

Saimaa University of Applied Science
Business and Culture, Imatra
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality
Degree program in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

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Sushi Bar in Imatra – Its Influence on the Tourism and Infrastructure Development of Imatra Region

Thesis 2016

Abstract

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The research was organized to find out the possible influence of a new catering company for the development of Imatra and its region – will it be interesting both for citizens and travelers, who decided to stay in this area for a few days. For this purpose qualitative and quantitative researches were organized and held for one and a half years. Another object of the research was to show profitability of the sushi-bar in quickly changing political and economical situation for the town, which depends on tourist flow a lot.

Such sources as literature, questionnaires for citizens and visitors of the town, interviews with qualified teachers of Saimaa University and independent Lithuanian and Russian sushi-cookers' opinions are used in thesis.

As the result of this project a negative answer has been reached for the main question of a sushi-bar is interesting and attractive in Imatra nowadays. The research shows that for progressive and developing future of the sushi-bar better political, financial and economical conditions are required: lack of incoming tourists from Russia, decreasing salaries of locals, increasing level of unemployment and losing of interest for foreign customers to come to Imatra shows negative conditions to plan it now.

Keywords: restaurant management, Finland, tourism, business plan.

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1 Introduction

The main idea of this thesis is to show the entire way to create a company. First of all, a short introduction of Imatra area will be done to explain why the author of thesis decided to locate a sushi-bar here. Also, all steps of company's business planning – its menu, organizing of four interview days in Imatra and its location, during all period of thesis writing, collection of professional opinions concerning idea of sushi-bar in this town – and finishing with financial plan and calculations of the total price of the idea, will be shown in the chapters of thesis.

First chapter will tell more about importance of Imatra and Lappeenranta as are frontier towns between Finland and Russia. At the same time, in this chapter the influence of changes in international policy will explain importance of Russian customers for entire South Karelia region and changes in visitors' amount during the period of winter 2014 till present. Also, the history of sushi's development and attractiveness of it will be explained in this paragraph – why Japanese sushi and other dishes have been chosen for this thesis.

Second chapter will provide information about organized interviews among potential customers. Their results will show the difference in interviewees' opinion concerning a sushi-bar – their division by age, preferences, from which countries interviewees are. Qualitative and quantitative researches with graphics will provide information about how political and economical situation influences customers' capabilities and wishes to spend spare money in such a place. In this chapter author will explain the importance of hospitality industry in Imatra area – its influence on the flow of tourists, attractiveness of the town with places of interest and other factors, which will bring more people to the town and more interest in sushi-bar.

Third chapter will be given for empirical knowledge and experience of thesis. Organized interviews and talks with people, who can compose professional opinion concerning such kind of innovation in international cuisine in Imatra region. Also, in this chapter consultation of KEHY company's representative – Katja Vehviläinen – and her assist with business plan and hints concerning

premise's search will be precised. In the same chapter the practical experience of author will be described – his notes about interest in sushi from customers during the work in Central Hotel Imatra, Bistro Restaurant from January till March of 2015 year. Author will tell more about the failed plan of company to introduce sushi for citizens of Imatra – which lesson is important to emphasize and prevent in the future, what should be taken under attention for foundation of sushi-bar and what advertisement course is more suitable for new company. Same time, author will tell more about sushi's classification, potential menu of the sushi-bar and price policy of the company.

In fourth paragraph business plan will be presented: calculations concerning price policy, ways of ordering the products will be listed there. Information concerning renting the premises for sushi-bar are also going to be presented in this part of the thesis.

SWOT-analysis will be provided in fifth paragraph to get deeply in reasons – what makes this restaurant important for Imatra area, what is important to foresee and what mistakes should be avoided?

Finally, sixth chapter will consist of the conclusion of entire thesis. It will summarize and explain why nowadays there are more risks to fail the idea of sushi-bar. All “for” and “against” factors, also, will be shown, so the reader can make his own opinion about the foundation of the sushi-bar.

2 Briefly about the main ideas

2.1 South Karelia region and its connection with Russia

The South Karelia area is one of the most important parts of Finland in terms of tourism: lots of tourists come to this country across the border by car and bus. The majority of tourists are travelers who come to Finland for one day or a few days – shopping, business, family holidays, to spend a vacation or just pass through. Some of them stay in Imatra and Lappeenranta for one day, overnight, and some of them leave same day they arrived.

Imatra is the first border town, where tourists get after crossing the border. This town has been popular among Russian tourists since the 18th century – after the first visit of Russian Empress Ekaterina the Great (Discovering Finland). Later in the 19th century one of the oldest parks in Finland was founded by Nicholas the First (Discovering Finland). Since last few decades of 20th century Imatra has become one of the most popular towns among Russian travelers – shopping-tours, business traveling, wellness tours etc.

Town of Lappeenranta also plays an important part in tourism industry of the region: it is also close to the border with Russia, it is one of the biggest industrial town in the region. Provided services in this town attract mostly people, who plan their trip further to Finland and want to stay overnight in Lappeenranta. At the same time, this town can be named as a “town of shops” – here you can find a big range of services and products, so this town could be compared to central region’s town of Finland. The number of hotels and places of interest is amazing – a big enough choice of what you want to pick up.

For tourists one of the most important places in Lappeenranta was an airport, which could help you to reach few famous places of interest. But since the mid of summer 2015 the airport of Lappeenranta has been closed, which has negatively affected the situation with tourists flow in the area. (Etelä-Saimaa) But the question of its reorganization will be solved already in year 2016.

Starting from winter 2014 till January 2016 political situation between the EU and Russia made the course of Russian ruble decrease its value almost twice – it is most important case of cutting the number of Russian tourists all over Finland. By the researches of TAK Oy company only for the period between 27 December 2014 and 9 September 2015 the number of visitors entering the country through the border-crossing points in south-eastern Finland has decreased from 275 thousand people till 157 thousand (Helsinki Times) and the amount of spent money was approximately 200 euro per bill, when year before it was 500. It means that South Karelia region lost 42% of customers already before winter holidays of the years 2015-2016.

2.2. Sushi-bar in Imatra

One of the main challenges for visitors in Imatra is that there are few places where citizens and travelers can have a good meal – Rosso, Bottenhoff and a few cafes and kebab restaurants. Each place has its advantages and disadvantages, and depending on tastes and preferences potential customers might like to choose something new and spend some time searching for a suitable place. The foundation of a sushi bar in Imatra is one of the key points for increasing the interest of locals and newcomers to spend time, money and have a good dinner in here.

There were already sushi-bars in Imatra, but by different reasons they have been closed. Now, after deeper analysis of the demand on the market of tourists' needs, it will be easier to complete researches and tell exactly it is possible and necessary to open a sushi-bar in Imatra region or not.

2.3. Sushi – its historical facts and simplicity

Surprisingly, sushi, Japan's most typical and popular food, is native to China. It starts the history in the 2nd century BC – that time “sushi” was a method of preserving raw fish and meat (Sushi Info). Already that time it was a special preparation sequence – to flatten, put salt, then to ferment with rice and only then it could be preserved for several months. Later, when the fish was consumed, it was possible to take the rice away. Later the technique was introduced in Japan where people found rice suitable add for fish to eat. Sometime later sushi evolved – people added different vegetables with vinegar and made it more tasty and varied, as it became widely popular in Tokyo through mobile street vendors (Sushi Info).

It took more than one millennium to find sushi in the form it can now be seen on the plates at home, at bars or restaurants. It is not typical rice and different kinds of seafood, but a very interesting process and idea how it is possible to combine varieties of fish, cooked in different ways, and one of the most widely spread kind of grain – rice.

During thesis seminar audience asked author why he would like to make a sushi-bar in Imatra. The answer for this question is easy-to-guess – the dishes of this cuisine can be made really fast and easy. Basically, the most time-consuming thing is the cooking of rice. Approximately, it takes 30-40 minutes to make rice ready, after that the process of making sushi takes from 1 till 8 minutes depending on what the cook is going to do – simple nigiri sushi (1 piece of rice with raw fish), temaki (conical sushi with 3-4 types of ingredients) or uramaki (entire sushi roll, which can be cut into 6-8 pieces) (Sushi Midori).

For keeping products fresh it is enough to have 1 fridge of medium size, where it is possible to keep cold seafood and extra ingredients, which should be saved cooled. For knives, cutting desks and washing machine there is no need to have a big premise. So, staff premises should not be too big to organize working process.

3 Theoretical researches of thesis

3.1 Hospitality industry – interrelation of hotels and shopping centers. Choice of the sushi-bar location depending on the town center attractiveness

It is not a secret that the closer hotels are to city center, the better quality of provided services it has, the more customers they will attract and more attended the hotel is (Enlighten Me). Also it means that big and famous shops would be located close to these hotels (to say without exaggeration, inverse relationship is observed in this situation – the bigger and more famous shops, the higher level of quality hotels will provide to correspond the level of services in certain country, city and location inside the city). In this case town center will be one of the best places to find the sushi-bar in the future.

Same time, hotels can be located according to main tourism group of customers:

- city center's hotels will be concentrated on business travelers;

- for leisure travelers hotel should be located closer to historical or entertainment places of interest;
- for travelers, who are looking for suitable price-quality service, hotels will be located not too far from city center, but will require transport to get to destination point from the territory of the hotel;
- hostels will be located far from city center, what will make more difficult to get into main streets of the city.

In the town of Imatra the situation here is a little bit different, because the entire population of Imatra is little bit less than 30 thousand people, almost everything is located here in town center. Two main hotels – Center Hotel Imatra and Valtionhotelli – are main destinations of tourists. They provide services for all enumerated groups of potential customers, it means – the main “fight” for customers depends only on quality of services and price policy of the hotels. They both are situated in Imatrankoski area, so potential customers have got nice choice of the accommodation they really need – full-fledged competition. This fact is one of the most important ones for location of future sushi-bar.

It should be noted that big number of important and well-known shops are located in the same place – main streets of Imatra are full of shops, which sell goods for all age categories, requests, wide prices range and create healthy competition to other shops, which are situated in big trade centers of Imatra, like Prisma, K-Citymarket, Rajamarket etc. It also makes important to find a sushi-bar in Imatrankoski area.

As opposed to big variety of shops and hotels, Imatra’s town center has not many places of interest, except Imatra waterfall. This place brings a lot of customers during the warm half of the year, when it works. During cold times the amount of tourists, who are looking for such places, is much lower than during entire year. Except waterfall, there are no other places of interest in Imatrankoski. But, to tell the truth, entire Imatra has not many places to visit for leisure travelers, so it is not such a big disadvantage for the town.

Concerning low and high seasons, which are also important for further researches of the thesis, it is necessary to underline, that Imatra attracts visitors and there are crowds of people almost all around the year, except few months – they are second half of January, February and March (before Finnish pupils will have their farewell parties and until the school is over before summer holidays). In October also fewer people prefer to spend their money on entertainment, because everyone prepares for Christmas celebrations, what means that during such periods of the year (school leaving parties, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Independence Day, Christmas week) people with more preference would like to go outside and visit restaurants with their relatives and friends. During these periods of the year it will be necessary to increase the amount of advertisement among potential customers – in newspapers, online advertisement for subscribers, among advertisement walls in big shops and supermarkets. The guarantee to keep business on level requires to keep customers informed concerning discounts, special offers: in this case level of sales could be held on level to protect company from losses.

It is possible to observe by the number of interviewed people in Imatra area, that in July, November and December during two years of the research there are highest seasons when there are crowds of people hanging around the town, who are ready to spend their money not only on buying souvenirs and gifts to relatives and friends, but also want to spend leisure time somewhere except their houses. It means that during these periods of the year the working load is going to be much higher: it will require to get more staff during these months, introduce bigger range of dishes in the menu, good possibility to organize some kind of contest for visitors to attract more customers next time.

Also, it is really important to take a look at the question of other companies, which provide catering services in Imatrankoski – potential location of future sushi-bar. Potential competitors in town center will help to bring more interest for potential customers to visit new sushi-bar and taste dishes, which have not been presented in Imatra before that.

When observing the situation in Imatrankoski area, there are few well-known places for those, who would like to go for dinner with friends or relatives during the day time. They are:

- Buttenhoff – this restaurant has already provided catering services for 80 years. It is known as a place with high cuisine dishes and elite sorts of wine. It is open from early morning – cafeteria and lunch buffet – till fine dining and a la carte menu in the evening;
- Rosso – this restaurant chain is famous for its Italian cuisine and good range of dishes in the menu. Warm atmosphere and nice price policy attracts a lot of customers everyday;
- Imatra Bistro – this restaurant has got wide range of dishes with good choice of beverages for it. Regular discounts in the menu and “dishes of...” pork or salmon, for example, when you can buy favorite dish with 30-50% discount makes this restaurant interesting for all groups of customers. Hotel on second and third floors of the hotel complex; and there is a night club and live music every weekend, keeps people coming every week again and again;
- Imatran Valtionhotelli – this is also a restaurant, which is situated on the premises of another hotel in town center, Valtionhotelli. This place is good for meeting and banquets for big groups and also it has a small dining room for 10 visitors. Classical Finnish menu, comfortable and quiet atmosphere attracts all types of visitors – citizens of Imatra and travellers from other countries.

These restaurants are full of customers all of the time. They provide high level of service, which keeps them interesting and visited all of the time. But at the same time, they provide different range of dishes and cuisines, so it makes sushi-bar a perfect choice to diversify type of cuisines and dishes, which potential customers can find interesting and attractive. It means that people, who are looking for simple and fast-cooking food, can look for a sushi-bar, which is going to be situated just between them. As was mentioned before, town center is actively visited by big number of people everyday, so a good signboard and other visual effects will attract attention of potential customers.

3.2 Sushi culture – its changes in time and national habits

3.2.1 Common knowledge of Japanese sushi

To be a good cook means to know everything about WHAT you are cooking and HOW you cook it. To increase your knowledge it is not enough just to collect all necessary produce and start as you wish. Of course, creating something new by yourself is also a good thing – it means that the cook never stays stagnant in self-development. It could bring more customers; if new dishes and ideas are good enough, they will bring popularity to your restaurant.

But we need to remember, that experience of every cooker starts with theoretical knowledge, which is designed for familiarization with future work. Making sushi, no exception, is also a really difficult occupation. Before even starting to make sushi, it is necessary to learn basic knowledge of what it is. For this purpose the author of thesis read some literature, but two books were most interesting and informative. The first one is “Sushi at home: The beginner’s guide to perfect, simple sushi” by Yuki Gomi (2013) – it could be named as an encyclopedia of making sushi. Some hints, interesting ideas, particular knowledge of some small details which can make sushi sound with a new taste – these ideas could be found in her book. This book teaches you entire cooking process of sushi – what ingredients you need to take even to make rice till types of fish, which are can be found on one plate or, vice versa, are forbidden to simultaneously.

Same time, the book of Trevor Corson “The Zen of Fish” (2007) summarized the history of sushi – from 4th century BC till nowadays. In his book it is possible to find information how the cooking methods, service and traditions of sushi eating have changed. He provides information about necessity of changes in every culture, and sushi is not an exception. His books have become very important all over the world and ideas concerning sushi are discussed by many sushi-cooks. He is a person who knows, maybe, everything about sushi culture - Corson is a recipient of a Japanese Ministry of Education Fellowship, has been a Knight Fellow at M.I.T. in the Investigative Science Journalism Boot

Camp, and was a Visiting Writer at the University of Memphis. He is a co-author of the Blue Ocean Institute's Guide to Ocean-Friendly Sushi and has been nominated for a 2010 "Seafood Champion" award from the Seafood Choices Alliance for his focus on sustainable ocean harvesting. So, his book made a really big impression on the author of thesis and some of his ideas could be used during foundation of sushi-bar and creating potential menu for it.

3.2.2 Influence of American culture on "sushi progression"

Very important impact on sushi culture was made by American culture. Basically, the way people eat sushi in Europe and America is imposed exactly by the USA's culture, which has transformed the idea and principle of eating sushi so much that there is almost nothing left from original way of sushi dinner. Most common example of the USA's influence is "Philadelphia rolls" – there is a totally American type of sushi, which does not exist in Japanese sushi cuisine at all. (Sushi Midori)

Starting from the beginning of American period of sushi, its history starts in the 60's of 20th century, it was a sushi restaurant by Moto Saito in New York. She kept all national traditions, but it did not go over well. So, sushi did not take off in the USA for another quarter decade. (Munchies) In the 70's other two cooks – Ichiro Manashita and Ken Seusa – invented California roll. That was first step-out from traditional sushis, after that sushis in the USA were made by the idea "everything goes good, that is wrapped in rice and nori" and is interesting for Americans. So, the new generation of sushi had arrived. After that sushi got "reverse import" – sushi went back to Japan and got population in modified view, influencing Japanese sushi culture itself. (Carroll)

For the next decade the number of sushi-bars was growing from year to year and starting from 1988 till 1998 their number in the United States had grown quintupling. Sushi ceased to be "dishes for hoc events" – they became everyday meal, on a par with donuts, MacDonald's and KFC at the beginning of 21st century. (First We Feast – The Great Divide)

3.2.3 Eleven common sushi myths – use of true facts for better quality of service

It is impossible to be a good cook, if the person does not know basic knowledge and features of cuisine, which he is cooking. To be a professional in a certain field, it is necessary to be ready to prepare “original” food, how it is supposed to be done. Sushis are not exception from this rule. There are 11 myths, which mislead people during sushi lunch. Some of these facts could be used for future sushi-bar to increase level of service, also – to protect people not to mislead the idea of “good” sushi, so they will be thankful for “level” of cook experience and would like to come to the bar again and again. It can make the sushi-bar “special”, will add “a little spice” – it will help to break out from scopes of standard sushi-bar view (First We Feast):

1. Use of soy sauce – it should be added directly to the sushi by cook, while making sushi. So during repast it’s almost unnecessary to use it with sushi;
2. Sushi and sake – by classical mentality of Japanese cuisine, it’s a tradition not to mix rice drinks with dishes made of rice to keep enough contrast between the flavors;
3. Fatty tuna is the ultimate connoisseur’s sushi – Americans have created a market for tuna, because it was one of the most popular fish in sushi in the USA, but not in Japan because of its melt-in-your-mouth sensation. Japanese prefer more subtle flavors and much more resilient textures of ingredients in sushi;
4. Visiting days for sushi-bars – it is a delusion, that it is better not to go to sushi-bar on Sunday or Monday morning, because the fish is not fresh enough. A good sushi-chef should practice the serving of each fish at the moment when it has aged to the point where it has most flavor, but also a time before the texture has started to degrade;
5. Adding of extra wasabi to sushi or soy sauce – the only one exception is adding wasabi to sashimi (the dish which is made only from raw pieces of fish), but you put it on top of the fish, not sauce. Good cook already adds certain (necessary) amount of wasabi into the sushi during cooking

process. There is no need to put extra on sushi, this case you won't feel real taste of the dish, variety of fish flavors. Adding wasabi to soy sauce means lessening the spiciness;

6. Pink tuna does not mean it is the freshest one – usually, pink tuna means it was gassed with carbon monoxide. Originally it should be little bit brown around the edges;
7. Gender of cook – basically, it is women's discrimination, which is strong in Japan. But still – the fact remains: both men and women cooks are good at doing sushi;
8. Sushi eating method – sushi still are eaten with fingers in Japan and many other countries. Just for simplification and keeping fingers clean chopsticks have been started to be served with meal;
9. California roll and its utensils to sushi – it does not matter that this roll has been invented in America. In Japan they think everything that is made with rice and seasoned could be called sushi;
10. "How to eat nigiri sushi?" – it is a myth, that nigiri sushi (piece of fish on top of oval-shaped rice) should be put into the mouth fish-side down, because if you put it into the sauce, it will fall apart. A good chef will add some sauce, which matches to the certain type of fish, so the customer shall have no need of extra sauce;
11. Ginger's role during repast – nowadays people eat ginger with sushi, but it should be used between eating different types of sushi, so it can "clean" your mouth from the taste of one sort of fish and prepare for another one.

These facts can help to increase the quality of sushi' service in the bar. Some of them can be used by chef during cooking, others could be put into "Interesting facts" advertisement papers for customers, who are waiting for sushi be done and could read this information.

3.2.4 Previous experience of sushi in Imatra

A few years ago in Imatra there was another sushi-bar, which was situated in Vuoksenniska area. For author it was complicated to gather information in the

Internet about that place. After the talk with Mr. Jukka Moilanen some information was possible to add to the thesis.

Sushi-bar did not go well in Vuoksenniska, but the idea was good. The main disadvantage for it was its location – Vuoksenniska is not so important and visited area of Imatra city. It takes almost 15 minutes and 10 km to get from Imatrankoski (most popular area of the town) to Vuoksenniska. It means that mostly people who live directly in North-East part of Imatra, where Vuoksenniska is located, was the target group for that sushi-bar. But the population of that area is not so big and the age range could be really big, so the target group is narrowed very much; also, the prices in restaurant were high enough to reduce the interest among potential customers to visit the restaurant often enough to get a good profit.

In 2014 in Rauha area, nearby with Holiday Club Saimaa, there was a BB-Bar, which was founded for weekend parties. As the main dishes you could order sushi and rolls in it. The idea of this place was good, but it has failed because of reasons. One of them is the same as with sushi-bar in Vuoksenniska – too big distance from the town center. That place – if the person does not have a car – could be interesting only for people, who live in HC Saimaa: there is no public transport, which could bring you from town center or bus station to Rauha area. Because this club was open only during weekends – from Friday till Sunday – people, who prefer to relax in the evening, mostly stayed in Imatrankoski, where the choice of entertainment centers and clubs is bigger and did not need to pay for taxi service, which during night time could cost almost 50 euro to get back from Rauha to center part of the town. So, after few months of work BB-Bar was closed, therefore also sushi-bar. By information, provided by Marja Antikainen, the analysis of price and dishes range it is possible to say that prices were good, but the company did not succeed because of lack of advertisement and its location.

4 Collection and systematization of empirical data

4.1 Organization and carrying out the interviews

For future sushi-bar next types of sushi have been chosen, which are easy and fast to cook and popular among people nowadays (menu specified by wishes of interviewed people):

- Nigiri – the simplest sushi: oval-shaped rice with slices of seafood on top;
- Gunkan-maki – oval-shaped rice, wrapped with nori (seaweed paper) and seafood on top;
- Hosonaki – roll of rice with one type of topping inside, wrapped with nori on top. Small in size – no more than 3 cm in diameter;
- Futo-maki – same as hosonaki, but with 2-3 types of topping. Approximately 5 cm in diameter;
- Temaki - conical sushi with 3-4 types of ingredients;
- Uramaki – rolls with basic topping inside, wrapped in nori and covered with rice. Top of uramaki usually covered with seafood (usually eel or salmon). (All For Your Home)

“SUSHI-BAR IN IMATRA” QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Second name _____ Family Name _____

I am from:

Finland Russia Scandinavia Other countries

I am in Imatra for (field for foreign visitors of the town):

Travelling Shopping Business trip

I am (y.o. – years old):

below 18 y.o. 18-25 y.o. 25-40 y.o. Older than 40 y.o.

I would like to come to sushi-bar:

alone in a couple with friends with family

I would like to order (please, clarify) _____

I will be ready to spend _____ €

I agree to provide this information for further thesis researches for the student of 11HD group, Saimaa UAS Lebedev Kirill

Data _____ Signature _____

Picture 1. Interview questionnaire in English

During the period of November 2014 till January 2016 the author has organized interviews among citizens and visitors. For this purpose interviews have been organized in several places: at Kylpylä Spa hotel, Holiday Club Saimaa hotel, Central Hotel Imatra, Imatrankoski trade area, K-Citymarket shop. These places have been chosen because of few factors: big number of visitors and customers during daytime, low and high seasons (hotels and center part of Imatra), wide age range of interviewees, chance to ask more questions from foreign visitors, different financial status. During interviews 1,247 people in total gave answers for short interviews. These numbers do not include 195 people, who decided not to answer questionnaire.

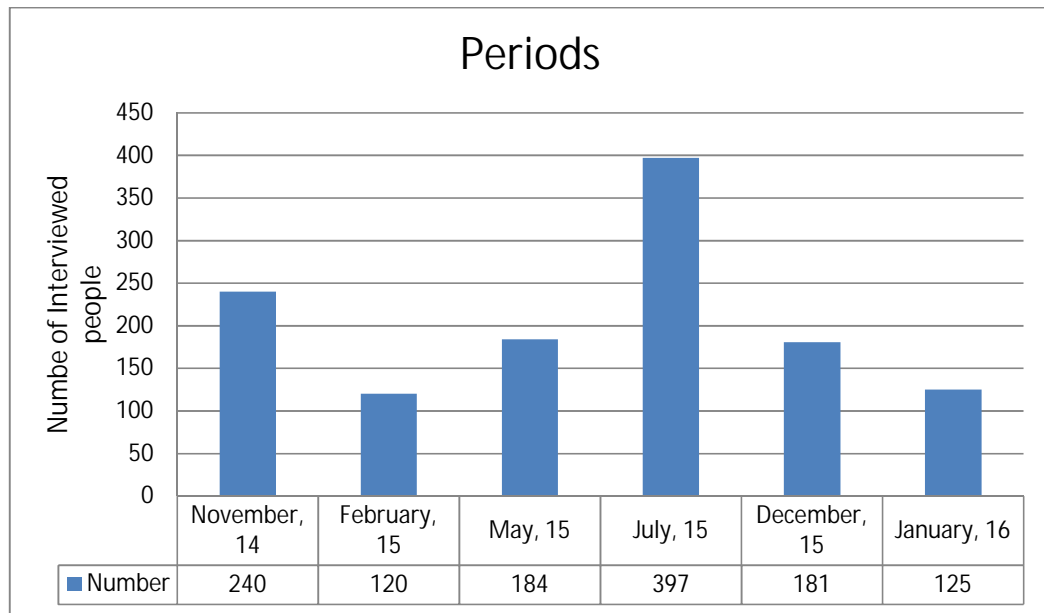


Table 1. Amount of interviewees during periods

During 14 months of interviewing 6 of the interviews have been chosen for these procedures:

- End of November and beginning of December, year 2014 – this period can be characterized as big number of celebrations among citizens and Russians and high number of foreigners (Swedish, Germans, Englishmen);
- February, year 2015 – period of low season in hotels and low interest in the city among foreigners;

- May, year 2015 – school graduation in Finland and big vacation period in Russia, lack of other foreigners;
- July, year 2015 – mid of summer, lots of holidays and celebrations in Finland, high number of citizens and average number of foreigners;
- December, year 2015 – pre-Christmas time, high activity among citizens of Imatra, downturn of foreigners in the town;
- January, year 2016 – best time for market analyzing after New Year and Christmas holidays, good chance to see the influence of financial crisis situation on citizens and Russians in Imatra.

In the table 1 it is possible to see that even close to other periods of time like end of November '14 and same period of the year 2015, number of people in the town differs a lot. Also, February '15 and January '16 present almost the same time of the year, but in year 2015 there were much more people in the town.

During interviewing it was possible and necessary to underline few groups of potential customers by age.

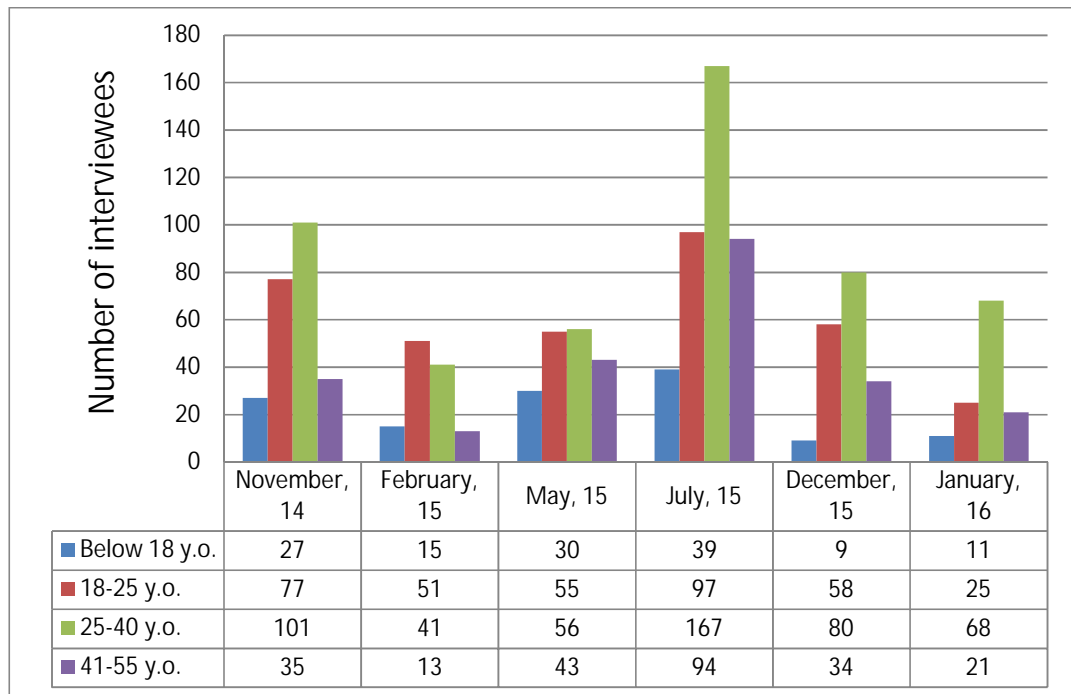


Table 2. Age differentiation of interviewees

During interviewing it was possible to classify 4 potential age ranges of customers:

- Below 18 – teenagers, who would like to visit sushi-bar with parents (if person is financially insolvent) or with friends to order some set of sushi for small group;
- From 18 till 25 years old – this is second target by number of interviewed people. This age range can afford to go to the sushi-bar alone or with girlfriend/boyfriend;
- From 25 till 40 years old – this is the biggest group of people. They gave mostly positive answers for the idea of sushi-bar in Imatra. Mostly, they are family members of all nationalities, who would like to go to bar with all members of family;
- From 41 till 55 years old – this group presents mostly people, who would like to get sushi with “take away” service, if it is available, or visit sushi-bar during lunch time or already after work, not in the evening

During gathering information concerning sushi-bar, the author also could divide interviewed people by nationalities, which could help to establish the menu and ingredients range more precisely: it is necessary to mention that the biggest percent of potential customers – Finns – are more choosy for the menu, as for presence of lactose and gluten. It means, that in menu information concerning amount of these two components will be surely mentioned. This statistic can help to understand how much the amount of sales can change during high and low season of tourist’s flow in the town, and also how the sales could vary.

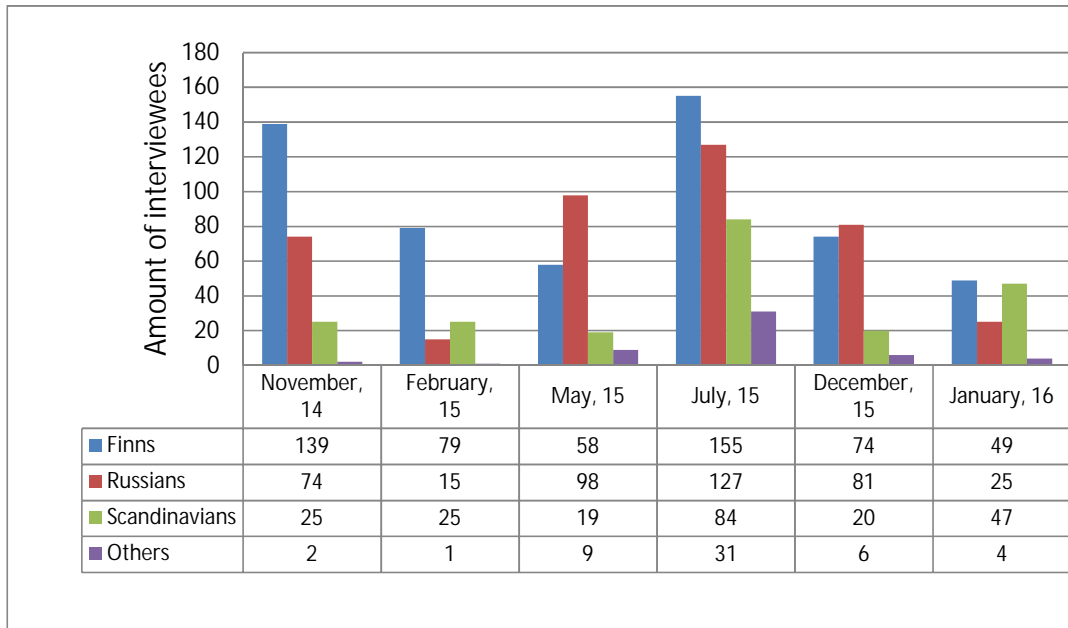


Table 3. Nationality classification of interviewees

For future pricing of sushi menu it was important to clarify in interview with whom they would like to visit sushi-bar. At this point, below are presented two more tables, which in the future of the company will help to create special offers for potential customers and make pricing system easier and flexible.

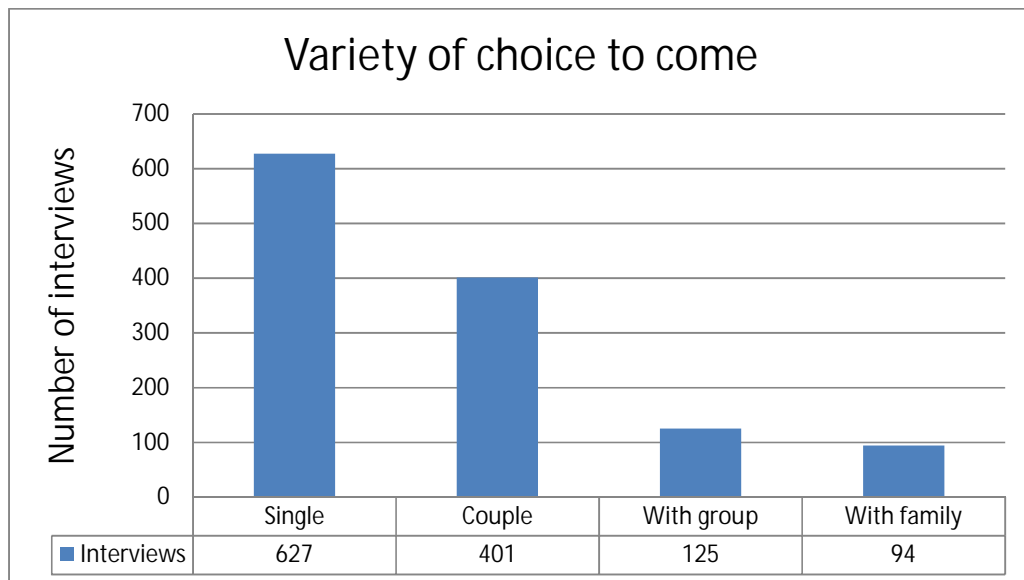


Table 4. Customer's visit preference

Table 4 shows that half of potential customers will come alone, which makes preparing order faster, only 1 worker in the kitchen will be enough. The situation almost the same with couples (31% of interviewed) – empirically, couples prefer to order a sushi-set, which consists of 2-3 uramaki and pair or two maki extra. 125 interviewees (10%) said they would like to come with a group of friends, which means that pre-order service will be better to organize to make sets ready in advance or to call for extra cook for this purpose. The rest of people (7.5%) would like to come and bring their families with them, which makes it significant to prepare a “children’s menu” (sweet rolls or sushi with fruits) and “family sets”, which will be cheaper and makes customers choose these dishes from the menu.

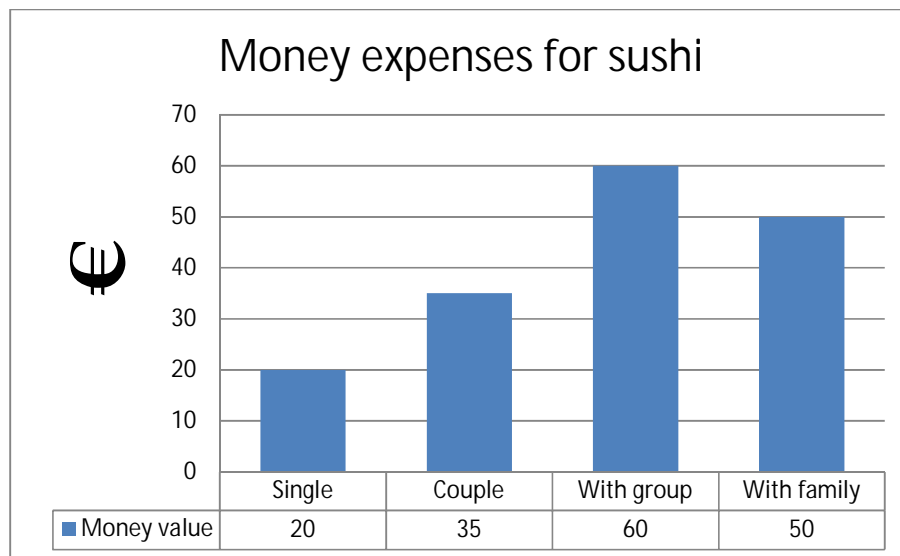


Table 5. Customer’s average bill depending on the group size

Table 5 shows us that the bigger the group is, then more money they would like to spend in sushi-bar. For a single person 20 euro is a normal bill, when you can order 3 rolls or 2 rolls with some extra sushi. For a couple a 35 euro bill could be a good set. For groups of people 60 euro is a suitable price (approximately, 10-15 euro per person will provide you an access to a wide choice of sushi in “team-set”). For families it is still important to provide some type of discount, so the same amount of sushi “family-set” or even a little bit bigger will cost less.

4.2 Interviews

To better analyze the market and potential future of sushi-bar, the range of interviews were held to collect a wide range of information, which can help to organize better quality of service, make better marketing decisions for advertisement of company, its catering services, price policy and elaboration of customers' segment. In this purpose four people answered author's questions. They are professionals in culinary sphere (one of them holds the rank of professional sushi-chef), marketing research field and PR-department.

4.2.1 Tadas Migauskas

Tadas Migauskas was one of the exchange students from Lithuania in Saimaa UAS during 2013-2014 school year. After that he started his professional work in Kaunas in "SushiBox" sushi restaurant and now, after 2 years, works as a professional sushi-chef, he decided to share his work experience for further researches of the thesis during his leisure trip to Finland in February, 2016.

For the question if sushi in Imatra has future and potential customers – he answered with hundred per cent confidence. He said, that sushi in Imatra would be a great hit because when he was studying in Imatra, he noticed that there are not a lot of places to eat out for people with middle class' salary and students, who want to get lunch or dinner with a low price – a few pizza places, one McDonalds, one Chinese food place and some Kebabs. A sushi bar would be a great improvement to the local youth if the sushi bar was simple but stylish, the sushi would be quick, simple and fresh, and the price affordable to almost anyone. Sushi is really popular among young people who want some light, low calorie snack that looks really good.

Next question was about attractiveness of sushi-bar for visitors of the town – will it be popular not only among citizens, but also foreigners, who are coming to Imatra every day? Tadas said, that everyone he met in his life has heard of sushi by now – it is the most popular food from Japan. Also, as he has mentioned before, it is quick, easy for the stomach and looks really good when done right. It would be a great attraction for foreign students and tourists, who are exploring the town and want to grab something quick to eat. If the sushi bar's exterior and

interior were simple and beautiful, it would have a potential to attract same visitors again and again just to spend their free time.

Average salary in Imatra is approximately one three euro per month and Tadas was asked the question concerning price policy for the future sushi-bar. He said that almost all dishes in the menu will depend on the price and the variety of the fish in Imatra. If it is easy to get some salmon, tuna, and eel at a low price, one sushi plate (uramaki roll), in his opinion, could be worth up to 7-8 euro. He took Lithuanian sushi-bars as an example, in Kaunas, for example, usually one plate of sushi is from 3 to 6 euro and usual salary is around 500 euro, so the price should be fair.

Next question (complex question) made Tadas think approximately 10 minutes before giving an answer: will it survive among famous restaurants of Imatra? One of them is a chain restaurant, another one has 80 years history and, of course, there are lots of kebabs. He still thinks that if done right – definitely. He has not noticed any Japanese food in Imatra so the cuisine is very different; secondly, it takes around 3 min to make a complex sushi and almost 1 min for a simple one – much faster than any other dish of competitors. Lastly, at the same time, it would be the most appealing to the students of University because it is cheap, quick and tasty one-bite-size pieces.

The last question was about ideas and hints, which he could share as a sushi-cook to make potential sushi-bar more successful. It was the easiest question during interviewing and fastest answer ever – fresh ingredients. Sushi's main point it to keep ingredients fresh and keep them in the fridge all the time, because sushi is best when the ingredients are fresh. Finland should have some very good quality fish and with some imagination, it's possible to make really tasty sushi. Another advice was to research sushi not just from Japan but more from the USA because that is where sushi became beautiful and popular, also their sushi looks better than Japanese. Last suggestion was the idea not to forget about Philadelphia sushi on the menu: it is rice, seaweed, crab meat, Philadelphia cream cheese, cucumber and some slices of thin smoked salmon on top – the best! Because it is one of the most popular uramaki all over the world

(only in Japan this uramaki is not mentioned as an original sushi, which Japanese prefer to eat.

4.2.2 Anatoly Lvov

Anatoly Lvov has studied with thesis' author in Saimaa UAS in one group. Already during his education, Anatoly became a cook in Holiday Club Saimaa hotel, got upsurge. Now he represents Union of Karelian Chefs and is ready to share his knowledge and experience, which could help to find a nice-working sushi-bar in Imatra area. His answers were not so solid with information, but still really nice ones.

For the first question – what's his opinion about sushi-bar in Imatra – he said, that it could be a nice competitor to other restaurants: first of all, if it is going to be “a take-off” or even delivery service, it will be great, specially during the day time, if it is impossible to leave office for long or if there are many customers in sushi-bar. For people, who want just to relax, to spend some time in sushi-bar will be an alternative to stay at home.

On the question – what suggestion he could give for beginning the business – he said, that any business requires much more money, than calculations show. It is never possible to predict the exact amount of money, which you will need for business. Anytime could some problem show up or another which you did not foresee in the beginning. And there could be a lot of problems before your company works at least one month. After that you could predict similar problems in advance, but it will also influence your budget.

The author of thesis got information that Anatoly Lvov was one of the business advisors in Holvi restaurant, which was opened not so long time ago in Vuoksenniska area, that is why next question was predictable – what factors should be better taken under account during opening sushi-bar and its first steps in business? He said, that building good staff relationships, trying to make connection and understanding between manager and subordinate personnel is the best way to increase profitability of the company in the future. Also, if one

wants to have a good number of customers during first months, one needs to give enough attention to advertisement and be ready to pay money for it.

Last question was how to make sushi-bar more important and well-known in Imatra area? Anatoly has suggested to take part in different events, activities as a member of culinary representative. For example, to organize pop-up event or to reach an agreement to present your sushi in some kind of party. During the summer time it will be possible to make an open-air sushi presentation or to make a sushi-chef culinary event: if the premises of the sushi-bar are not too big enough for such event, ask permission or deal with an other restaurant to invite customers and to show them how to make sushi – from the simplest till most difficult and time-consuming rolls. But – as a small hint from cooker to cook – he told not to show all secrets for public, because, in that case, the cook and restaurant/bar/café itself could lose all potential customers: someone will start cooking by same scheme and be a better cook.

4.2.3 Jukka Moilanen

Jukka Moilanen is a Master of Science, member of Karelian Chefs Union and teacher of culinary courses in Saimaa University in Imatra. He agreed to take part in theoretical part of the thesis by answering questions, similar to questions asked from other interviewees. It was a pleasure for him to share his knowledge and hints in such a project.

For the question about foundation sushi-bar and potential customers he answered that there were already two places in Imatra, where sushi have been presented (BB-Bar in Rauha, nearby Holiday Club Saimaa and sushi restaurant in Viokseniska), but both of them have failed because of few facts: location, price policy, advertisement etc. So, people in Imatra region already know what sushi is and not everyone was satisfied, so now it could be a risk to make independent sushi restaurant or even sushi-bar in Imatra. The best way is to make it like a part of another restaurant and make some events to increase the popularity of sushi part of this restaurant once or twice per week.

Another question was about interest in the bar among foreign visitors of Imatra – Russians, Scandinavians, other Europeans? By sharing the personal experience, Mr. Moilanen said that – as for him – during the visit to a foreign country, he would like, first of all, try local food and its features – as professional – he thinks, that sushi-bar could be interesting for foreigners, if advertisement is good enough, so it will be possible to rely on them for lunch time, and few of them as customers for evening time. But still, he clarified, that no one knows exactly interests of people, so it is impossible to predict customers' behavior.

During the interview with Mr. Moilanen the question about price policy was asked. In his opinion, a simple starter like plate with 5 different nigiri could cost 5 euro. But, of course, the price for uramaki can not be put by the same idea as a price for simple nigiri, because the restaurant or bar will spend fewer ingredients; so it could start from 5 euro (if it is vegetable uramaki) and reach up to 10 euro (if it is uramaki or temaki with expensive ingredients).

For the question how to survive among other famous restaurants of Imatra, Mr. Moilanen has suggested to create some dishes, which will be interesting specially for Finnish customers, for example – sushi with deer – so customers will be pleasantly surprised by the menu. Also, he said, big attention should be paid to advertising: person, who starts such a business, should be ready to spend money to bring a lot of attention to a new place in town with well-known and famous restaurants.

To answer the question what suggestions for opening sushi-bar he can give, Mr. Moilanen said, that customers' wishes should be always on the first place for the owner. If foundation of sushi-bar is organized for satisfying the owner's hobby idea, then it will fold up. The owner should be ready to answer 3 main questions, which will help to increase the number of customers: what is customers range? How to sell dishes to them? What to sell? If answers to these questions are found, then sushi-bar will have future. The idea of décor of the place is very important, because it helps customers to relax and feel comfortable. If person feels something is not his cup of tea, then it will be difficult to sell him anything.

Concerning ideas and hints for business plan Mr. Moilanen suggested to get in contact with Poolo Huttunen: this man has founded a sushi-restaurant named Wakkani Sushi in Rovaniemi and has got a lot of followers in different online societies (Quandoo). Also he said that there are 2 general ideas, which are important to know –first one is “Cook not what you want, but what customers want!” and second one is “If there are no customers and no sales – change the menu!” These are main ideas, why even well-decorated restaurant with skilled staff can fail.

To the last question – what could be the start point for sushi-bar? – Mr. Moilanen said, that, for example, taking part in different street events could be a good way to advertise sushi, also, if some restaurant or hotel gave a permission to organize or take part in different arrangement and present sushi separately from the main menu on event.

4.2.4 Marja Antikainen

Marja Antikainen is a senior teacher of tourism department in Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. She was chosen as a teacher of marketing courses, which could help the author of thesis to get more interesting and useful ideas. Interview was held in a way of usual dialogue, not in “question-answer” system.

In the beginning the question about relevance of sushi-bar in Imatra was asked, and in the opinion of Ms. Antikainen right now it is not the best time to found a company like this – problems with internal and external economy influence a lot in Imatra region. There are much more risks to go bankrupt and lack customers. She underlined that the most important question is it there are enough customers in sushi-bar? Because, as she said, people try to save money for something that is more important for citizens of Imatra and, of course, visitors of the town will also avoid to spend money anywhere else except shops. But, at the same time, she mentioned that people could love it, because it is a good food experience, if the price and menu range suit potential customers. And, of course, the person, who is thinking about opening such a company, should be ready for se-

rious loss the first few months, maybe even half a year, before the company will start bringing profit.

The idea to open a sushi-bar in town center, Imatrankoski area, seems interesting for Ms. Antikainen. The only thing she said to take care of is the visual effect for customers: they should see what is going on inside. What kind of atmosphere is going to be in it? What can the signboard be associated with? So, people can create their own opinion about it already before getting inside of the sushi-bar; it should be “warm” and interesting. And, of course, atmosphere inside the sushi-bar – one of the most important things, which can keep people coming back to the bar once and again and again: pleasant music, good furniture, temperature – these aspects and everything else that happens in sushi-bar should prepossess customers.

For the question about price policy, Ms. Antikainen said that price of sushi which were in Bistro restaurant, where she was a regular customer, were too high; so – in her opinion – to sell sushi 2 euro per piece would be a nice price and she is ready to buy rolls no higher than 6 euro per roll (of course, she could pay a little bit more, if the fish in sushi is expensive). Except the talk about certain prices for sushi, she said that the idea of sushi-buffet done not just by entrance fee payment like in Rax-buffet in Lappeenranta, but making the price of sushi by kilos is a good opportunity to attract more people to the shop: K-Supermarket – as a potential competitor – has got salad lunch buffet, where you can pay approximately 19 euro per kilo and get into the salad box whatever products you want from those, which are introduced in the menu.

About K-Supermarket Ms. Antikainen shared news with author of thesis that this shop in Imatra sells sushi now: people chose sushi from existing menu, pay for it, and once per week sushi comes in boxes from Helsinki. The prices for sushi sets are suitable and because there is no other opportunity to buy sushi, except to go to Svetogorsk, people buy them in K-market. She also suggested to contact with Tom Färd – manager in this shop – to talk about cooking sushi for them already now. First of all, it will decrease the final price of sushi for customers; second, people will get sushi, which are much fresher than those, which are

coming from Helsinki; and last, it is a good opportunity to earn money and have K-market as a partner in the future, when sushi-bar will be open.

During the talk the question about advertising sushi in Imatra was asked. Marja Antikainen shared her experience about it – she thinks that not only social media (putting advertisement in Internet, creating a web-page of sushi-bar in Facebook or other social web-pages) is important in this question. In her opinion, creating an image of future sushi-bar is possible to do even long before its opening: making sushi for different events and just talk with potential customers about it, but surely do them “visible”, to arouse the interest among people for Japanese cuisine. Same time it is possible to spread brochures, but now everywhere – for example, some hotels have got such a policy, that it is not allowed to leave advertisement of your own restaurant or shop on a billboard at all. In this case it will be necessary to talk with hotel manager to get permission for it.

Ms. Antikainen also said that before opening the sushi-bar one of the most important questions is a considered menu. After setting off the customers’ range, a few methods of holding these customers can be useful: making a discount cards for regular customers and those who order a lot; creating a special menu for big groups of customers and a “children’s menu” for those, who have families, because children can eat not all dishes adults prefe. Same time, invitation of reporters from local newspapers for official opening will spread news about sushi-bar really fast, because a lot of Finns prefer to read newspapers. And keeping newspapers with upcoming events in sushi-bar will keep interest among customers.

After opening the sushi-bar, she said, there are few more hints not to lose your customers, which she has shared with author. One of them is to sell in the sushi-bar something else, except food itself – for example, equipment for making sushi or eating them at home: if people like it, why not try to do them at home? And already this idea can be a way for one more type of self-advertisement: organization of sushi-cooking competition – people can make any kind of sushi at home, then bring them to the bar and become members of such a competition – regular customers can choose the winner, who will get a certificate of “Honora-

ble sushi-cook” and some small prize like a bottle of champagne or discount for sushi. This idea is good, because people will have no limits in their imagination – only you can decide what will be inside of your sushi? It does not mean that others will not like them.

Besides organizing competition among customers, the cook in the bar can make a “Sushi cooking evening”: not everyone has got enough imagination or skills to start making sushi just in one day, someone will find it interesting to watch and learn to make different types of sushi, ask questions about them. By making really small entrance fee or payment for entire course, the bar will be ensured with big number of customers all the time.

One of the best ideas is to organize some kind of sushi-events for teenagers. On one hand, you can familiarize young people with sushi culture and show that sushi is not so “strange”, as they may think at the beginning; on the other hand, if young people like it, it can work like a virus – they can tell about sushi everyone: friends, relatives, neighbors, parents. It will bring more attention to the bar for sure.

And, as a last idea concerning providing services to customers, Marja Antikainen mentioned, that “take away” service will be also good. People have not always got time to spend half an hour or more by waiting for sushi – somebody can just take them and go back to work or home. If possible, delivery service for a small fee can be attractive also, especially in evening hours and at weekend, when people want something special, but do not want to leave their houses.

As for the menu, the final touch of the dialogue, Ms. Antikainen said not to forget to change the menu and introduce something else (salads, soups, desserts), make “season” menu, special dish of the week or Chef’s dish for a special price. People should not be “bored” with the same menu for a long period of time – some dishes, which are ordered all of the time, can be kept in menu longer, but approximately 30% should be changed time to time.

4.2.5 Katja Vehviläinen

Katja Vehviläinen presents KEHY-company in Imatra. Her duties comprise assisting during company foundation and organization of financial plan of future firm – she helped to fill-in and alter already existing form of financial plan for beginning companies in author's case (preliminary form of KEHY-doc does not require to necessary criteria of thesis – has got too much unnecessary conditions, which can be taken out from it without harm for future researches). During the meeting and assisting with financial plan of sushi-bar, Ms. Vehviläinen answered few questions of thesis' author.

First of all, author asked Ms. Vehviläinen her opinion about sushi-bar in Imatra. She said that the idea is good and interesting, but nowadays it will be impossible to make company profitable during, maybe, first three years after opening without really strong PR-company and possible assist "from the side": to create totally new business in difficult economical situation brings too much risks to fail with it. Better to make a sushi-bar together with a company, which already exists and to start as an addition for the main menu. Of course, the idea is to keep the rights for sushi menu, prices and continue working separately with one's own name after a year or something like that.

In her opinion, competition could be done only by local restaurant of Chinese cuisine as a similar Asian food restaurant. If potential start is done properly, for the beginning of the sushi-bar a preliminary menu will be enough. Later, when it will be possible to hire more cooks, it will be a good idea to increase the menu and bring into it soups, salads and some desserts. It will increase the influence of sushi-bar for wishes of customers and bring more attention to the menu and bar itself.

Author also asked Ms. Vehviläinen concerning starting capital. She said that 20 thousand euro is a good amount of money, but there were almost no companies in her memory, who planned the capital and did not use extra money. Advertisement, extra purchases, hiring staff, rent of premises – everything can increase money demand during first year. Numbers could change both sides –

some numbers could be lower in calculations, other underrated and costly, especially if starting the company independently from already existing business. So it will be better to increase the budget for 2 or 3 more thousand euro to be sure there will not be extraordinary moments and lack of money in main budget. To avoid big bank loan is the best way to make the business – in case the company fails, there will not be need to return money to the bank.

4.3 Author's practical knowledge in sushi cooking and working experience

It is necessary to underline, that if sushi bar is going to be opened in Imatra, thesis' author is going to be the cook in it for the first few months, until the amount of incomes is enough to afford another person to work as a sushi-cook or even working together (depends on sales values). Such decision is permissible because the author has got almost 3 years working practice by individual self-educational program in this field. The quality of service till January 2015 could not be proved by potential customers, except neighbors and friends, who are "regular customers" of author's sushi.

During January 2015 author of the thesis took a part in selection of those, who would be sushi-cooks in Imatra Bistro restaurant, situated on the premises of Central Hotel Imatra. After affirmation of author's right to present sushi in the hotel, during January-March 2015 sushi was presented at the hotel. During that period author was making sushi for visitors of the restaurant three days per week, from Friday till Sunday. For the first month customers with great pleasure were leaving their comments concerning level of service and quality of sushi. It helped to make changes in dishes to make it more interesting and tasty for customers. Sushi itself was an interesting addition to the main menu of the restaurant and could have continued longer, but the author of the thesis had to finish making sushi because of low interest among customers to sushi from beginning of March. There were a few reasons why sushi was not popular anymore.

1. Refusal of restaurant manager to listen to the thesis' author concerning price policy – author did not take part in price policy of sushi menu. All the prices were decided without sushi-cook's opinion, so, basically, prices were too high (6 pieces uramaki roll cost 12 euro, which is too much for sushi for the first year of sells);
2. Discussion of menu itself – preliminary menu was done without agreement of sushi-cook. Only after long debates and backed up by facts, the ideas of author got result and the sushi menu was changed. Into the menu were introduced few types of uramaki and nigiri (before that, sushi menu was introduced with only 1 type of dishes – sushi plate, where should be 6 nigiri of 6 different types, which made cooking process difficult, inexpedient and expensive);
3. Lack of advertisement – all requests of author concerning increasing the amount of advertisement were refused. Advertisement of A4-size papers on the billboard of the hotel and few pages about sushi on the tables of the restaurant – that's all, what was done for increasing the popularity and interest in sushi among potential customers in Imatra Bistro. Author got suggestions for restaurant manager to make an advertisement in local newspaper, invite journalist to the restaurant for "crush-test" of sushi and short article in newspapers;
4. The failure of sushi-master evening – in plans of author was an idea to organize "Sushi-master evening", where would be possible for people to see, learn and ask questions concerning how the author is doing sushi. Everything could be done during 1 or 1.5 hours. Visitors could have an interesting lecture having their own small plates of sushi during "the lesson", while cook made few different kinds of sushi – nigiri, uramaki, maki and, for example, temaki. After that they could ask questions straight the cook and make notes, if someone wanted to make sushi at home;
5. Unwillingness of restaurant manager to listen to author's suggestions – all ideas, which were presented to the restaurant manager by sushi-cook, were skipped or not taken into account at all.

Lack of advertisement, too high prices, no desire to attract customers resulted in downturn of interest among customers after 2 months. Even during January-

February the interest rate was not too high, because only visitors at restaurant could get news about sushi in Imatra Bistro. In author's opinion, the idea of restaurant's manager could work, but with better approach for the business idea. If the author of article could have the chance to turn into reality all plans, which he got during work in Imatra Bistro, the preliminary money expenses could be higher, but the result could also exceed the expectations.

5 Financial plan of sushi-bar

To be ready for sushi-bar foundation, like in any type of new business, it is necessary to prepare a big amount of money. It means, that, first of all, the person, who wants to open the business, had to prepare financial plan to take a look carefully – how much money will it require? Raw products expenses, premises rent, salary etc. – everything should be calculated, if the person does not want to get into problems with lack of money.

Financial plan is a type of table, which can help to predict all necessary expenses, variable and fixed costs of future company and future financial state by using current known variables to predict future income, asset values and withdrawal plans. This often includes a budget which organizes an individual's finances and sometimes includes a series of steps or specific goals for spending and saving in the future. This plan allocates future income to various types of expenses, such as rent or utilities, and also reserves some income for short-term and long-term savings. A financial plan is sometimes referred to as an investment plan, but in personal finance a financial plan can focus on other specific areas such as risk management, estates, college, or retirement. (Wikipedia)

For the starting point 13,000 euro will be a preliminary amount of money, which in theory will be prepared for foundation of business – the rest of necessary money will be taken from the bank as a loan. This amount can show most closely how big the start-up capital should be to begin the business and should

not be taken the loan from the bank and take care for returning of money back to bank.

Financial requirements (incl. VAT)		Euros	Funding				Euros
1. Premises altogether	Aid-%		6. Long-term loans		In All		
- Land area			Loan given by	Interest %	Term (year)	Capital	
- Buildings (duty free)			Finnvera				
- Buildings			Bank				
2. Equipment all together	Aid-%	7,500					
rent of premises		3,000					
special equipment		2,000	7. Leasing				
dishes and other inventory		1,500	8. Part payment				
			9. Business allowances				
- goods storage by business purchase		1,000	- ELY-Centres Investments allowances-aids				
- advanced purchased storage							
- Duty free purchases							
3. Marketing investments		2,000	10. VAT Return				1,645
Advertisement and billboards		2,000	11. Own funding in all				13,000
			- Capital investments by owner				13,000
			- Shareholder loan from Finnvera				
4. Devepoling investments							
5. Other working capital		5,145					
	In All =	9,500				In All =	14,645
Financial requirements - Funding =		0	Allowances and VAT-returns in all =				1,645

Table 6. Fund use and funding resources

Table 6 shows total preliminary calculations concerning the amount of money needed to open the sushi-bar. 13,000 euro starting capital will be enough money for 2-months premises rent, buying equipment for the bar, making first-wave advertisement. Some money will be left for future – to prepare ingredients for first weeks of work and extra cases.

Business costs in a year (vat 0%)	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	Notes	
	2016	2017	2018	Cost rise %	
				2017	2018
12. Instalment of loans and accent					
- interest in Euro					
- capital of loans in the end of the year					
13. Annual costs of Part payment					

14. Wages and salaries of employees					
- Monetary wages in month				3%	3%
- Number of months	12	12,4	12,4		
15. Social costs etc. % of Wages	40%				
16. Entrepreneur's Pension Insurance (YEL), non-mandatory pension fees					
- YEL wages, basis for the pension (yearly wages)				3%	3%
- YEL-percent in the calculations	23.6%	23.6%	23.6%		
- non-mandatory pension insurance premiums					
17. Other indirect employee cost					
- YEL-entrepreneurs accident and life insurance fees					
- Membership fees of unemployment Funds for Entrepreneurs				3%	3%
- other non-mandatory insurance premiums for employees					
				3%	3%
8. Other staff costs	1,000	1,030	1,061		
- employees health care				3%	3%
- work clothes and protection instruments	1,000	1,030	1,061	3%	3%
- other optional staff cost (meal, recreation etc.)				3%	3%
19. Cost of premises	1,750	1,803	1,857		
- rents and assessments	1,500	1,545	1,591	3%	3%
- electricity, water and heating	250	258	265	3%	3%
- reparation, cleaning, guarding, waste disposal				3%	3%
20. Leasing rents, final instalment of the total financing		30%			
21. Cost of construction machines and vehicles, business use					
- fuel costs				3%	3%
- maintenance and repair				3%	3%
- insurance, inspection, transport				3%	3%
22. Cost of ADP-equipment and ADP-programs					
- equipment and program rents, updating and maintenance				3%	3%
- purchase of ADP-equipment (operating life under 3 years)				3%	3%
23. Cost of other machinery and equipment					
- maintenance and repair				3%	3%
- purchase of machinery/equipment (operating life < 3 years)				3%	3%
- other machinery costs				3%	3%
24. Travelling expenses (fares, accommodation, meals etc.)				3%	3%
25. Compensation for travelling expenses				3%	3%

26. Marketing costs	2,000	2,060	2,121.8		
- advertisement, printed matters	2,000	2,060	2,121.8	3%	3%
- other marketing costs				3%	3%
27. Administrative services	2,900	2,987	3,077		
- hired staff, legal services, consulting services etc.	500	515	530	3%	3%
- bookkeeping, financial administration, auditing	2,400	2,472	2,546	3%	3%
28. Knowledge acquisition (papers, books, membership fees)				3%	3%
29. Costs of communication and monetary transactions					
- tele and data communications				3%	3%
- post and courier costs				3%	3%
- monetary transactions				3%	3%
30. Insurance premiums				3%	3%
31. Office supplies				3%	3%
32. Other costs (discussion, vehicle costs in private use etc.)				3%	3%

Table 7. Business costs in a year

In table 7 costs and money spending are described with more details:

1. The table 7 is not filled up in some spaces because necessary information could be gathered only during foundation of the company in real life. Some companies do not provide this information before the negotiations;
2. Calculations are presented for 3 years in advance as a compulsory part of every financial calculation;
3. During financial calculations for years 2017 and 2018 3% growth of any costs should be ready to calculate, as an approximate price growing rate;
4. Paragraph 13 and 14 – costs for salary payment – as was mentioned before, author himself is going to start working in sushi-bar, that is why his salary could be spent for business needs, if required, after deduction of money for private needs;
5. In paragraph 14 number of months is calculated as changes in calendar weeks, consequently – changes in total amount of working days;
6. Paragraph 16 – YEL-percent in the calculations is based by law per cent, which will be in calculations in case of opening the sushi-bar;
7. Paragraph 19 – for average price or premises rent have been chosen 1,500 euro. This number can change, depending on few factors: certain

location of premises, free access from the street, size of street windows, repair works in premises. The cost of electricity, water and heating of premises will vary depending on the month of the year and weather forecast;

8. Paragraph 27 depends on the number of workers, period of the year and amount of done work; the price for bookkeeper services is also different. 500 euro were taken an amount of money for future plans, when the business is going to grow and it will be needed to hire more staff – so, it will be necessary to pay to companies, like Opteam, to help with it.

Sales estimate (all prices include VAT)			1st year	2nd year	3rd year	Notes	
			2016	2017	2018	Price/value change %	
						2017	2018
Marketing product #1 (nigiri)	24%	Net Sale	5,475	7,000	9,000	3%	3%
- sales price/unit inclusive VAT			1.5	1.75	2		
- sales amount (pieces, quantity)			3,650	4,000	4,500		
- purchase/cost price per pieces incl. VAT			0.4	0.5	0.6		
- purchase/cost price per pieces VAT 0%			0.32	0.40	0.48		
- gross margin %			73.3%	71.4%	70.0%		
- gross margin €			4,015	5,000	6,300		
Marketing product #2 (gunkan-maki)	24%	Net Sale	5,475	7,000	9,000	3%	3%
- sales price/unit inclusive VAT			1.5	1.75	2		
- sales amount (pieces, quantity)			3,650	4,000	4,500		
- purchase/cost price per pieces incl. VAT			0.4	0.5	0.6		
- purchase/cost price per pieces VAT 0%			0.32	0.40	0.48		
- gross margin %			73.3%	71.4%	70.0%		
- gross margin €			4,015	5,000	6,300		
Marketing product #3 (hoso-maki)	24%	Net Sale	4,380	5,425	6,560	3%	3%
- sales price/unit inclusive VAT			3	3,5	4		
- sales amount (pieces, quantity)			1,460	1,550	1,640		
- purchase/cost price per pieces incl. VAT			1	1.1	1.2		
- purchase/cost price per pieces VAT 0%			0.81	0.89	0.97		
- gross margin %			67%	69%	70%		
- gross margin €			3,203	4,050	4,973		
Marketing product #4 (futo-maki)	24%	Net Sale	5,110	6,975	8,200	3%	3%
- sales price/unit inclusive VAT			3.5	4.5	5		
- sales amount (pieces, quantity)			1,460	1,550	16,40		

- purchase/cost price per pieces incl. VAT			1.3	1.6	2		
- purchase/cost price per pieces VAT 0%			1.05	1.29	1.61		
- gross margin %			63%	64%	60%		
- gross margin €			3,579	4,975	5,555		
Marketing product #5 (temaki)	24%	Net Sale	5,110	6,200	7,380	3%	3%
- sales price/unit inclusive VAT			3.5	4	4.5		
- sales amount (pieces, quantity)			1,460	1,550	1,640		
- purchase/cost price per pieces incl. VAT			1.5	1.8	2		
- purchase/cost price per pieces VAT 0%			1.21	1.45	1.61		
- gross margin %			65%	64%	64%		
- gross margin €			3,344	3,950	4,735		
Marketing product #6 (uramaki)	24%	Net Sale	13,140	14,950	16,800	3%	3%
- sales price/unit inclusive VAT			6	6,5	7		
- sales amount (pieces, quantity)			2,190	2,300	2,400		
- purchase/cost price per pieces incl. VAT			2.5	2.8	3		
- purchase/cost price per pieces VAT 0%			2.02	2.26	2.42		
- gross margin %			58%	57%	57%		
- gross margin €			8,725	9,756	10,994		

Table 8. Sales estimate by years

Table 8 also requires few explanations:

1. Same as with price growth with table 7, the increasing cost of raw materials will be compensated with growing cost of final product. According to KEHY company notes and data, 3% growing rate was chosen, but this per cent could vary, so the calculations of clear profit could be other;
2. Prices of raw materials (fish and other seafood) were taken from the official web-page of KESPRO company, which provides services for restaurants, hotels and other big companies. In calculation by default has been included the price of rice, as the main ingredient of all dishes;
3. Calculations are done for 6 main dishes, which interviewees chose for the menu in sushi-bar;
4. Calculations are prepared with general calculations of how sushi-bar should work to have a good profit and cover variable and fixed costs for the work – approximately 10 nigiri and ginkan-maki, 4 hoso-maki, temaki and futo-maki and 6 uramaki have been added into the table as an average number of made dishes during the day. Number of total done dishes in calculations is presented for entire calendar year.

33. Incomes according to sales estimate (goods or service produced, gross margin of sold products)	26,880	32,731	38,856
34. - minus business costs	7,650	7,879.5	8,115.885
35. Business costs during one month (*2 = minimal working capital)	638	657	676
36. Entrepreneur's earnings (all costs paid excl. personal income tax)	19,230	24,852	30,740
37. Depreciations (25% machinery/equipment, 7% premises)	-1313	-945	-668
38. Entrepreneur's taxable income	20,543	25,797	31,408
39. Net sales/turnover	26,880	47,550	56,940
40. VAT (Euros)	6,451	11,412	13,666
41. Total sales	33,332	58,962	70,606
Business weeks per year	47	52	52
Working days per week	5	5	5
Sales per day			

Table 9. Business losses/profit per year

Table 9 presents final calculations for all money spending and potential profit/losses after paying money for buying products. But these calculations are not full one – some cells in tables 7 and 8 need to be filled in before making conclusions about profitability of the company. But this data could be available only after starting firm's campaign, because some state companies could provide such information only during actual work with project.

6 SWOT-analysis of potential company

After making a business plan, it was important to make SWOT-analysis of a company – to introduce all potential weak and strong parts of the company to ask final questions: is it necessary and needed to find a sushi-bar in Imatra area? It will underline and summarize all information, which were gathered before.

First of all, it is necessary to distinguish **strengths** of a company, as a main index for the future company:

- Exclusive representative of sushi culture in the town;

- No need of big premises;
- Easy to get necessary products;
- Simple and fast process of cooking dishes;
- High level of potential customers' interest for sushi-bar in Imatra among Imatra citizens;
- Relatively low prices among other catering companies;
- Accessible prices;
- Big percent of interviewed people would like to try sushi – new dishes and menu in already pestered choice of dishes in Imatra's restaurants.

These eight points make potential sushi-bar very interesting for customers, who would like to visit something else, neither already pestered kebabs or too expensive restaurants.

Same time, there are few **weak** points, which can negatively affect on potential sushi-bar. They are:

- Potential customers do not know this company yet;
- It will require really persistent and convincing advertisement;
- Uncertainty of opening and closing hours;
- Notable influence of foreign visitors for the final profit of the company;
- Seasonality influences the number of customers;
- Competition for the catering company among restaurants of Imatra with big amount of regular customers.

Some of the weak points can seriously affect for profitability of the company. There are points, which should be taken under control (for example, to keep high interest during low seasons – when hotels have low booking level and people prefer to save money for vacation or presents).

Even before the company is founded, it requires elaboration of plans for the future, so to be ready to keep people surprised even after a year the company is founded creates **opportunity** line:

- Expansion of sushi-bar – increasing its size and making a sushi-restaurant;
- Creating a line of sushi-restaurants first in towns of South Karelia (Lappeenranta and Joutseno) with potential expansion to the capital of Finland;
- Increasing of menu – introducing to potential customers new dishes, which could be important among Finns (sushi with deer meat, local fish, new style of already known sushi) and organization of master-class evenings;
- Invitation of sushi-cooks from other towns and organization of “sushi-cooks’ battles”;
- Creating Facebook page to keep customers aware of last updates in menu, collecting customer’s wishes and making new interviews for increasing the quality of service;
- With time – introducing delivery service, when the demand for sushi will increase and citizens would like to order big sets.

If the sushi-bar gets its niche in Imatra area, future plans could make a really good competition among restaurants and bars not only in Imatra, but other town also. Taking into account potential customers with low prices and good quality of service will help to settle a sushi-bar and get customers almost all the day while the bar is open.

The last part of analysis – **threats** – is also an important part of research, because on this step the company should understand its potential problems, which should be eliminated from beginning and controlled all of the time:

- Special actions for the period of low seasons;
- Specification of customers – necessity to think more about family’s or group of friends’ menu;
- Lack of money after the beginning of business and necessity to take loan from the bank;
- Downgrade of customers’ interest in sushi after 1 or 2 years;

- Changes in raw materials cost – influence on dishes' profit and increasing the final cost of sushi.

Company has got a good potential to become an important part of Imatra's big family of catering companies. Its capacities in the beginning should be enough to make the company famous among citizens of Imatra and get more attention to it for customers from different market segments. On one hand, some risks should be taken into consideration from the entire foundation of the company. Nowadays not all banks are ready to provide loans for new companies, so the beginning of the business requires much more money, at least 20 thousand euro – not all important data are specified in financial calculations of company, it means that final statistics of company's profit or loss will change after entire information will be gathered. On the other hand, the company has got a good chance to become important in the town very fast.

7 Conclusion

The idea of foundation of a sushi-bar in Imatra has got a right to exist. It can become really important in everyday life of Imatra citizens. People would like to visit it and are interested in dishes' diversity in the town nowadays, they are ready to try new menu and to do it by following original traditions of Japanese culture.

The only one thing the author of thesis needs to take care of is a good advertisement campaign. Creating of a demand on a good level is one of the most important parts of every campaign – the company will never be successful until potential customers know about your services and are interested to visit it at least once per week. They should crave for your services, should be ready for new offers and not be disappointed with what they can find in sushi-bar. Previous experience in this field shows that a lot of mistakes have been made by previous owners of sushi-bars in Imatra – it is a good example, which is going to be a platform for future company: to consider mistakes of past to make a good future.

But, to say without exaggeration, right now the risk to open a sushi-bar is too risky. Too many factors, starting from January 2016, are against it. Shops are closing almost every week, number of foreigners in Imatra is decreasing from day to day; the wish of people to go somewhere and spend money in restaurants or shops is not so big like in the same period of year in 2015. It means that people prefer now to save money for some big event or better times. Economical crisis, summoned by political situation between the EU and Russia, has got serious negative impact on prosperity of South Karelia region first of all. It can cause strong negative influence on the first working year of the company, which considered is the most difficult on the way of company's forming.

Also, professional opinion of teachers, who live and work here, know economical situation and pulse beat of the city, attest the high level of risk. Leaning on their opinion, it is better to follow their advice and do it – at least – not earlier than spring of the year 2016, when the situation is going to be clearer. During the next calendar year, as they said, it will be possible to track changes in people's preferences; to make one or two more interview rounds and organize new statistic data.

As the conclusion, the author would like to underline that during research – collecting interview data – it was really amazing to see surprisingly high wish of interviewees to contact with interviewer and answer questions, to share their opinions and preferences concerning Japanese cuisine. It shows people's readiness to explore something new in town, where everyone knows everything about restaurants and other catering companies. And sushi-bar with good advertisement strategy, interesting menu and special offers – by seasons, for different customer's segments and groups, even time of the day – can keep interest among citizens and visitors of the town all of the time.

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