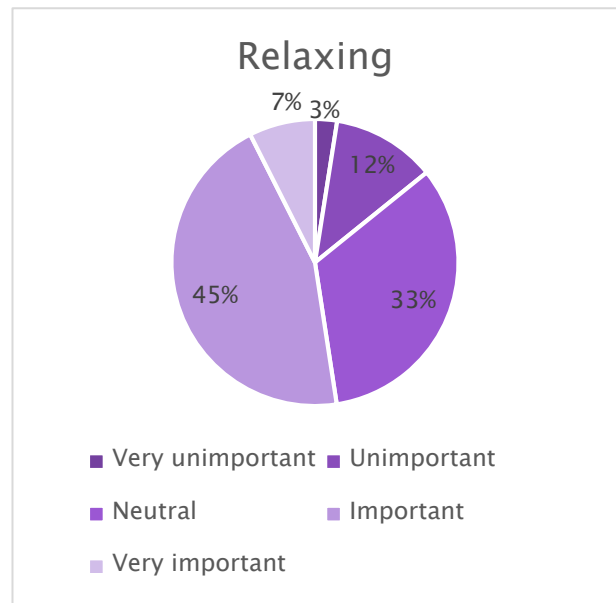


Figure K.7: Relaxing factor

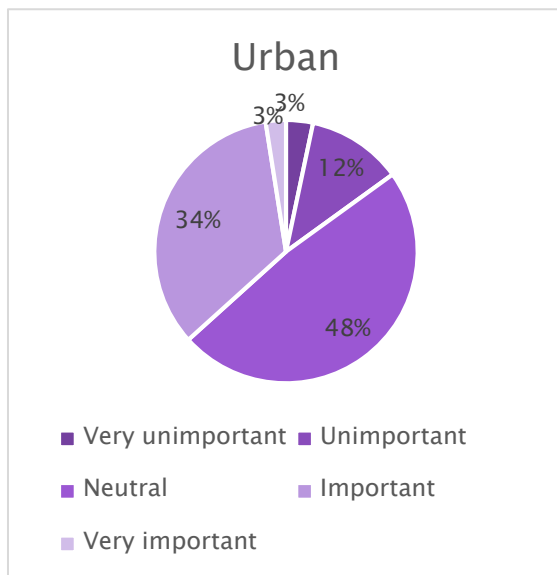


Figure K.8: Urban factor

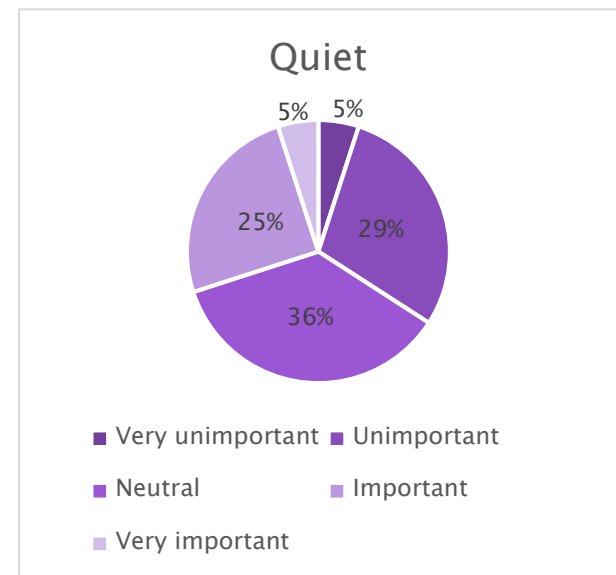


Figure K.9: Quiet factor

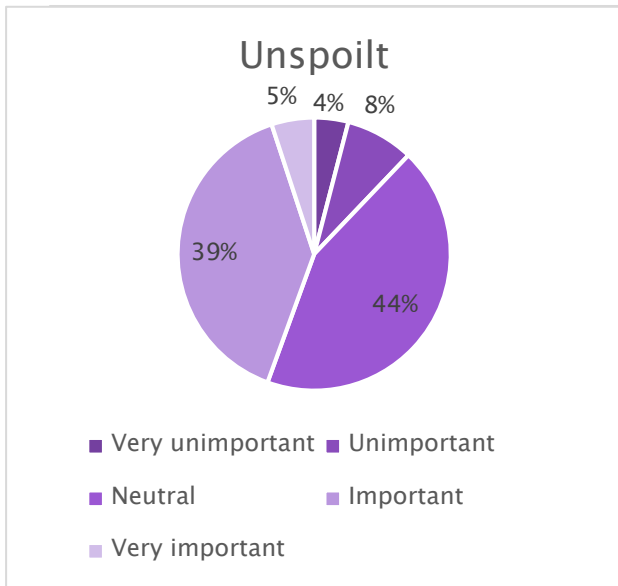


Figure K.10: Unspoilt factor

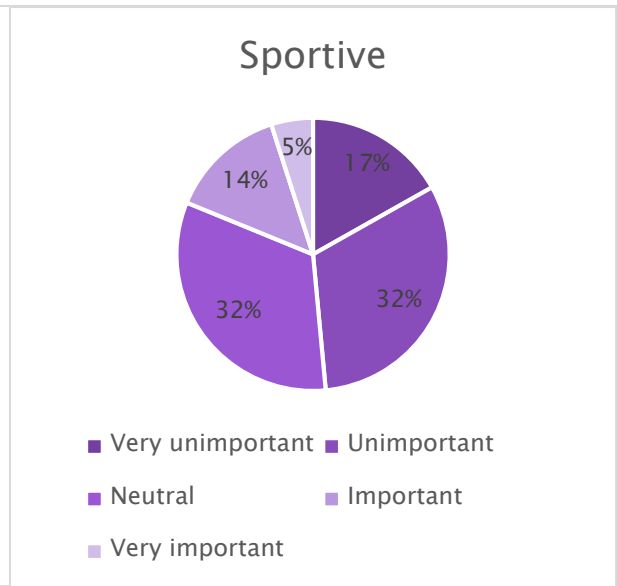


Figure K.11: Hospitable factor

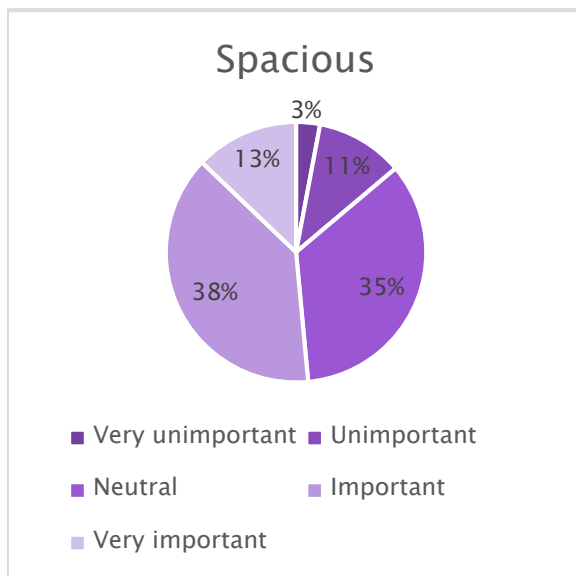


Figure K.12: Spacious factor

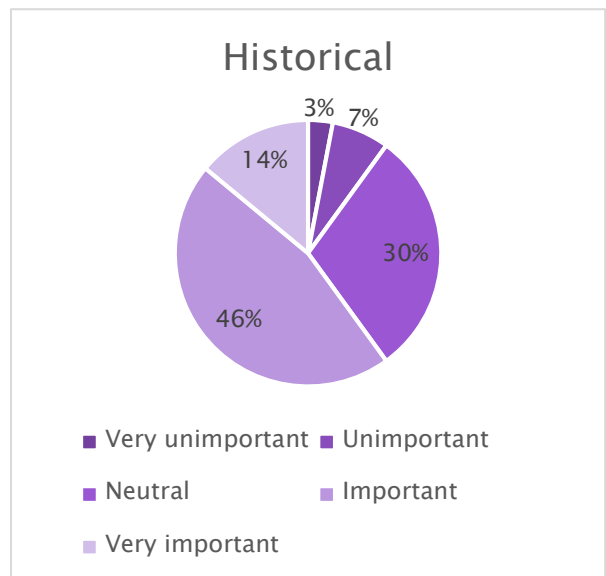


Figure K.13: Historical factor

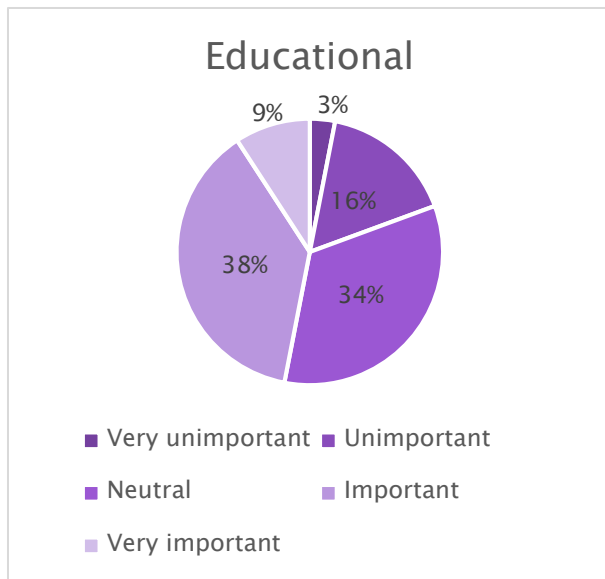


Figure K.14: Educational factor

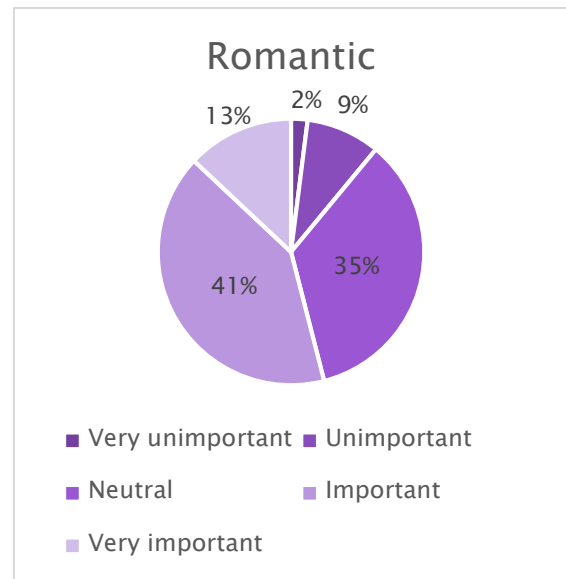


Figure K.15: Romantic factor

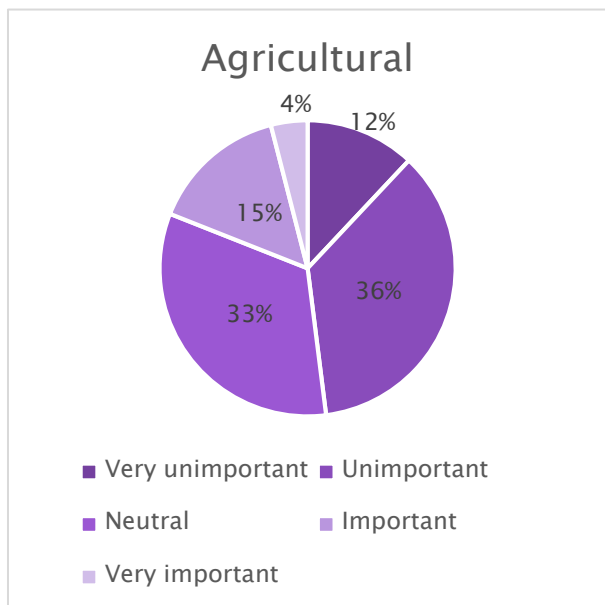


Figure K.16: Agricultural factor

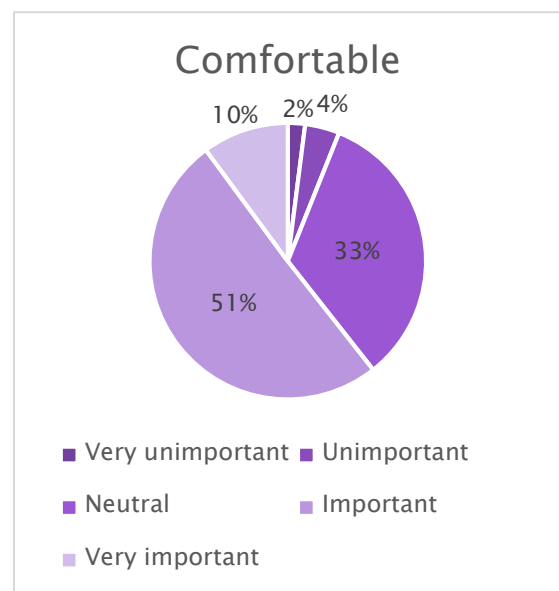


Figure K.17: Comfortable factor

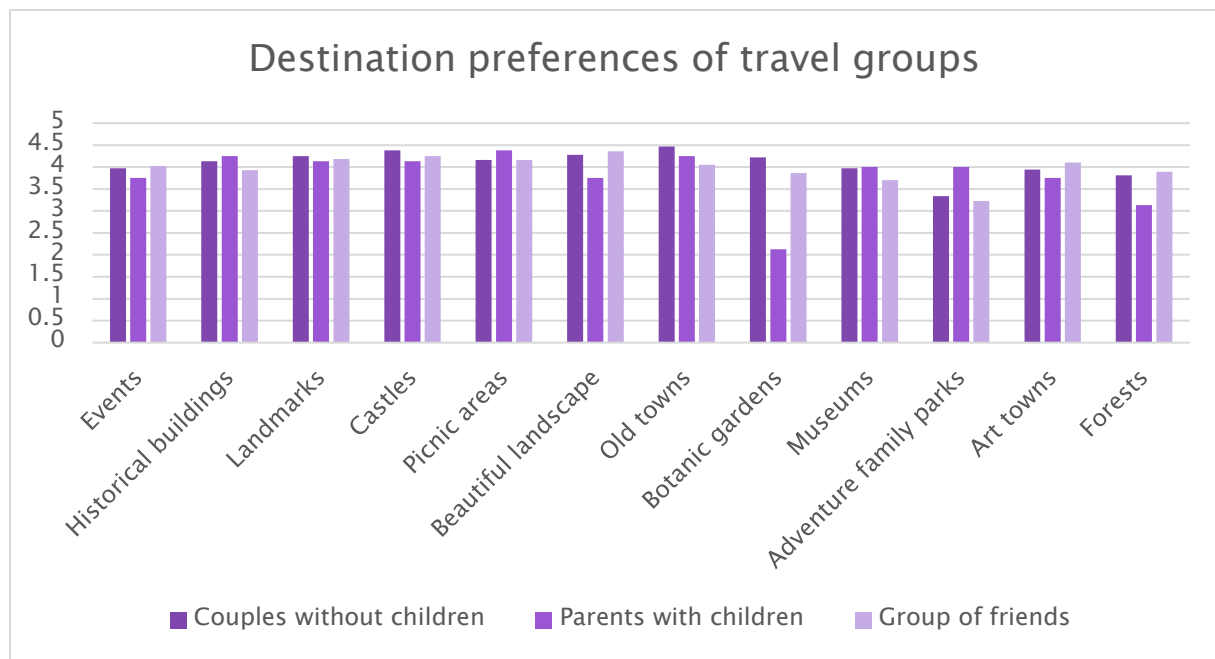


Figure K.18: Destination preferences of travel groups

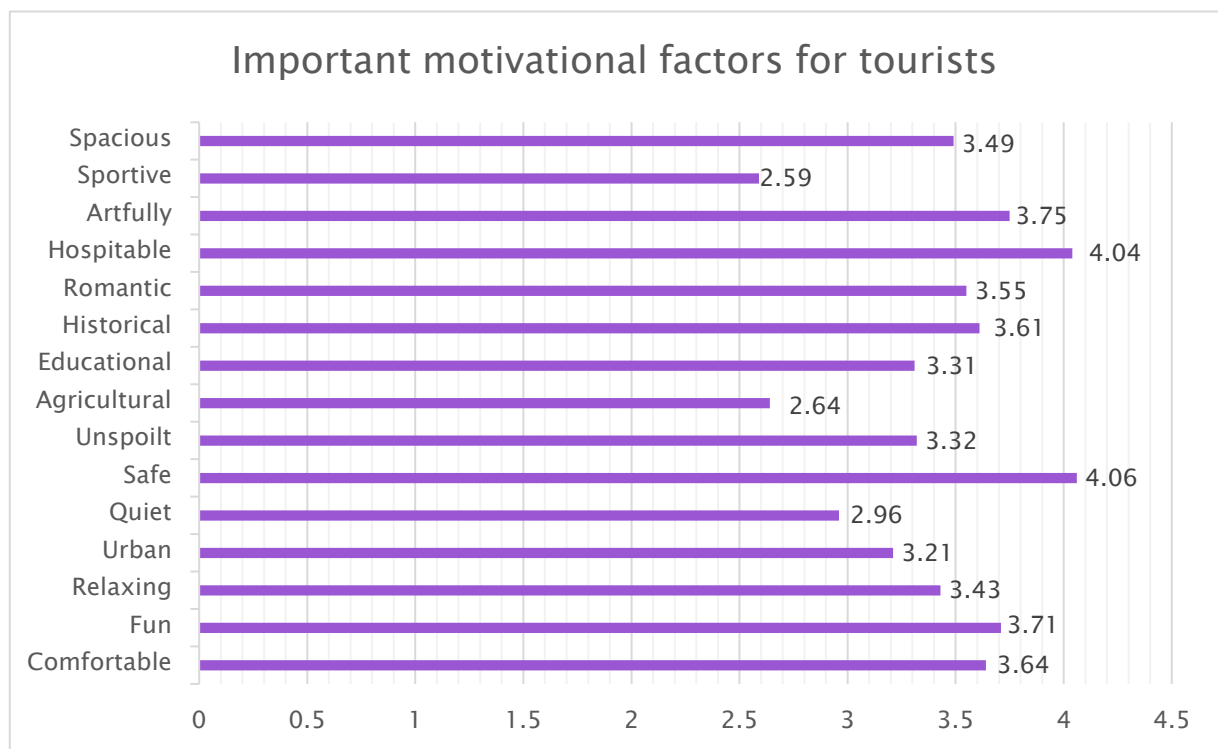


Figure K.19: Motivational factors



Figure K.20: Reasons of visiting a destination

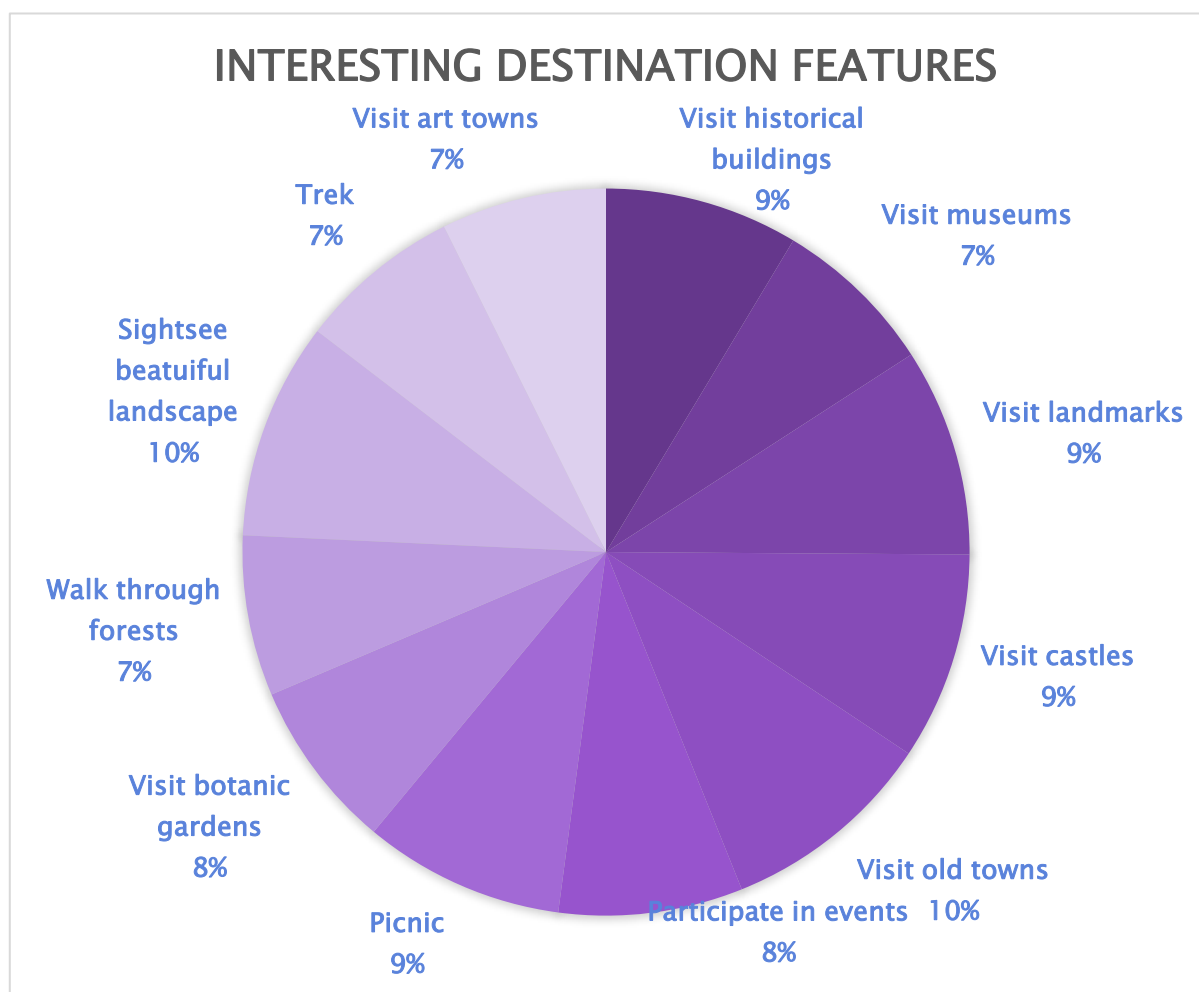


Figure K.21: Interesting destination features for all respondents

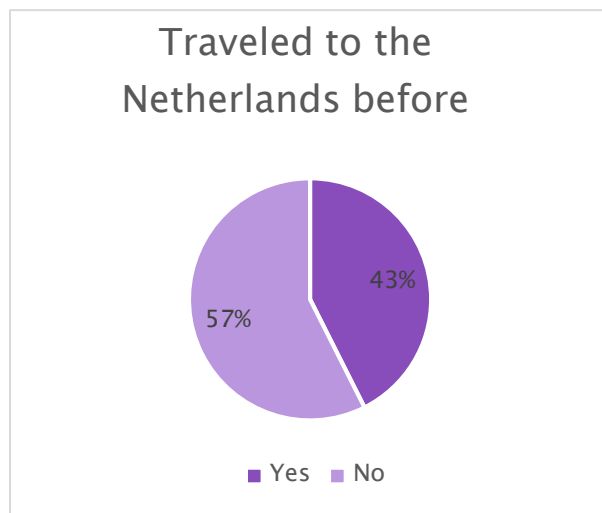


Figure K.22: Travel abroad times

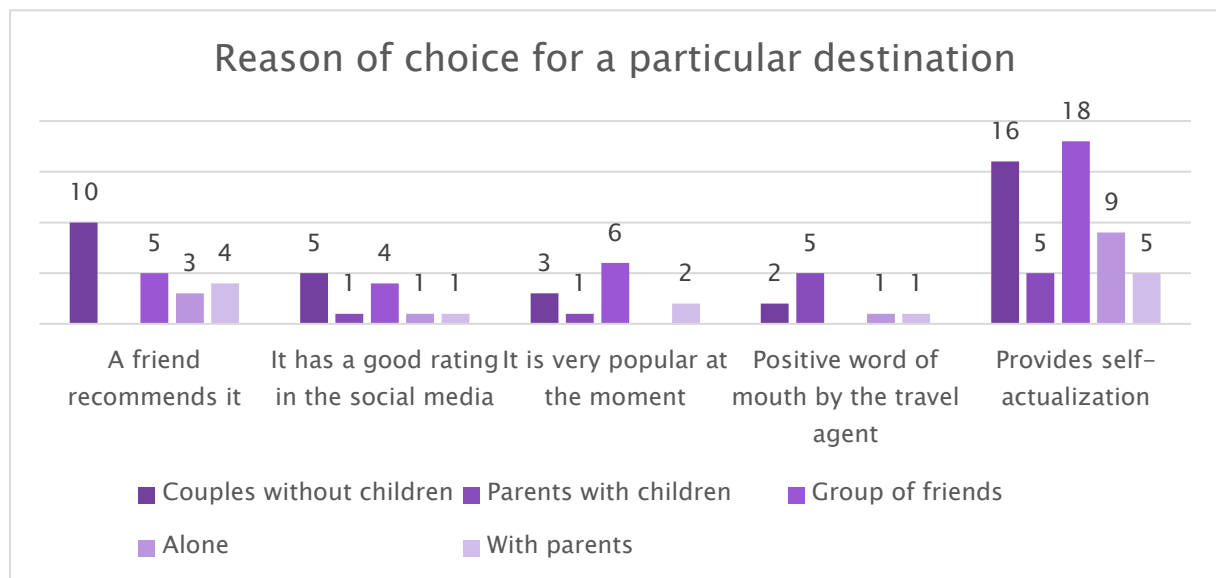


Figure K.23: Reason of choice

Appendix L: Prerequisite criteria selection

In this part, the prerequisite criteria selection is explained as mentioned in the advisory section. In order to come into an evaluation process of the alternatives, it is necessary for them to meet the following criteria:

- Is the alternative in-line with the mission of Bayuca Travel?
- Is the alternative in-line with the data analysis about the needs and wants of the Russian market?
- Does the alternative showcase the destination identity of the region of Twente?

Explanation of prerequisites

- Is the alternative in-line with the mission of Bayuca Travel?

The alternative must be connected to the mission statement of Bayuca Travel which is to offer unique products and services to its clients. Since the tour operator is environmentally conscious, this needs to be taken into account when an alternative is proposed. The ambitions and motives of the company need to be met when introducing a travel package from the three options. By staying in-line with the direction which the organization focuses on, it is probably that the alternative will be implemented, thus turned into a marketing plan.

- Is the alternative in-line with the data analysis about the needs and wants of the Russian market?

Each one of the alternatives needs to lead to a continuation based on the theory found within the research phase. What this means is that both the theoretical framework and the survey data analysis regarding the Russian tourist characteristics and their preferences, is taken into account when brainstorming the alternatives. The alternatives need to be based on the information which is derived concerning the Russian traveller's wants and needs, in order to be considered for the evaluation phase.

- Does the alternative showcase the destination identity of the region of Twente?

The alternative needs to accurately portray the destination's DNA. This is important in order for the package to generate added value, which in turn boosts the traveller's experience. The destination identity was derived from the desk research and the alternative should not steer away from the core destination characteristics but rather help out to strengthen the extended characteristics of the region of Twente

Appendix M: Prerequisite criteria selection

Alternative 1: Historical avenue of Twente

The alternative is correctly in-line with the mission statement and ambitions of Bayuca Travel because it manages to capture the sense of creating a unique themed travel experience for the tour operator's clients. Furthermore, it encourages international tourism development when a new travel market is introduced, which boost the economical state of the destination.

The alternative is correctly in-line with both the theoretical framework and data analysis because both research sources showcase that the Russian travellers prefer to travel as a couple when traveling abroad. Furthermore, as seen from the various figures found in the data analysis, this particular travel group is particularly interested in the historical aspect and from the cultural category: art galleries and events participation. The alternative offers the chance for this travel group to get in touch with the natural destination features of Twente.

The alternative shows promise to be able to link itself to the destination identity of destination Twente, when incorporating a historical theme for the destination. The package tries to highlight the main historical attractions which the group of friends will be interested in visiting.

Alternative 2: Experience Twente

The second alternative is as well in-line with the mission of the tour operator for the reason that it tries to deliver a high-class experience for a group of friends. The product is tailor-made to cater the wishes of the above mentioned target group. Since Bayuca Travel is ambitious in delivering unique experiences, this package combines the fun and safe characteristics of Twente into an enjoyable friend's trip. Furthermore, this package deal is able to showcase the destination identity of the region of Twente highlighting the most interested destination features which the target group has selected from the survey.

Alternative 3: Getaway from Amsterdam

The following alternative is in-line with the mission statement of Bayuca Travel due to the fact that it tries to encourage the development of one area. The client has stated that currently Amsterdam is overcrowded with international tourists and that the carrying capacity is at its peak. Therefore, what this travel package offers, is the chance for an internationally unknown destination such as Twente, to be able to flourish from the Russian travel market.

The alternative is linked with the requirements of the parents with children target group because Bayuca Travel, in this case will act as a mentor and recommend a particular destination. This information was found from the survey design that the above-mentioned target group values the tour operator's opinion about where to travel next

The alternative will again be linked to the historical aspects of the destination but in a more family friendly way.

Appendix N: Information on Hof van Twente gathered by an email correspondence with a VVV representative

Dear Mrs. Niemeijer,

I wanted to thank you again very heartily that you are willing to help me out with this! Your input will be very valuable with the survey that will be spread to 100 Russian tourists. I have tried so many other places to ask for information such as BeleefTwente, Twente Branding but they do not respond at all!

Now going to the topic, I will not bombard you know with too many questions because I know you are very busy currently before the holidays, so I would suggest perhaps we can set up a follow up meeting when you have more time after the holiday.

For now the most important factors that concern the questionnaire are:

Could you name some destination features from the region of Twente such as memorable attractions, unique buildings or activities for families/couples?

What symbolizes Twente as a destination?

Which cities do you highlight in your branding efforts?

Below are some examples of information I have gathered so far from tourism websites from Twente. Can you clarify if they are true or not and could you add something to the list?

Thank you very much again beforehand and looking forward to your reply!

Hello Emil,

Lionne Wolberink

At the request of my colleague Lianne Niemeijer I will send you the answers in red on your questions.

Emil: Could you name some destination features from the region of Twente such as memorable attractions, unique buildings or activities for families/couples?

Lionne: Twente is a combination of country- and city life. Castles with their gardens (for example: Landgoed Twickel in Delden, Singraven in Denekamp, Warmelo in Diepenheim etc.) are very important. The most popular activities are walking and cycling, visiting a town or village. "Famous" museums are TwentseWelle and Rijksmuseum Twenthe in Enschede, Zoutmuseum Delden, Oranjemuseum in Diepenheim, Naturadocet in Denekamp.

Emil: What symbolizes Twente as a destination?

Lionne: Twente, estate of the Netherlands is a slogan which is used by the Twents Bureau voor Toerisme (bankrupt in 2015).

The Hof van Twente contains a beautiful landscape, where it sometimes seems as if time stood still. The beautiful environs with its many scenic cycle and walking tours are ideal for the active tourist. Twente offers a broad range of overnight accommodations such as camp sites, farm camping sites, bed & breakfasts, guesthouses and hotels.

Which cities do you highlight in your branding efforts?

Lionne: The township Hof van Twente consists of the cores of Bentelo, Delden, Diepenheim, Goor, Hengevelde and Markelo, several neighbouring communities and a large rural area. The general definition of 'Hof' is garden.

Bentelo: Originally, Bentelo was a medieval community. It is mostly known for its beautiful surroundings, which draws walking and cycling tourists to this part of Twente all year long. Bentelo is also a very hospitable community. At several farms and at the Hof van Twente vineyard tourists are most welcome to take a look around and

taste the delight of local products. Also, the Easter celebrations in Bentelo, starting off with a huge bonfire, brings many people from all over the region together.

Delden: A large part of the city centre dates from a period in which Delden received city rights (1333). Many buildings have been professionally restored. Everywhere in Delden, the close connection with the county castle Twickel is noticeable. Monuments of historic value are museum farm the Wendezoele, the Noordmolen (oil mill), the Houtzaagmolen (saw mill), the Salt museum, the Old and Roman–Catholic Blasius church. Delden also inhabits many galleries and hosts a number of events throughout the year such as the monthly regional fair Twente, the Cultural Street Festival and the nationally acknowledged four–day Wheelchair event, always starting at ascension, which are definitely worth visiting.

Diepenheim: In the history of Diepenheim, the castles Huis te Diepenheim, Nijenhuis, Westerflie en Warmelo have a prominent place. Though they are inhabited, the surrounding estates are free for access. The popular Zes kastelen tour takes you along the six estates, with also the castles Weldam and Wegdam. Other remarkable tourist attractions are the grain watermill Den Haller, the Oranjemuseum Nieuwe Haghuis and the Art Association Diepenheim. As the centre of art, Diepenheim is most famous. Also, the art event Kunstmoment and Kasteeldag (Castle day) are real highlights.

Goor: In 1263, Goor received its city rights and became the political centre of Twente. As a result of Thomas Ainsworth founding the first textile school in 1833 in Goor, the town has played an important role in the regional textile industry. Scattered throughout Goor are remarkable works of art, which can be seen along the Art walking tour. Other highlights are the Braak mill, the Klompenmuseum (wooden shoes) and Thomas Ainsworth's tomb. The yearly school and folk fest, and the 4–day autumn bicycle tour are important examples of Goor's traditions.

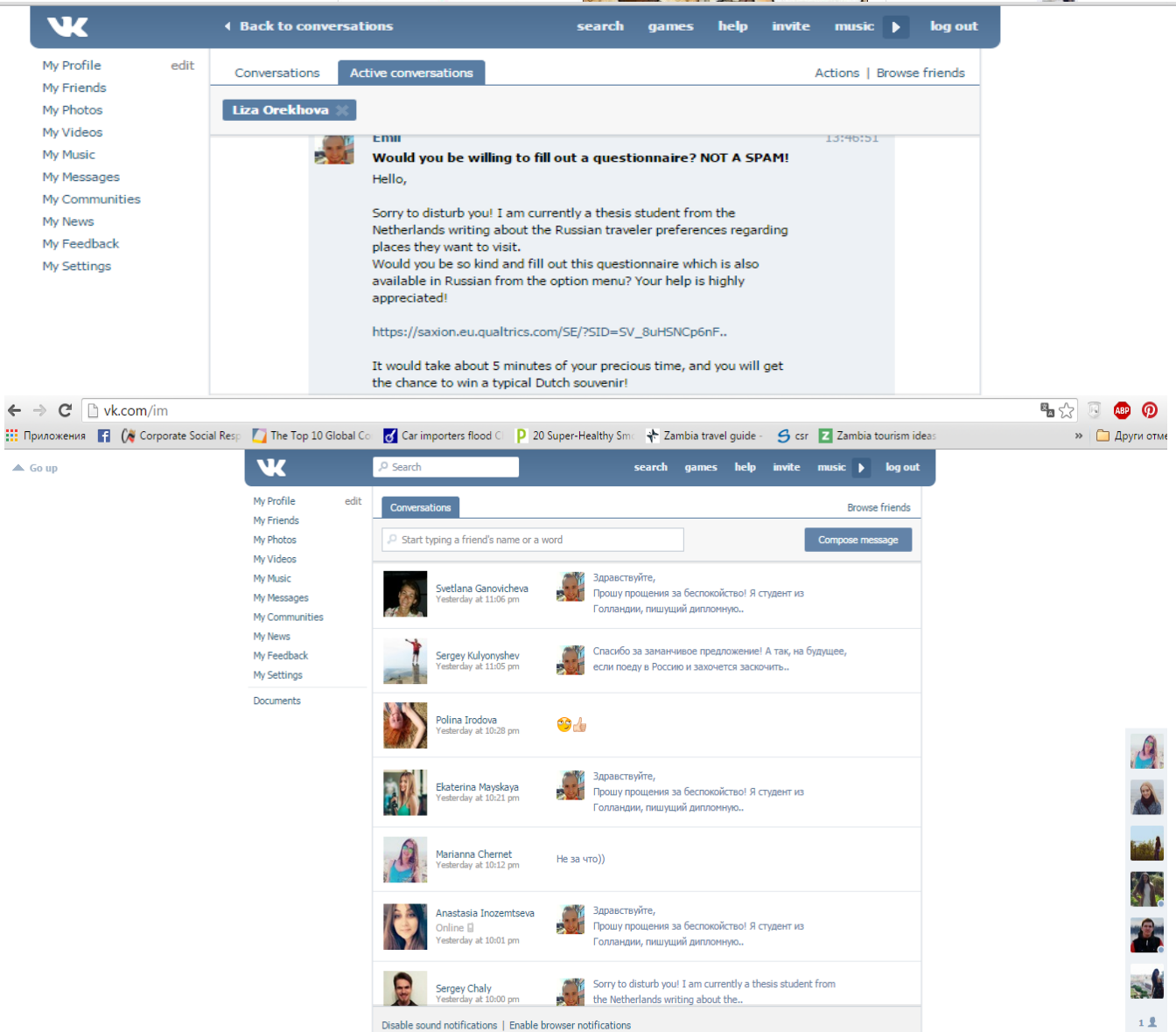
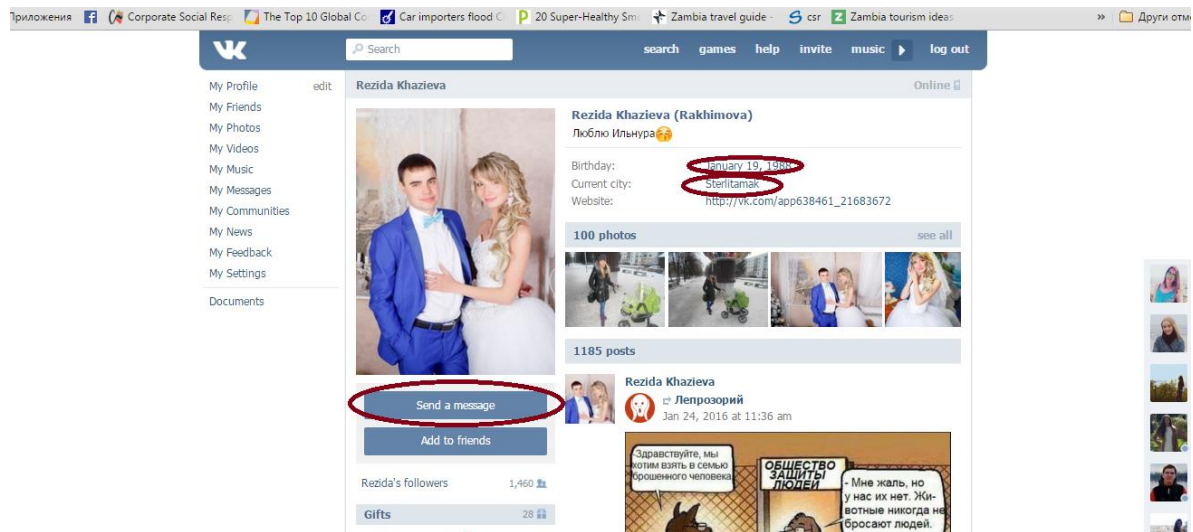
Hengevelde: Hengevelde's origins also lies in the Middle Ages. Under the influence of neighbouring estate Weldam, Hengevelde and its environs flourished into a beautiful landscape. It is mainly known for inhabiting the legendary local criminal Huttenkloas, who has murdered many people with his wife Aarne and son Jannes in the 18th century. Hengevelde is definitely worth a visit during the annual weekend folklore event called the Höftedagen (in June) with a variety of theater and music entertainment.

Markelo: Markelo is one of Twente's oldest villages with its characteristically sloping landscape and its five hills. It has many agricultural communities, where modern business conduct is mixed with traditions. Tourist attractions are the Martinus church, Buursink's mill De Hoop (wind, grain and peel mill) and the museum farm Eungs Schöppe. There are several yearly events such as the Art Bicycle Tour and the open air shows in the Kösterkoele.

At the list of the destination we will miss artfully (Diepenheim, Delden, Ootmarsum), sportive, wide/spacious, clear.

At the list of the features we will miss Hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, Camping on the farm, Art galleries, Routes (walking, cycling, horse riding trials, mtb trials, etc.), Visit an event.

Appendix O: Invitation process for the respondents



Appendix P: Stakeholder matrix

Influential parties	Role in applying the project	The benefit of a project	Level of influence
Buitencentrum Hessenheem De Langenberg Accommodation providers	The accommodation providers have a very important role here because one of the core elements of the tourist's experience, is the place where they are going to stay in at. Without such a stakeholder involved, the project would simply not be possible.	The benefit for the accommodation provider to work in cooperation with Bayuca Travel is that the tour operator introduces a new source market which is international and for now this is not a common practice in the region of Twente. Both parties will economically benefit from this.	Collaboration is important here and the accommodation provider sets out the commission rate.
Fiets City Activity providers	Activity providers are important partners which provide the thrill and excitement of the travellers. Without their cooperation, it is not possible to create a tailor-made tourist package catering for the needs and wants.	The benefit for the activity provider is more customers to rent bikes from the shop when Bayuca Travel brings groups of people together. Awareness will be raised in such a case.	There will be low level of resistance due to the fact that these kind of activity providers do not play such a vital role as the accommodation type.
Europcar Rental car providers	Transportation helps the travellers to reach from place A to B. By renting cars, this eases the traveller's experience.	Cooperation is necessary with such providers and both sides will get revenue benefits for working together.	As in the case of the other influential parties, here the commission rate plays a vital role and the resistance level is expected to be high.



Appendix Q: Design of the website package

Please tell us about your trip to the Netherlands plan in 5 minutes or less:

Who are you traveling with?

☐ On my own

☐ With my loved one*

☐ With the family

☐ A group of friends



What is the age group of the people traveling?

☐ 3 - 15 ☐ 16 - 26 ☐ 26 - 45 ☐ 46 - 70 ☐ above 70

What would you like to do there? *More than one option is possible.*

☐ Visit landmarks

☐ Visit castles

☐ Get married

☐ Celebrate anniversary

☐ Discover Dutch heritage and culture

☐ Other, please specify



When would you like to fly to the Netherlands?



What is your preferred accommodation?

☐ Luxurious cottage

☐ 4* hotel

☐ Luxurious vacation house

For how many days would you stay?

If you have any special preferences to make your trip unforgettable, please mention them below:

Based on your previous selected options, this is what the idea trip will be for you! (Generated content)

Historical Avenue of Twente



Take a (day) breathtaking travel experience with (selected target group) back in time to the historical sightings of the spacious and beautiful destination Twente, situated in the Netherlands in this historically themed package.

You and (your travel group) are (age range) cultural seekers who are looking for a relaxing and unforgettable historical journey. Then Bayuca Travel is sure that you would enjoy having a historical tour through the cities as well as the various castles such as castle Twickel. Twente is the place for you and your love lone! You will have the opportunity to select the features you are interested. We will determine the most affordable price for you at the end when including all optional activities.



The six castle tour of Diepenheim is one of the most popular routes in Twente for cycling. It is around 30 kilometres long, going around the beautiful landscape and open fields of Twente, introducing you and your loved one to the magic and beauty of the destination, as well as the possibility of visiting the historical castles: Huis te Diepenheim, Nijenhuis, Warmelo, Wegdam, Weldam and Westerflier. Alternatively, instead of having the opportunity to cycle, you could utilize our Europcar deal and instead drive to the castles.



Bayuca Travel provides you with the possibility to enjoy a marvelous picnic experience with your partner in the botanical gardens near castle Twickel, in case you get too tired from all the historical sightseeing. Enjoy a lovely, relaxing lunch menu together and let the good times row. The menu includes typical Dutch cuisine, plus drinks of your own choice. Dietarian wishes will be met.

When you are done with selecting all the activities you would like to do, and the accommodation preference where you will likely stay, you will get an immediate reservation notification on your email address, as well as direct contact with us for further information on how to process the payment.

If you have any particular questions regarding anything related to the package tour, as well as the Netherlands in general, our experienced team will try their best to answer all your questions.

Thank you for putting trust in us and do not forget to subscribe to our weekly email newsletter for limited discounts!

