Development of a gamified customer journey plan towards optimal User Experience
Case: Launchpad USA (Amcham Finland)

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The objective of this project was to create a comprehensive, gamified Customer Journey towards engagement, satisfaction and optimal customer experience for the Launchpad USA companies. The sub objectives involved minimizing the bottleneck of numerous face-to-face meetings, giving users freedom to explore their options according to their desires and needs, as well as providing them with a platform for communication with their U.S. partners. The project aimed to outline the process of mapping the customer journey for Launchpad USA, list the requirements for its interface towards user engagement, happiness and satisfaction and lay out the criteria for tapping into the psyche of the member companies using gamification principles with the uppermost aim of optimizing their experience.

The theoretical framework of the project involved the exploration of different Customer Journey, Gamification and User Experience models, based on existing literature. The aim of the exploration was to find out whether an appropriate framework exists that could serve as the backbone of the research and the development of the Customer Journey Mapping plan. The research showed that a customized model should be used, in order to take all aspects of the Journey into account. Therefore, the Simplified Monomyth/Player journey was constructed, with the behavioural principles of Hassenzahl and Fogg serving as the Customer Experience basis.

The data collection techniques included extensive internal and mixed brainstorming sessions, interviews with the main Launchpad USA stakeholders and testing sessions with selected Launchpad USA users. The result of all sessions were very promising. They showed that the transformation of the Launchpad Journey from a static, manual status to an immersive, interactive experience was necessary; they also outlined significant touchpoints to take into account when constructing tailored gamified Journeys.

The results also helped make an important discovery: triggering certain emotions throughout the Journey, especially emotions that can be experienced in their everyday lives, are vital in influencing the customers' behaviour towards the desirable goals. Customer Journey maps are an excellent means of persuasive technology and, when done properly, they can have a huge impact on a company's brand placement and on customers' loyalty and acquisition.

Keywords
Customer Journey Mapping, Gamification, User Experience, Customer Experience, Gamified Customer Journey, Emotions, Emotional experiences in Customer Journeys

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1 Introduction

The U.S. market is one of the most competitive markets in the world. Launchpad USA is a program offered by Amcham Finland, tailored to meet the needs of Nordic and Baltic (N&B) businesses by guiding them from start to finish towards breaking into the U.S. market. The program's experts' duties involve working with companies from the N&B and aiming to comprehend their business and objectives, in order to provide tailored solutions and the right connections to boost their success.

Launchpad USA is addressed to growth companies regardless of industry, size or respective goals. The desire to expand their business beyond the Nordic borders is the common denominator for all of them.

An aspiring asset and one of the main value offerings of the program is a customer journey-based service. According to the Launchpad USA service offering, there is a specific logic to the U.S. market access. For this reason, a 40-step "Launchpad USA route" was created, aiming to help companies set their own improvement pace, anticipate potential needs and avoid future market pitfalls. The route is not a one-size-fits-all solution for all companies. Depending on the company maturity level and the individual needs of each company, the journey is typically tailored, in order to best serve the company's aspirations and ambitions with the least waste (on time and/or on money).

At the moment, this route exists in the form of a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet describes the steps, prerequisites and activities that a growth company should consider before entering the U.S. market. The route is exhaustive and elaborate; however, it fails to take into account any design explorations. It is also easily understood that the user experience has room for significant improvement.

In order to improve the user experience and engage the companies, the spreadsheet route must be revised. The goal of this study is to transform this xls spreadsheet into a gamified Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) plan, towards achieving a two-fold purpose:

1. Increase the Launchpad USA companies' user engagement and satisfaction through utilizing gamification techniques and mechanisms;
2. Reach the Launchpad USA's business objectives by optimizing the CJM's user experience towards creating personal (case-by-case) value.

The benefits of such plan are expected to be trifold:

1. Automate the CJM and as a result, minimize the human factor intervention (the bottleneck between Launchpad USA companies and Amcham experts);
2. Give end users an optimal high-level of freedom to set their choices according to their companies' needs;
3. Create a new interactive and gamified CJM, towards better user experience in order to increase engagement.

1.1 Objectives and research questions

The objective of this study is to develop a plan for an interactive gamified CJM to support Launchpad USA's 40-step process towards breaking into the U.S. market. Sub-objectives include a plan for the automation of the current CJM, in order to minimize bottlenecks, requirements for giving end users a level of freedom to set their choices according to their companies' needs; and specifications for creating the CJM, towards better user experience in order to increase engagement.

The primary business objective for Launchpad USA is dual: To attract new members, mid-term wise, as well as to retain the existing loyal customers, long-term wise. It is important to comprehend that the primal focus is placed on Customer Experience. Launchpad USA has built its values on the open sharing of data. Currently, all information shared online and offline is done on the basis of transparency, free flow and openness. At the moment, it is not foreseen to request sensitive information from the member companies. Therefore, complex data privacy and security issues are out of the scope for this study.

Understanding the 40-step process is necessary before defining the requirements for the gamified journey. It will constitute Launchpad USA's strongest competitive advantage against similar program offerings from other companies and it will outline what kind of process is needed that fits the needs of a N&B company from a strategic and operational point of view. The process is flexible so that it can be customized depending on the individual company case.

The study will also focus on the mapping of the steps from a spreadsheet to an electronic, interactive and gamified, visualized format that will allow users to set up their choices with minimal intervention of a human factor.

Finally, the study will identify what the main criteria for better user experience are, based on the CJM plan.

This study will thus attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. **What is the process of a CJM for Launchpad USA?**
2. **What are the requirements for a CJM interface?**
3. **What are the main criteria for optimal UX of the CJM using gamification mechanisms?**

1.2 Purpose of the study

Currently, there is no program in the Nordic market that has a complete and thorough guide (online or face-to-face) for N&B companies who are attempting to break into the U.S. market. At the same time, although Launchpad USA continuously grows and expands its operations, as well as its geographical reach, its online presence is relatively weak and the fact that the complex 40-step CJM is currently still in a spreadsheet makes it challenging to comprehend, customize and follow up.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to outline the specifications for Launchpad USA's CJM plan, towards improving user experience and increasing engagement. Currently there is no similar study in this industry, in the N&B area.

1.3 Scope

This study will explore gamified design paths towards building a UX-optimized CJM. The theoretical frameworks supporting the empirical parts, will dive into the related notions and present the models for Gamification, User experience and Customer Journey Mapping.

The scope of the study is limited to gathering the requirements and producing the plan for Launchpad USA's CJM. The execution of the plan is scheduled to take place by mid-2017, due to resource constraints in the company. For this reason, the actual development of the Customer Journey is out of scope for this study; however it constitutes a good opportunity for future studies.

The development of the plan and solidification of requirements will be done based on the Lean Startup methodology (Ries, 2011). The aim is to acquire a minimum viable product (early prototype) which will be initially tested with business users. The data collection will take place in the form of mixed brainstorming sessions, interviews and online testing sessions; the collected feedback of the prototype will be used as input for the second cycle of the CJM (development of the product).

1.4 Motivation

This subject relates to my current position as Digital Communications manager at Amcham Finland. Amcham Finland is an agile, fast-paced, non-profit, non-partisan and fully member-funded Finnish Association (Amcham Finland, 2016). Launchpad USA is one of Amcham's most popular and favoured flagship programs; however, till now, and due to resource constraints the improvement of its CJM has been de-prioritized.

This study could provide a baseline for developing the CJM on an interactive platform, in a gamified form, with better user experience aiming to increase Launchpad USA company members' engagement through the Launchpad USA website. As stated, the process of the actual development is estimated to take place in 2017. As a result, the benefits of the gamified CJM are expected to be harvested at a later date. This study could be further developed in the future, with the acquisition of user data once the development is over.

This study will also serve as a tool for my learning and understanding of fundamental concepts related to Customer Journey Mapping, Gamification and User Experience techniques both from a practical and a theoretical point of view.

2 Case Description

2.1 Amcham Finland Presentation

Amcham Finland is an independent, non-governmental, non-partisan and fully member-funded non-profit, international business-to-business network whose mission is to make Finland a more globally savvy and connected market (Amcham Finland, 2016).

The membership comprises 400 companies headquartered in more than 20 countries. According to Amcham, and in the words of management guru Brian Tracy, "*it doesn't matter where you are coming from. All that matters is where you are going*".

Amcham provides companies with an additional resource. That resource can come in many forms. Each of Amcham's programs and networks offers a mix of leadership and business development, connections, advocacy, and access to decision makers. On top of the direct company-specific value, Amcham enhances the business environment for all members.

2.2 Launchpad USA

Launchpad USA is one of Amcham's flagship programs for companies breaking into or scaling up their business in the U.S. market.

Launchpad USA is tailored to meet the needs of every business. This program is for Amcham's growth companies regardless of industry, size or goals. What matters is the desire to expand business beyond the Nordic borders.

What Launchpad USA is trying to accomplish is prepare companies for their Journey to the U.S. Many companies go into the U.S. without a solid plan to enter the U.S. market, without understanding the U.S. market in relation to or in the context of how their business fits into it. Launchpad USA works with companies and helps them first understand the nature of the market, understand its diversity, its competitive nature and the risks associated with doing business there. Currently, the journey starts with talking to companies and understanding what it means for them when they say they want to go in to the U.S. Once the objectives are clarified a plan of action is developed.

The process mostly involves exploratory discussions and developing a personalized roadmap. This roadmap, the physical manifestation of the journey is, at the moment, an excel sheet. It is delivered to the companies as the basic project plan, outlining the steps, the timeframes in the proper sequential order and with side notes attached to each steps.

In the notes, the reasons for a particular step are articulated, as well as some of the conditions that need to be met to fulfil a certain step.

At the present time, this is completely a manual process, as each Excel sheet is typed it and it needs to be uniquely generated to meet specific company needs. Not all companies are required to follow the same amount of steps.

There is a lot of work involved to put the steps together, to make sure they are accurate. A major part of the process is connecting the growth companies to the partners in the U.S. U.S. partner companies (Inc companies) are still Amcham members, experts who cover all steps that a company needs to take in establishing, entering and growing their business. The ideal situation is connecting the Nordics members to these partners at the right time, in order to get proper guidance on certain aspects, on certain areas related to their business. This, again happens manually, as it involves maintaining another Excel spreadsheet with all U.S. partners and categorizing them based on the industry time, as well as what type of services they provide. Depending on this categorization, certain partners can then be attached to a certain step.

There is typically about 40 steps that can be loosely grouped to different areas. Within each step there are multiple sub steps as well. As mentioned, not all companies need to follow the full roadmap – some might need all 40 steps, some might require, for example, only 8 steps to fulfil their individual needs.

In order to understand the nature of the Journey, I will analyse the rationale behind the 40 step process and explain the nature behind the areas.

The 40-step process (see **Appendix 2**) is categorized into Company Formation, Finances, Immigration, Sales and Marketing, Human resources, Logistics, Risk Management and Real Estate.

The first thing to take care of when is to **form a company** that is registering a business. Compared to Finland, this is a much more complex and cumbersome procedure. The business registration side comprises establishing a legal entity for a business and that constitutes the starting point for companies.

Another area of the process is the **Immigration** component. The immigration part aims at helping companies understand what their options are, in terms of immigration visas, of moving their key employees over to the U.S., either for a short term or a long term and whether they are eligible to apply - many of the U.S. visas have very strict requirements and often those requirements come at high costs.

The third area is the **Financial Management**. This part includes managing the books, the banking, the accounting issues when dealing with federal and state taxes and understanding the U.S. tax environment in general.

Another area is the **Human Resources** component which involves hiring and employing U.S. personnel. Again, this is a complex section, because there are several state local employment laws that companies have to adhere to. Under HR there are quite a few steps, from job postings, to employee handbooks, to offer letters. Within the HR there is also the payroll management and handling personnel insurances.

Risk management is another part of the process and can be accomplished in several ways, insurances being the greatest of all. Identifying or at least understanding what the basic insurances that are required in the U.S. are, is vital. Generally speaking, companies are in need of protecting their business, especially established Finnish companies.

Another part of the process is **Real Estate,** which mainly deals with acquiring office spaces and leases; **Marketing and Branding** is a recommended development area which might involve creating a marketing plan, branding guidelines etc.

Logistics, is another section, which involves companies trading with U.S. retailers. Exporting and shipping goods to the U.S. can be quite tricky especially when large-scale retailers are involved, as there are certain requirements that U.S. retailers impose.

Based on member company feedback, it is safe to say that the 40-step plan has so far been very valuable to member companies and they have actually successfully used it to go to the U.S. The feedback has been very positive as without that plan what companies usually end up doing are endless Google searches, hoping that they get it right. These are companies that don’t have any experience breaking into a foreign market, so they try to put the pieces of the puzzle together on their own. For the most part, these companies face problems, miss certain touchpoints and the actual process might take a lot longer to accomplish.

The Excel component is moderately helping ease the process, but the way it is formatted hasn’t been clear to a lot of companies, leading to several, often not needed follow up meetings. The greatest bottleneck and challenge with the current process is connecting the companies to the partners in the U.S. – and this is part of the problematic customer experience.

Member companies have repeatedly mentioned that they wish for a better user experience with minimal consultation with the Amcham experts. The aim is to give them more independency and the U.S. partners more visibility. The rationale behind is that, with minimal human intervention, members can - without even realizing it - put together the 40 step process by themselves, through a digital platform or structure, where they can also find linked information as well as valuable contacts in every step. Automating, simplifying and streamlining the process would save costs and increase efficiency. Amcham could also save a lot of time as it currently dedicate resources in explaining aspects of the process seemingly unclear, mainly due to the format of the plan. The change would also be valuable for the member companies, as they need solid guidance and it would allow reaching out to their partners more efficiently.

The process is eventually a bridge between the business community in the Nordics – especially in Finland – and the business community in the U.S. A digitized tool would help this community communicate efficiently and it would allow both sides to take care of most of the areas within the process by themselves, without having to consult the Launchpad USA experts every time they run into difficulties. U.S. partners would be able to share information with the incoming growth companies. This is very important and an objective of the Launchpad USA brand. Step aside and let the communication flow more easily through a digital platform.

2.3 Aligning Study with Organizational goals

Goal alignment is the process of aligning individual goals (in this context, the goal of my study), with the larger overarching goals of the organisation (in this context, the goals of Launchpad USA).

Goal alignment allows for a quicker execution of the overall company strategy. Without proper goal alignment to strategy, every bit of advancing motion is a struggle. With everyone working together towards the same objectives, companies can execute strategy faster, with more flexibility and adaptability. Essentially, goal alignment will strengthen leadership and create organizational agility.

Through the present study, I am aiming to maximize the organizational benefits of the greatest business impact for Launchpad USA.

- **Improve and accelerate operational execution**: the CJM will help move to strategic executing; by automating the process, the time spent for operational tasks is expected to be minimal;

- **Get internal people focus on the right things**: By getting the employees currently working with Launchpad USA-related tasks working with the right things, at the right time, results are also expected to be right;

- **Increase customer retention, as well as maximize the acquisition of new customers**: The application of the CJM will help retain already loyal member companies, but at the same time it will attempt at acquiring new companies too; this constitutes one of the main objectives of the Launchpad USA Program as well.

3 Literature review

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the theoretical foundation (frameworks, related work, and models) for the empirical part of the study. The breakdown of this chapter, is, as follows:

First, I will briefly present the terminology that I will frequently use throughout the study. The reason for including a terminology section, is to assist the reader in understanding the concepts. Then, I will thoroughly outline the existing work, as well as the theoretical models and frameworks for CJM. The analysis of the frameworks and models will constitute a solid theory groundwork for the empirical part. I will follow the same process for the notions of Gamification and User Experience. The frameworks and models will be defined, analysed, evaluated and compared. At the end of the chapter, I will elaborate on the customized model I will use for this study. The model will be constructed based on the theoretical analysis.

3.1 Terminology

Customer Journey Mapping

Customer journey mapping is a tool typically used in order to discover and tackle the weak user experience parts of a product or a service. It assists in outlining the major touch points where the customers interact with the end product or service in focus. The mapping is customized and adjusted depending on the case. Some professionals prefer to call it “journey modelling” (Ghazarian, 2014). A CJM may have different sections, depending on the customer goals. Normally, it describes archetypal behaviours for different channels (i.e. website, social media, apps, etc.) or it may outline the thoughts, ideas or actions of the user for every step of the journey.

User Experience

There is no agreement on a clear definition of User Experience in literature; however it is commonly understood that the notion of UX is complex. In any case, it should not be confused with the concepts of “usability” or “user interface” (Hellweger & Wang, 2015). In this study, I will adopt Kuniavsky’s definition of UX, where the UX is considered as the entirety of the customers’ insights, thoughts, and ideas as they interact with a service or a product. The users’ perceptions deal with the concepts of efficiency, effectiveness, satisfaction and quality (Kuniavsky, 2003).

User Experience Design

UED (alternatively UXD or XD) is defined as the process of augmenting satisfaction by means of improving the accessibility, usability and user fulfilment that the user experiences when interacting with the service or the product (Kujala et al., 2011). UED extends the traditional concept of HCI (Human-Computer Interaction) by examining, observing and analysing all aspects of a service or a product, as far as user perceptions are concerned (Wang, 2015).

Gamification

Gamification is the discipline of applying game-design elements, principles and mechanisms to non-game notions and contexts (Deterding et al., 2011, Robson et al., 2015). Gamification engages game-design elements (Hamari et al., 2014), with means increasing engagement (Hamari, 2015), productivity (Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011), flow (Hamari & Koivisto, 2014), learning (Herger, 2014), recruitment and evaluation of employees (Herger, 2014) and usability of systems (Herzig et al., 2012), among others.

The Purchase Funnel

The purchase funnel is a marketing model describing one or more potential customer journeys, from the point of first entry with a product or service, till the end point, which is usually, purchasing the product or service.

It is considered as of great importance to a business environment in terms of branding and marketing, as it can help understand and monitor customer behaviour through the sales process (Gibson, 2015).

Monomyth (Journey of a hero)

The Monomyth is derived from the film industry; using methods and artefacts based on mythology and narration, the Monomyth comprises a category of tales involving a focal character (a Hero). The Hero typically embarks on a challenging journey, is faced with obstacles, comes out as a victor, usually in a decisive crisis moment, and finally, he/she returns home transformed.

The Monomyth was originally introduced in literature by Campbell (1949) in his book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Campbell describes the Hero’s journey below:

“A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man” (Campbell, 1949).

GameFlow model

The GameFlow model (Sweetser & Wyeth, 2005) is a user enjoyment model and it consists of eight elements: concentration, challenge, skills, control, clear goals, feedback, immersion, and social interaction. Each of these element contains criteria aiming for player satisfaction.

Lightweight gamification model (LGM)

The LGM is a custom-made lean gamification model and it consists of four distinct rules: Design for feedback and not for reward, focus on the player's personal journey, prioritize implicitly tracked metrics and throttle the feedback to sustain engagement. (Beresford, 2014).

Hassenzahl's model for UX

This model accepts that each product or service, when used, is assigned automatically with certain qualities. These qualities can differ from user to user. User experience can be defined as twofold: The specific situation in which the product or service is used, as well as the kind of results these qualities pose on the user.

The qualities are organized in four elements: manipulation, identification, stimulation and evocation. Hassenzahl further organizes them into hedonic and pragmatic attributes. Pragmatic attributes describe the practical aspects related to the usage and functions of the service or product, whereas the hedonic attributes describe aspects related to the user's psychology (Blythe et al., 2004).

The Fogg Behaviour model (FBM)

The FBM is a model used for comprehending human behaviour. It assumes that behaviour derives of three components: motivation, ability, and triggers, as well as their subcomponents. The model supports that in order to convince a person do a certain thing (goal behaviour): They must fulfil three distinct prerequisites: They have to be motivated, must be able to manifest the behaviour, and receive stimulus in order to manifest the behaviour. These components should happen at the same time, or else the goal behaviour will not manifest (Fogg, 2009a). The tool used to outline a behaviour, based on Fogg's model, is called behaviour change grid.

Behaviour change grid

The Fogg Behaviour Grid outlines 15 different ways users' behaviours change. The grid assist in thinking more clearly about behavioural changes. Every behaviour type in the grid uses diverse psychology strategies and persuasive techniques (Fogg, 2009b).

<u>Customer Journey Canvas</u>

Service Design Thinking a recent, popular notion which describes methods and techniques of brainstorming and designing services. The Customer Journey Canvas is a tool used to facilitate service design (Blomkvist at al., 2010).

<u>Player Journey</u>

The Player Journey is a 3-step model (onboarding, habit-building and mastery) by Kim (2010) used for designing engaging experiences.

<u>Gamification model Canvas</u>

Gamification Model Canvas is a flexible and effective tool introduced by Jiménez (Mora et al., 2015), which can assist in evaluating solutions. It is based on game design principles and aims to help develop certain behaviours in gamified environments.

<u>Lean Startup</u>

The Lean Startup is an approach originally developed by Ries (2011), based on continuous innovation and primarily addressed to start-ups.

The Lean Startup methodology is, fundamentally, an experiment aiming to answer one question; that is if the product or service in focus should be built, as well as to define whether a viable business model can be constructed. The first rounds of experimentations include answering these questions and eventually end up in the production of the first “minimum viable product”. Testing it will determine if it is wise to proceed with full-front development and promotion of the product or service or not. Further cycles include iterations and further experimentations; finally the product/service can be released. The heart of the approach is that, by the time the product is ready to be released, there will already be a pool of loyal customers to support it. The Lean Startup methodology bases its success on the notion of “validated learning”, by receiving frequent and fast customer feedback.

3.2 Customer Journey Mapping

3.2.1 Why businesses map journeys

Business are bound to have competitive advantage, if they want to survive. Clarifying the objectives of the CJM is of paramount importance; **if you get things wrong from the beginning, you are guaranteed to fail**. Literature concurs that there are multi-layered advantages when investing in mapping the customer journey; having a deep understanding of the needs, actions, dreams and perspectives of customers, business become more customer-centric and can eventually dissipate silos, achieve seamless value offerings across different Units, as well as, offer personalized, customized products or services that can meet all of their customers' needs.

In addition to the above, building a comprehensive CJM in the early stages of the company's program offering, can assist in internal business goal alignment and help build a common understanding. Thorough interaction touchpoints is also a way of providing visibility.

Business objectives that should be supported by the CJM, could include increasing customer loyalty, lifetime value, risk mitigation, gaining more market share, acquiring a better understanding of customer segmentations and so on; the list can be vast, depending on what the company is planning to achieve. A common denominator though, is ensuring that all touchpoints during the Journey are built to help meet these goals, give a competitive advantage and help companies capitalize on them. The Journey must provide a return on investment (Clarabridge, n.d.).

3.2.2 Customer Journey mapping and Touchpoints

We will begin our own Journey by introducing the notion of touchpoints. Touchpoints can be defined as specific events or milestones when customers interact with a product or a service offering of an organisation, usually during a Sales process. Business environments have been utilizing and paid special attention to touchpoints; however, focusing mostly on achieving maximum levels of satisfaction is not optimal, as this approach might suggest that the company's customers are satisfied with the company, while they are actually not. It also shifts the focus away from the big picture: the customer's end-to-end journey (Rawson et al., 2013, Richardson, 2010).

Mapping a customer's journey is a simple, yet effective idea. The map itself is usually nothing more than a diagram which depicts the steps a user must follow when coming in contact with a company or organization. The journey should illustrate the company's offering, whether it is a product, a service, an experience, or any of the above. The more touchpoints the journey has, the more complex the mapping usually is. Bottom-line though, such complexity is often necessary, in order to increase user engagement.

The aim of the mapping is to capture the customers' needs, processes and perceptions for every touchpoint. Visualizing the journey helps identifying pitfalls, opportunities and promotes optimization of user experience.

Richardson (2010a) states that, generally, a journey timeline should follow certain steps to improve customer experience. His proposal looks like this:

Figure 1: Customer Journey Timeline (Richardson, 2010b)

Richardson adopts a method comprising of certain questions that need to be answered for each touchpoint:

1. **Actions**: *What* does the user do, *how* does he/she moves to the next step of the journey?
2. **Motivations**: *Why* is the user at this particular step? *What* are the criteria for him/her to move further into the journey map?
3. **Questions**: What might be the *challenges* the user could face that could impose an uncertainty?
4. **Barriers**: What *variables* (like costs, technology implications, or other obstacles) would prevent the customer from stepping further into the process?

The mapping of the touchpoints is typically done through customer research techniques. Extensive surveys and methods, such as focus groups accumulate too complex levels of details and usually fail to really outline the experience. The best way to succeed is to approach selected, loyal customers and request them to map their individual journeys, on-site.

CJMs are frequently non-linear. There are numerous ways to describe how a journey will begin, progress and end. Some may lead the customer from awareness straight to the preferred goal (e.g. purchasing of a product), especially if the customer is not willing to spend too much time browsing around. Other journeys may manifest the opposite, i.e. encourage the customer to spend time doing extensive research before the purchase.

Authors concur that it is essential to first thoroughly plan all possible journey branches in order to foresee all processes that might occur for every touchpoint. This method is very important as it guarantees a risk-minimal CJM and optimal UX (Bahil & Temkin, 2014).

A CJM comprises a visualization of a customer's UX with an organization. It is one of the best ways to outline what the customer experiences are, what actions the customer would have to follow, and should be undertaken under the end-user's perspective. A CJM could be produced by taking two different points of view: either by drawing the end-to-end experience, or by describing a single process.

Isaacson (2012) argues, that, although CJM aims to optimize the experience, not all transactions need to be exhaustively planned, neither all customers need to be satisfied for every step. When paying a bill for example, end users usually require a simple interface, a more simple interaction and prefer a functionality that works, taking all safety measures into account. The customer does not seek for an emotional or memorable experience, rather than simplicity, effectiveness and efficiency (Isaacson, 2012).

Identifying the key touchpoints are vital in a CJM. These milestones are crucial for customer retention. The higher the satisfaction and renewal is, the more likely the company is to attract more customers and retain the current ones. Looking into the CJM from this perspective, it can provide an organization with a great resource allocation guide.

A Customer Journey is user-centred, namely it is built to support the customers' needs, actions, end-goals and tries to solve problems, questions, barriers. Organizing the journey touchpoints properly plays a crucial role in getting the things right from the beginning.

Richardson (2010a) claims that creativity, when orchestrating the touchpoints along the journey, can harvest unexpected benefits. Original, resourceful and customer-specific (personalized) touchpoints makes the end user feel special, taken care of and increases the chances that the customer identifies with the company brand.

The different ways touchpoints can manifest can be found below (Richardson, 2010a):

- **Products**: The term product may include a physical product, a website or a service.

- **Interactions**: Interactions are two-way and can be face-to-face or virtual (phone calls, social media, blog comments, contact forms and so on). Including an interaction touchpoints very much depends on the company's business model. Some companies might prefer to keep face to face interactions to the minimum, for cost reasons, as well as to allow customers independently "travel" through the journey; other companies root for the direct two-way interaction, and use it as a loyalty-build for their brand. The latter support the opinion that going for the informal, personal connection help form long-term relationships with the customers.

- **Messages**: Unlike interactions, messages constitute one-way communications vehicles and can involve means such as manuals, collaterals, advertisements, packaging and so on. They typically include brand related materials and their focus is twofold: they try to solidify the brand and make a first-time user comprehend the nature and use of a complex service or product.

- **Settings**: A setting is defined as the environment where a product or a service is used or seen. A setting can be quite challenging to manage, especially in situations where the journey takes place in a physical environment, rather than in a website for example.

By orchestrating the touchpoints, a company is actually building upon their product's or service's UX. In order to optimize this UX, Richardson (2010a) suggests that the key ingredient is to build the touchpoints in such way, so that they "*seamlessly meld together*". This seamless experience should occur both throughout the customer journey, as well as by making each touchpoint support the other in each step of the journey.

The following section describes the most common CJM models and frameworks for creating Customer Journey maps. The objective of this section is to present the most commonly tested and used CJM models, analyse them, compare them and utilize their elements to produce a hybrid model, aimed to be used for the construction of the Launchpad USA CJM.

3.2.3 Five-step process model

We begin our analysis by introducing the **five-step process model** by Isaacson (2012). Isaacson's model is a meta-model and constitutes a generic framework for any type of Journey. The five steps, described in *Figure 2*, involve selecting the journey, building an array of touchpoints, defining each touchpoint, outlining and describing key metrics, and producing user manuals to help with the execution.

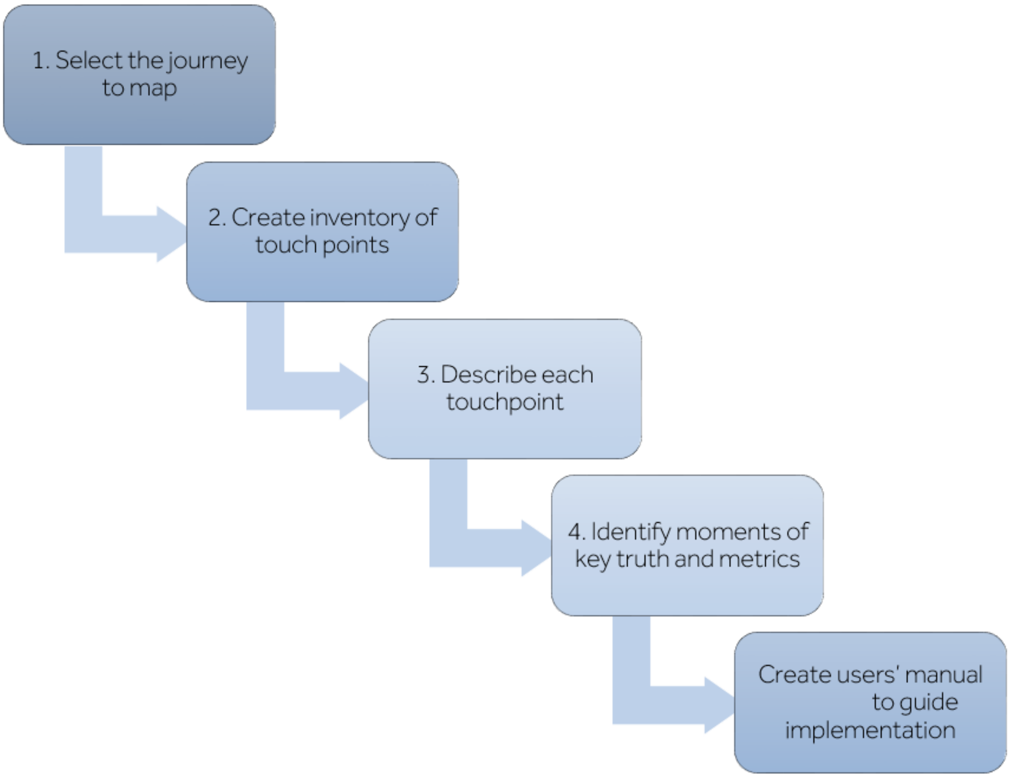

Figure 2: The Five-Step process model (Isaacson, 2012)

The five steps are supported by five design principles. All principles should be utilized for each step:

1. **Customer perspective should always be taken into account**: the end-user's point of view must be underlying basis for the CJM. The UX can be achieved by using user-friendly terms. Complex terms, buzzwords, jargon should be excluded.

2. **Connect with the customer's emotions**: Isaacson (2012) argues that there are three elements to be taken into account here: the emotional, experiential, and functional aspects of the customers' experience. The emotional aspect describes how a customer is feeling, the experiential outlines what a customer experiences, and the functional deals with the logistics of how the process takes place.

3. **Make sure the CJM is universal**: It is important to ensure that the mapping will be able to apply to all customer segments. Further breaking down the CJM can happen for specific customer segments and customized for different channels.

4. **Simplicity is crucial**: The last thing customers want, is a complicated, non-user-friendly plan. The CJM must be easily followed, address all levels and functions, in

order to retain the customer’s satisfaction and increase engagement.

5. **Build the CJM in such way, so that it can gather inputs**: It is the best way to map out all customers interactions with the company’s product or service. Acquiring the input can happen by using typical techniques and methods, such as interviews, brainstorming sessions and workshops.

3.2.4 The purchase funnel

A notion, tied to the structures of modern marketing, the purchase funnel, is a model that outlines the customer journey from the moment of first contact with a company’s brand to end of the journey (the ultimate goal of a purchase of the company’s service or product). The purchase funnel, or purchasing funnel, is a consumer focused marketing model which illustrates the theoretical customer journey towards the purchase of a product or service.

The model first appeared in 1898, with E. St. Elmo Lewis (Wikipedia Contributors, 2016) developing a framework aimed at mapping a customer journey from the moment the product/service in focus came in first contact with a customer to the moment of the desired action, which is the purchase of the product/service (Strong, 1925). Initially, the purchase funnel took the name of “AIDA-model”, which stands for the pillars of the model: Awareness, Interest, Desire, and Action. The AIDA-model can be seen below:

- **Awareness**: the customer becomes aware of the product/service;
- **Interest**: the customer expresses interest in the product/service and therefore the brand;
- **Desire**: the customer wishes to acquire the product/service
- **Action**: the decision on purchasing the product/service is made

Often in literature, the purchase funnel is referred to as the customer funnel, marketing funnel, sales funnel or conversion funnel. Townsend (1924) was the first person to associate the Funnel with the AIDA model.

The purchase funnel concept is used in marketing to guide promotional campaigns targeting different stages of the customer journey, and also as a basis for customer relationship management (CRM) programmes and lead management campaigns.

Gibson (2015) pinpoints that the funnel is important when marketing a business, since it can be used as a means for comprehending and monitoring a typical customer behaviour throughout the sales process. This can be proven to be valuable when:

- Businesses plan their marketing campaigns;
- Identifying areas of improvements by means of conversion rates (making the prospects into customers);
- Developing further the sales process;
- Adopting a CRM system.

There is not really a standard method of portraying the funnel. Stages, duration and type of steps can vary depending on the nature of the product/service offering, as well as on the customer, amongst others; however, the basic stages are the same. The shape of a funnel has been adopted, in order to depict the potential loss of customers at each stage. This is a very important aspect of the model, as a company's prospects might be aware of the company's brand presence; nevertheless that does not guarantee that they will buy the product or service (Gibson, 2015).

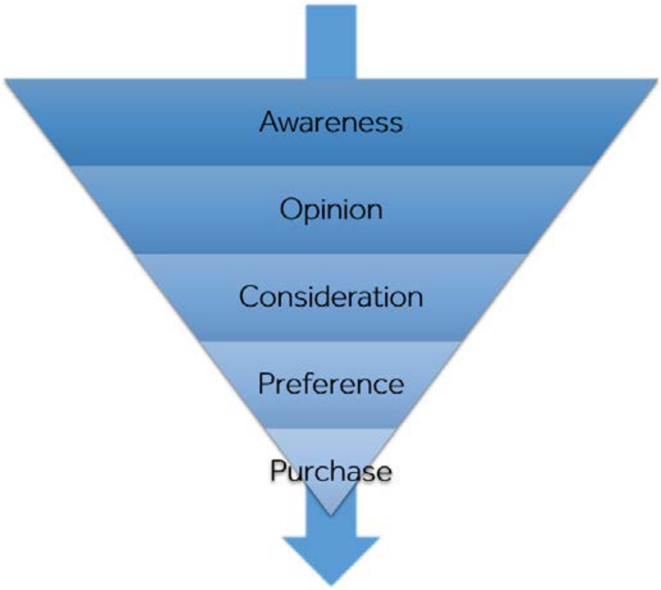

Figure 3: The purchase funnel (Wikipedia contributors, 2016)

There are quite a few purchase funnel models alternatives, based on the main one. Below, we will examine some of them.

3.2.5 Forrester model

The Forrester model is built upon the Purchase Funnel, by taking into account two important points (Haven et al., 2007):

1. The level of complexity in today's business contexts is much higher than the standard funnel tries to tackle;

2. The traditional funnel is not taking into account modern aspects of marketing (i.e. utilization of social networks).

Forrester's report argues that the traditional model is too simplistic and linear, whilst complex environmental factors (social media) that might affect the customer decisions are nowhere to be found. In this case, the typical five-stage process (Awareness, Consideration, Preference, Action and Loyalty) is not enough (Haven et al., 2007). Instead, Forrester introduces a multifaceted and more complex figure, where customer decisions are affected by factors like friend recommendations, peer pressure, alternatives and user-generated content.

Forrester labels the customers who managed to achieve the end goal as "contributors". The report assumes that the level of satisfaction for them is high, thus they can be considered as brand ambassadors for the company. The contributors informally are tasked to further promote the brand by using social media. *Figure 4* displays Forrester's four-step depiction of brand advocacy, namely how active contributors are.

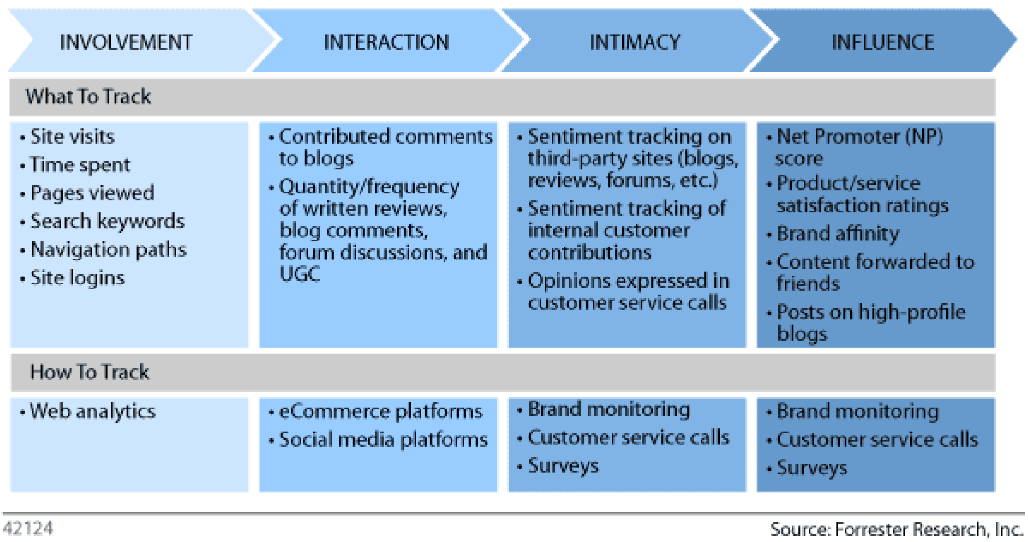

Figure 4: Brand Advocacy (Haven et al.,2007)

3.2.6 Court et al., model

Court et al., (2009) suggests a tweak to the traditional funnel, with a slightly different five step process (*Figure 5*), as depicted below.

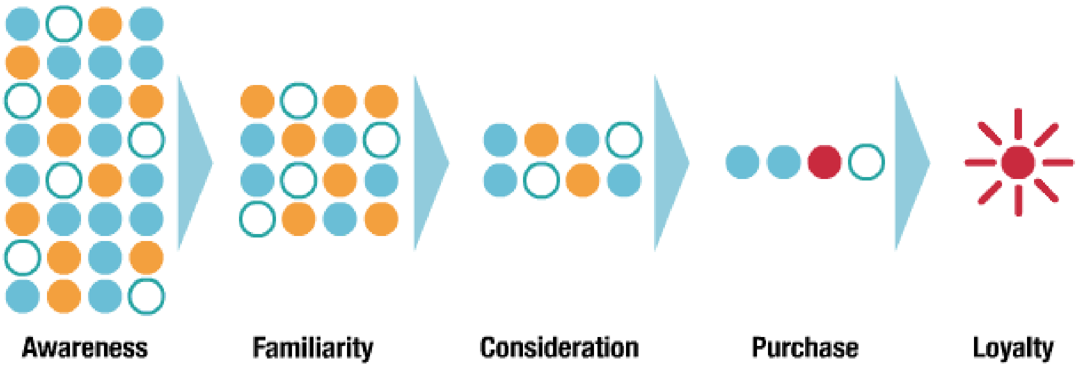

Figure 5: Court et al., model (2009)

This model builds on Forrester's proposal, by putting the focus on the trigger of the sales process. The authors eventually propose the adoption of a loop-like framework with the decision journey concentrating on 3 points:

1. Comprehending the trigger of the sales process is one of the most vital elements when building the journey;
2. A company's brand is not the most interesting element from the customer's perspective; the customer selects the brand at the moment of purchase (the very final achievement moment);
3. Analyse and build upon all touchpoints.

Figure 6 describes in more detail their take on the mapping of a Journey:

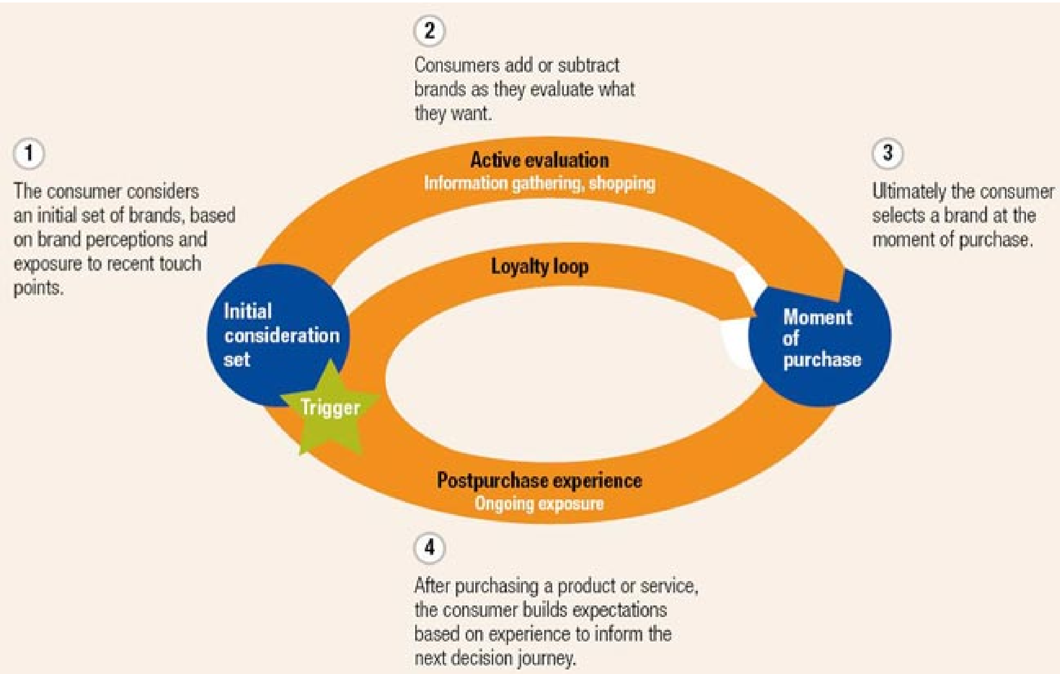

Figure 6: Customer Journey Mapping Diagram (Court et al., 2009)

3.2.7 Armano's community approach

The list of models that have been proposed for a CJM is impressively great. Another framework worth mentioning is the "Purchase Spiral" by Armano (2007). Armano's proposal (*Figure 6*) considers a community centred methodology, where the focal factor affecting a customer's decision is not marketing-based, rather than conversation-based. This is a more traditional approach, unlike Forrester's model which emphasizes internet based communications (social media).

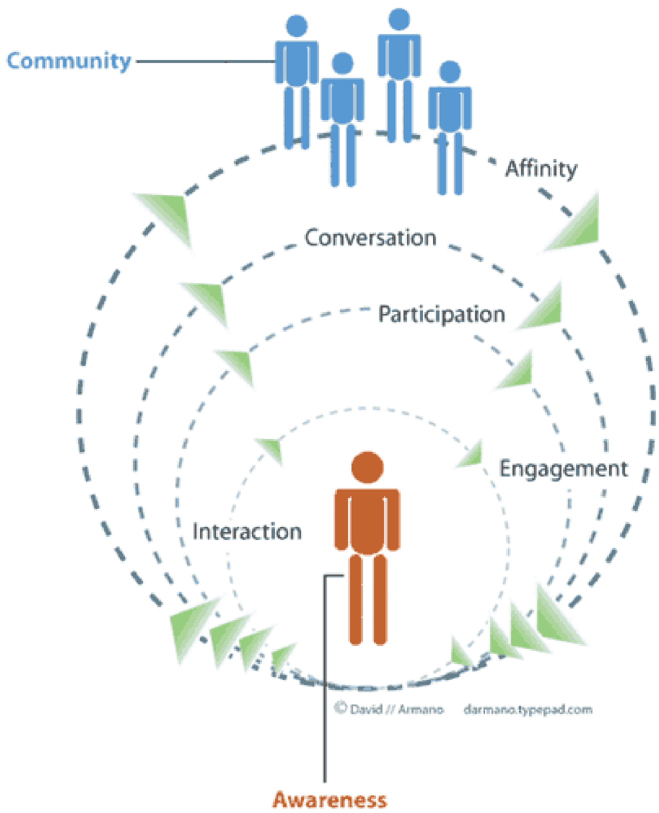

Figure 7: The purchase Spiral (Armano, 2007)

3.2.8 Monomyth (A Hero's Journey)

A vital element in any journey is the element of storytelling. Storytelling is the one thing, apart from exciting touchpoints that can either keep the user engaged or dispassionate.

Storytelling is a relatively recently adopted approach. Many businesses have already taken a step further by investing in their own brand storytellers; however, while all this sounds great in theory, in practice, many companies find it challenging to determine how these stories can be told.

Storytelling rules are not written in stone; there are really no frameworks or models for modern storytelling; nevertheless, literature often suggests that adopting classic storytelling methodologies is the first step. An example commonly used is the classic "Hero's Journey" from Campbell's (1949), *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.* Campbell describes the *Monomyth*, a "hero journey/adventure" story design that is very frequently met in many narratives (Rose, 2013).

Campbell's model of the Monomyth is very extensive. The steps he proposes are 17. It is not compulsory to include every step in the story.

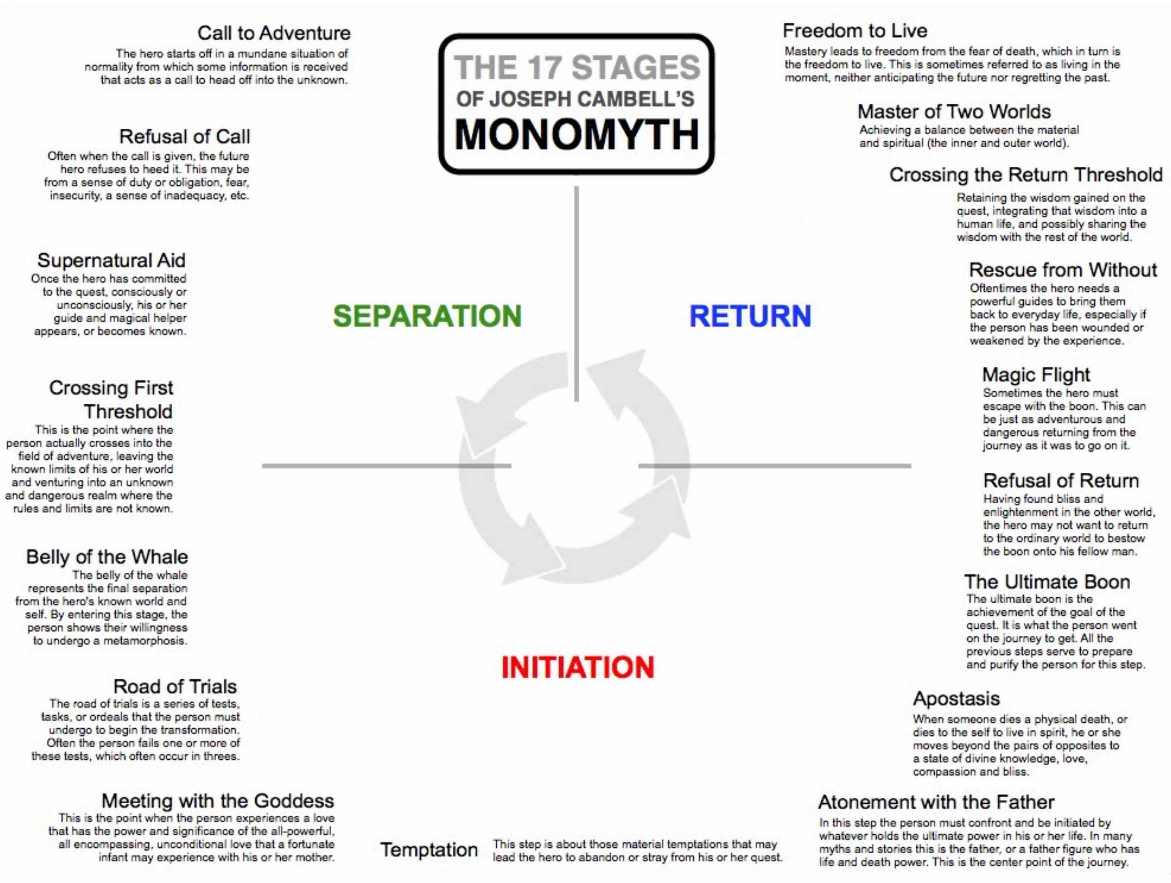

Figure 8: The Monomyth (Hero's Journey), (Cezar, 2014)

Here are briefly, the steps of the Monomyth:

1. **The Call to Adventure**

   The hero begins the journey starting in an ordinary, normal situation. He receives certain information which acts as an incentive for him to start the adventure.

2. **Refusal of the Call**

   It is quite common that when the hero receives the call, he does not wish to embark on the adventure. That might happen because of the hero's internal sense of fear, possible insecurity, obligation, strong feelings of inadequacy etc.

3. **Supernatural Aid**
   In case the hero accepts the call and commits to it, it is time for the magical guide/helper to appear.

4. **Crossing First Threshold**
   This is the starting point of the journey. The hero leaves the ordinary realm of his world and starts the adventure. The world he about to enter is usually dangerous, and the rules or limits are unknown.

5. **Belly of the Whale**
   The belly of the whale is the ultimate threshold between the hero’s own world and the realm of the unknown. If the hero chooses to continue he/crosses this threshold and manifests his will to proceed and undergo a transformation, later in the story.

6. **The Road of Trials**
   This is the point, where the initial array of challenges and tests begin. The hero is now out of his comfort zone. The challenges can be physical or mental. The aim for the hero is to successfully overcome all the trials and proceed towards the end-goal.

   In this step, the Hero must decide who to trust or not. This is the stage where he can make allies or enemies. The reason of the trials is that they are going to help him/her prepare for even greater challenges, by assisting him/her hone his skills and learn new ones. During this stage, we, the readers/users understand more about the character of the hero. This is also the point where we identify with him/her.

7. **The Meeting with the Goddess**
   This is the point where the hero falls in love. He finds a person that he loves, unconditionally, powerfully and, as Campbell indicates, this love might resemble the unbreakable bond a mother shares with her infant baby.

8. **Temptation**
   This stage represents the temptation the hero comes up against. It may have a physical or mental form, a distraction that could eventually push him/her stray from

the quest.

9. **Atonement with the Father**
   The Father – someone or something holding great power – is the most focal point of the quest. This step is triggered by whatever holds the ultimate power in his or her life and the all the steps are leading the hero to this: the hero must confront him before he moves on.

10. **Apostasis**
    Apostasis is a metaphor in the monomyth, where the hero passes away and either lives in spirit, or dies a mental death, only to move on to the other side, in a realm of compassion, peace and love. This is the step, where the hero experiences a period of rest before he decides to go home.

11. **The Ultimate Boon**
    This is the point where the hero finally achieves the ultimate goal. The hero is now purified and ready to return. The boon is typically represented in narratives as something ethereal; a magic potion, the elixir of life, a symbol of great power and holiness, etc.

12. **Refusal of the Return**
    It is however possible that after the hero has experienced the realm of happiness and bliss, he might not choose to return to his ordinary world with the ultimate trophy.

13. **The Magic Flight**
    The acquisition of the boom, might not happen easily. Often, the hero must escape from a magical creature that is guarding it. The return home can be as difficult and challenging as the beginning of the journey.

14. **The Rescue from Without**
    The rescue from without symbolizes the guides and rescuers that assist the hero throughout the quest.

15. **The Crossing of the Return Threshold**
    The hero reaches a point, where he crosses the threshold of the return to his mundane world and he now must take the wisdom he has gained from the journey,

integrate it into his daily life and bestow it to the rest of the world.

16. **Master of Two Worlds**
    Having returned home and being wiser, the hero has now managed to achieve balance between his world and the other realm; the mystical and the earthly. The hero has achieved mastery; he now can command and move easily in both worlds.

17. **The Freedom to Live**
    Mastery of all worlds releases the hero from the fear of death. The hero becomes a being of the ethereal, he lives in the moment, not being afraid of material things, having gained wisdom from the past and not worrying about the future. This stage marks the end of the Journey as a whole.

3.2.9 Three Steps to User Loyalty

Inspired by the Monomyth, Fuhriman (2014), proposes three ways the companies can use the hero's elements, in order to retain customers, increase engagement and gain continuous loyalty:

1. **Offer powerful guidance**
   The Rescue from Without: Like the hero is assisted by guides, or rescued by helpers towards the goal of his Journey or during the return home, similarly, customers will most likely need a certain level of assistance as well. Assuming the Quest is in fact the Customer Journey, companies must act as rescuers and help the customers move around; either by providing clear steps, online help, follow-up emails, loyalty programs, and other types of incentives so that the customers are satisfied and engaged. It is important to ensure that the provided content is clear, consistent and relevant, tightly connected to the customers' profiles, work and interests.

2. **Deliver real-world integrations**
   The crossing of the Return Threshold: As described above, after the hero returns to his ordinary world, he then must integrate and bestow his gained wisdom. The main challenge in this step is that, after the adventure, it is possible that the hero might find it challenging to remain passionate in his day-to-day life; it is also likely that he may not identify with other people anymore. In such a case, the hero must figure out a solution on his own and accept the situation, although he came back changed.

Similarly, in a Customer Journey, companies must continue supporting their brand in order to retain users and keep them interested. Ways to achieve this, is making sure users are interconnected, through social apps, or other online means and through face-to-face interactions. Businesses must be creative and find ways to continuously engage users with exciting and user-friendly mediums, such as tools, relative content, smart, adaptive offers and services, personalizing them to each user's needs and behaviours.

3. **Give the gift of freedom**
   The Freedom to Live: In the Monomyth, the hero achieves mastery, by moving freely and comfortably between two worlds. In the Customer Journey, this freedom can be achieved, by a lean, seamless UX, intuitive tools and guides and personalized content. This way, companies can enhance their brand and customers feel free to choose different Journey paths.

3.3 Gamifying the customer journey

Gamification applies game methods and processes to usually non-game tasks in order to ignite specific behavioural patterns to the customers. When referring to business environments, gamification integrates game mechanics into an online medium – usually a website – or service, community, process or practically anything applicable, aiming to increase engagement and improve user experience with the target audiences (which might differ, depending on the gamified product or service) (Bunchball whitepaper, 2012). An attractive, interactive and dynamic gamification experience can support the overall strategy of an organisation and serve a variety of business goals.

Let's look at the gamification perspective through the prism of CJM. Historically CJM has always been important for a good loyalty-marketing strategy (Cognizant whitepaper, 2013); however, traditionally, organisations only take into account their customers' progress from the perspective of the products, programs or service offerings. The aim though is to see things through the customers' eyes and analyse the way the service offerings could be adjusted to the customers' personal journeys. Once the organisations change their perspective, it becomes easier for them to understand the challenges and pitfalls. A strong loyalty deeply interrelates with the customers' journey. We need to think about producing a plan on a long term perspective, namely on the future benefits the customers will harvest. A successful loyalty in its core, means that the customer is willing to make a potentially short-term sacrifice (resource-wise) for a long-term gain.

CJM should be materialized by illustrating a progress state within a system or program. Customers usually enjoy self-discovery, love accomplishing something and being rewarded for it. Tools like progress tracking can achieve this goal. Many customers might be satisfied enough to invest in “simplified” systems like these. Others might prefer to be intellectually challenged, and might require a higher level of customization, demanding that the system will be tailored to their specific needs.

Zicherman (2014) points out that every customer is unique and not everybody is motivated by achievement. CJMs must be adaptive and should contain more refined and attentive challenges that enable people to “beat the system” and prove their genius over different aspects of the system.

3.3.1 GameFlow

The GameFlow model is proposed by Sweetser & Wyeth (2005). The model is a product of criticism on the typical points in game literature. The authors’ main concern is that research focuses mainly on three elements of UX in games; the user interface (display, controls), how the game interacts with the world (mechanics) and the challenges in gameplay. However, the most crucial factor in a game is very sparsely tackled. This factor is player enjoyment, the ultimate way to keep a gamer interested and engaged. Sweetser & Wyeth utilize heuristics for enjoyable gaming, analysing an array of notions, from game design mechanics, evaluation of games and the psychological notion of Flow, in order to tackle the player enjoyment from their perspective (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The end result is the GameFlow, a model on player enjoyment. GameFlow nicely ties the theories of enjoyment and fun (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) with research on meaningful game design (Jegers, 2009).

Table 1: Emotional Experiences in Game/Narrative

<table>
<tr><th>GameFlow</th><th>Four Keys to Fun</th><th>Narrative Emotions</th></tr>
<tr><td>Concentration</td><td rowspan="2">Hard fun (challenge)</td><td rowspan="4">External (structure-related): Curiosity, Suspense, Surprise</td></tr>
<tr><td>Challenge</td></tr>
<tr><td>Skills</td><td rowspan="2">Easy Fun (novelty)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Control</td></tr>
<tr><td>Clear Goals</td><td rowspan="2">Serious Fun (altered states)</td><td rowspan="4">Internal (content-related): Identification, Emotional Memory, Empath</td></tr>
<tr><td>Feedback</td></tr>
<tr><td>Immersion</td><td rowspan="2">People Fun (interaction)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Social Interaction</td></tr>
</table>

3.3.2 Lightweight Gamification Model

The Lightweight gamification model is introduced by Beresford (2014), specifically addressed to companies that plan to deploy gamified products or services, but lack the resources to do so with an exhaustive gamification framework. The model draws attention on 4 rules:

1. Design for feedback and not for reward only;
2. Focus on the player's journey;
3. Monitor and deploy tracked metrics;
4. Regulate and use feedback to maintain engagement.

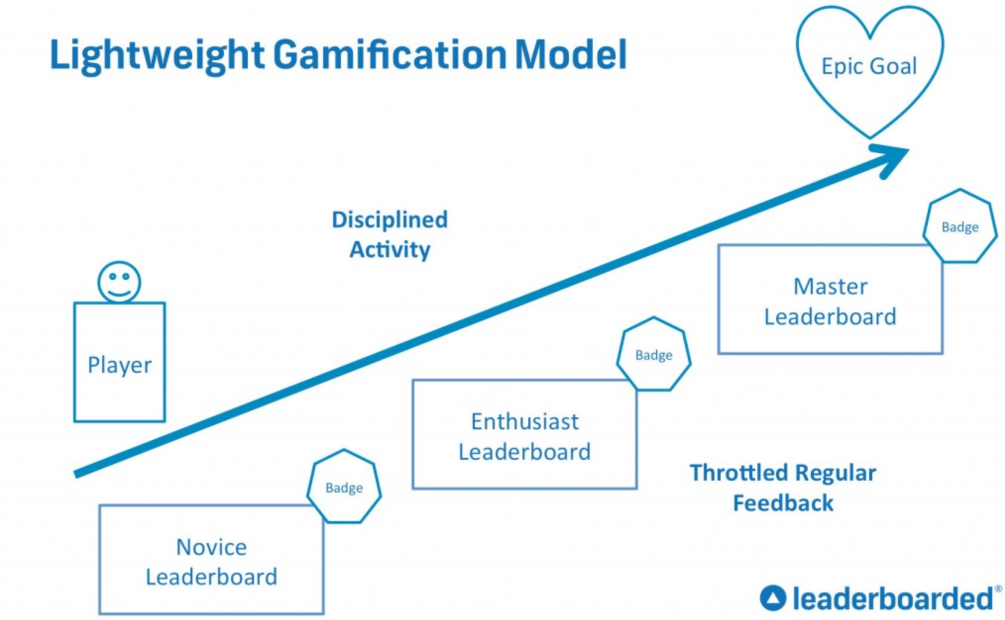

Figure 9: Leightweight Gamification Model (Beresford, 2014)

Beresford supports that the model focuses mostly on customer retention, and not necessarily massive acquisition. The preferred objectives comprise, a customer regularly returning to the gamified product or service and strive to do even better – namely optimise his performance. The model puts focus on already existing customer behaviours and inherent reward, with the help of valuable, relevant feedback.

Figure 10: The 4 rules of the Lightweight Gamification model (Beresford, 2014)

3.3.3 Player Journey

The Player Journey draws elements from the Monomyth and essentially focuses on character metamorphosis. Introduced by Kim (2010), the Player Journey model outlines a "learn – practice – mastery" arc scheme. Kim argues that this is the backbone of every successful game. The idea is that in a game, the hero is played by the user, therefore the user must identify deeply with the character, in order for the journey to be meaningful and engaging.

Kim supports that a game should first and foremost manifest as a learning experience for the user. It is a means of honing skills, gaining experiences and successfully overcoming challenges. The player, as a hero, plays the game and at the end, he comes back to reality, transformed.

Driven from the above, Kim believes that a company can utilize the elements that make a game compelling, in order to transform their services or products to unforgettable experiences. She, thus, proposes a three-stage framework for transformative Player Journeys: **onboarding**, **habit-building** and **mastery** (*Figure 11*).

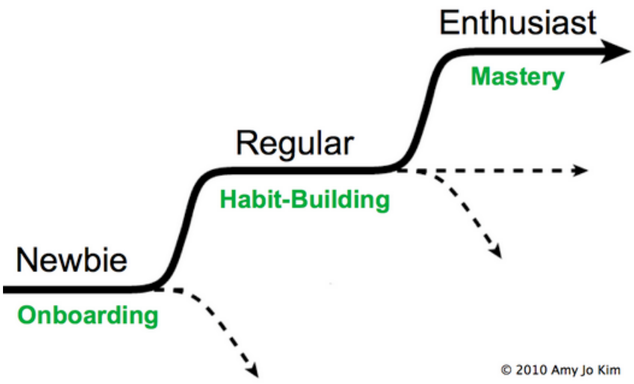

Figure 11: Player Journey (Kim, 2010)

- **Onboarding**: Inspired by the Monomyth paradigm, the Onboarding is what the player experiences before he begins the Journey. It is the stage of practice that helps the player (Newbie) understand what the quest is all about and teaches him/her how the ropes work.
- **Habit-building:** After some level of practice, the player starts to understand the mechanics and purpose of the Journey. Means like activity loops and feedback systems help him/her turn from a Newbie to a Regular.
- **Mastery:** Towards the end of the Journey, they player is enlightened. He holds the wisdom of things and he can move comfortably between worlds. The player turns from a Newbie to an Enthusiast. He has mastered the game.

Storyline in a gamified product or service is substantial; however other kinds of tools, such as progress bars, levelling up and rewarding mechanisms make the learning experience even more fun. They serve as buoy for the player; they indicate how far he has come; however they should not be displayed separately from the Journey. Instead they should come as a package, in order to enhance the learning experience. This element is focal to the Player Journey.

The model takes into account principles of seamless UX as well. Kim considers that in a successful game all stages are interconnected. Game elements merge together and result into the “learn - practice - master” arc. At the same time, the gamified experience should trigger strong emotions and create a powerful sense of place to the user. Traversing from the state of Newbie to the state of Master must be supported by compelling storyline, giving the user the freedom of living – chances of being creative and make meaningful choices.

3.4 Gamification towards optimization of customer experience

3.4.1 Customer Experience

Gamification motivates people to do extraordinary things (Burke, 2014). User Experience (UX) design on the other hand, outlines the effectiveness, efficiency and pleasure an organization’s customers accrue by using the product or service the organization provides. It is one of the most critical – and often one of the most underrated – aspects of a company’s investment. It can have a big impact on the company’s external Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and should be part of the company’s strategic decision processes (Codium whitepaper, 2015).

Schaffer (2013) supports that “*finding meaningful challenges and getting clear feedback about progress on challenges is the best way to make even boring or repetitive work more like an enjoyable game.*”

UX design supported by gamification mechanisms should be incorporated into customer mapping. A usable CJM is one thing; being persuasive and addictive – like a game – is another. Customers should acquire satisfaction from performing each activity the CJM offers.

In order to combine UX and gamification techniques, first it is necessary to map out the target audiences. Following this, the objectives of the organization must be laid out and comprehended. Customers’ needs should then be identified and understood. UX design and gamification features must repeatedly be tailored and iterated to meet these goals and needs. Once the UX and gamification techniques are in place, metrics should be set, measuring effectiveness efficiency and continuous improvement.

UX is such a powerful determinant of success or failure. A compelling, gamified and attractive CJM can be an indicator of success and help increase return of investment especially if substantial investments in time and money have been made.

3.4.2 Hassenzahl’s Model for UX

Hassenzahl’s model (2007) supports that each user interacting with a product or service, automatically and intrinsically assigns certain unique attributes to it. This is an individual act; these attributes not the same for every user. UX comprises the results of these interactions (Fredheim, 2011).

The attributes are organized into four categories: *manipulation*, *identification*, *stimulation* and *evocation*. The attributes are grouped, depending on their nature, into pragmatic and hedonic. Pragmatic attributes describe the functions and practical usage of the service or product, whereas hedonic attributes describe the effect on the user's psychology. Separating the attributes is essential in order to comprehend how to design UX optimized products and services, as well as, why UX itself cannot be traditionally designed.

1. **Manipulation**
   Hassenzahl (2007) uses a hammer metaphor to divide the hedonic from the pragmatic attributes. A hammer has certain pragmatic attributes: the user knows how it functions and how to use it. A hammer though can also represent values, such as justice, stability and power.

   In the UX realm, the pragmatic quality of manipulation relates to the functionalities the product or service. Typically, these qualities are linked to usability and consequently, customer satisfaction.

2. **Identification**
   Identification is an implicit function that describes the ability of a product or service to convey a message; namely communicate its identity. The underlying principle is that a product or service fulfils its function, if it allows the user to express himself.

   The ability of self-expression through a product/service can be understood by bringing social media as an example. Conveying a message has been easier than before and the word can spread exponentially. Companies communicate their brand message, explain to the user who they are, what they do, what their products and services are and how they can assist the user. Typically, identification is achieved by providing a high level of freedom to the user, by helping him personalize his online presence and provide relevant content.

3. **Stimulation**
   Hassenzahl (2007) supports that, in traditional usability principles, the vast majority of features in a product or a service is deprecated, as most of them are rarely used. On the contrary though, in UX, these features must be included as they typically serve a hedonic function called stimulation. Features used infrequently, can be utilized as triggers and help the user by providing meaningful feedback. One way to do so is to leave the feature to be discovered by the user and thus, providing the element of surprise.

The finest stimulating functions are considered those that are, on the one hand, unexpected but on the other hand, still well-accepted.

4. **Evocation**

Hassenzahl (2007) adopts the metaphor of souvenirs to describe evocation. He describes a souvenir as a notion of weak manipulation, but an excellent trigger for recalling the past through memories. Evocation speaks strongly to the psychological well-being of the user; as a result, a product or service should serve the purpose of elicit memories.

Evocation covers the emotional aspect of UX. An interface, the experience of a service or the physical manifestation of a product must provoke evocative feelings to a user. Take Facebook for example; it provides users with functionalities like *"See your memories"*, which are considered to be extremely evocative.

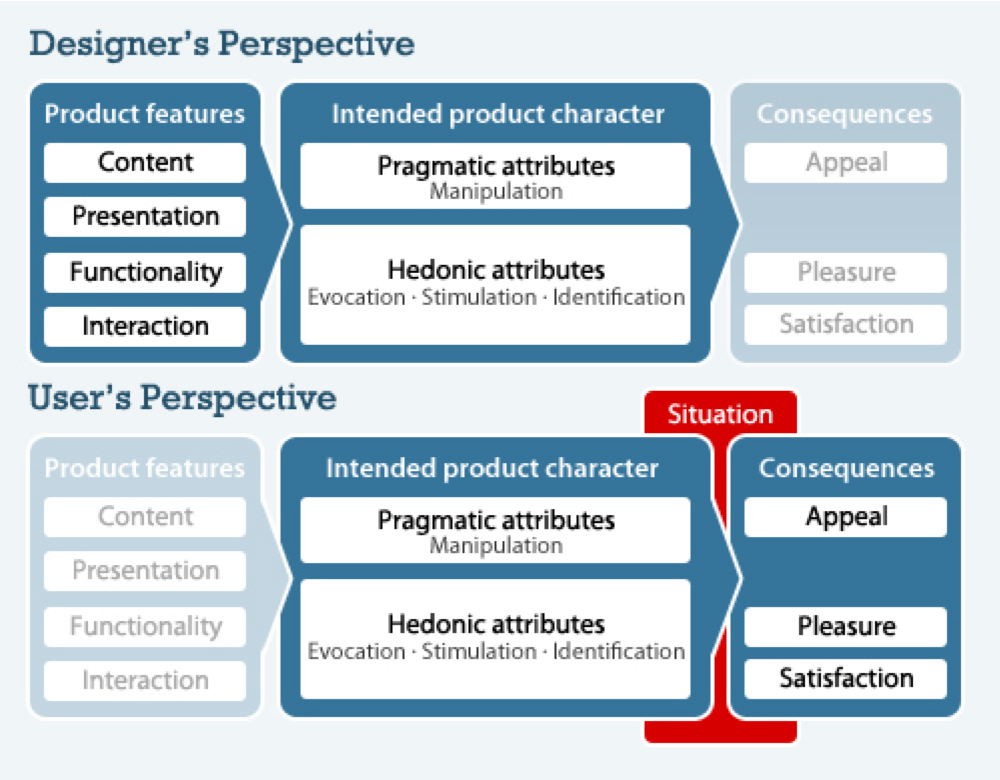

Figure 12: Hassenzahl's model for User Experience (Blythe et al., 2004)

3.4.3 The Fogg Behaviour model

Fogg's model (2009a) bases its foundation on credibility and behavioural design and draws its principles from the fact that design impacts behaviour. Knowing how to impact behaviour, one could design for behaviour (Laja, 2012). One can say that behavioural design is the pinnacle of both psychology and technology and comprises an organized and thorough way to impact a specific type of behaviour.

The Fogg Behaviour Model is a framework for influencing behaviour and drive behavioural changes. It describes that three aspects must happen at the same time for a behaviour to be triggered. These elements are motivation, ability and trigger. When the desired behaviour does not manifest, this means that one or more of these elements is absent. Fogg proposes a behavioural formula to describe the interactions between these three elements which is the following:

Behaviour = motivation x ability x trigger. (B=m*a*t) (Fogg, 2009a)

Let's analyse Fogg's model:

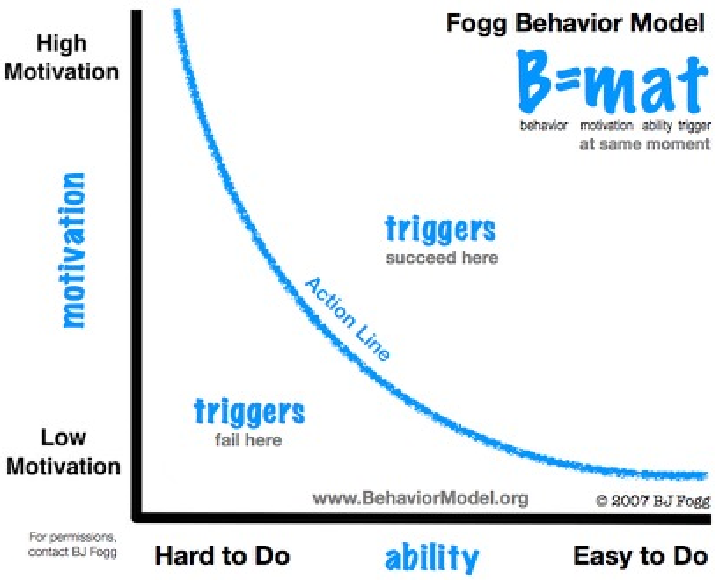

Figure 13: The Fogg behaviour model (2009a)

According to *Figure 13*, the ideal is to be placed at the top right (high motivation, easy to do and an appropriate trigger). A "high motivation/difficult to do" combo results in frustration, whereas a "low motivation/easy to do" combo results in annoyance.

The desired behaviour in our case is twofold: retention of existing customers and high rate of conversion. This can occur, in the case of CJM, by convincing customers to purchase the product or service, use a software and so on. I mentioned before, that it is crucial to define the behavioural goal in advance. The Fogg model can fortify a CJM and help companies detect what are the obstacles in the customer decision-making process and figure out which of these three elements is missing.

Motivation

Fogg (2009a) supports the opinion that the user starts his journey, ideally already motivated. Companies' UX strategy thus, should not focus on getting people motivated, rather than helping them achieve what they have already come to do (*Ability*), thus take the existing level of motivation and enhance it. Fogg (2009a) proposes a 3-element motivation framework, with to sub-elements for each element:

1. **Motivator #1: Pleasure / Pain**
   The first motivator includes two elements, seemingly opposite: pleasure and pain. The key feature of pleasure/pain is that, once applied, the results are instant. People instinctively react to what happening at that moment, without thinking or anticipating. The reason for this, is that both pain and pleasure comprise primeval reactions and draw focus on feelings of self-preservation.

   This is also the reason why this motivator is so powerful. Immediate responses is the first thing companies should take into account when trying to enhancing motivation in their product or service.

2. **Motivator #2: Hope / Fear**
   Less primal than pleasure/pain, the hope/fear motivator is branded by thinking and anticipating. The level of immediacy in responses is lower, as hope is the anticipation of something good happening, whereas fear holds the anticipation of something bad happening.

   In a CJM, this motivator can be equally or more intense that pleasure/pain. In the Launchpad USA example, it is expected that people are willing to experience pain, by paying money and joining the membership, as an exchange to overcoming their fear of potentially failing in case they try to break into the U.S. market solely on their own. It should, however, be taken into account that there is no systematic way of comparing the level of intensity for motivators. Depending on the end goal, companies should incorporate a behavioural strategy in order to determine which motivator fits each stage of a Journey.

3. **Motivator #3: Social Acceptance / Rejection**
   Social Acceptance/Rejection is an extremely impactful motivator. It sets the

principles for self-placement of a person in society. People are exceptionally motivated when coming to gaining social acceptance and avoiding rejection from peers.

One can support that this motivator is nearly as primal and instinctive as pleasure/pain. People heavily depend on societal interactions in order to survive. They also feel the need to prove themselves to other people, in order to guarantee a good place in their group and gain social acceptation.

In the Launchpad USA CJM example, a manifestation of social acceptance/rejection could be twofold: Companies must help each other in order to succeed. Although the distance issue (U.S./Nordics) can frequently prohibit them from meeting each other face-to-face, a well-built CJM can bring them together online.

Ability

Ability can be defined as the amount of effort needed to fulfil a task. Fogg (2009a) considers ability to be of greater importance than motivation. In today’s world, ease of use is crucial. One needs to be able to do something. Just being motivated is almost never enough.

This is where UX enters the picture. In order to retain customers and gain new ones, companies need to make the CJM easy to move through and easy to understand. If they must opt for optimization, it is recommended to opt for ability over motivation. Simplify and motivation will come.

People are by nature lazy. Consequently, the more effort they need to put on, in order to achieve a goal, the higher motivation is needed from their side. Fogg (2009a) believes that people’s ability to use a product or service (i.e. a piece of software) depends on training or teaching them how to do so; however most people are too lazy and unwilling to be trained. Instead, they want to skip the learning process and learn by doing. This is why simplicity is important.

Trigger

Even when motivation and ability are there, the desired behaviour cannot happen if there is not an appropriate trigger. Trigger is what pushes people to act. It is the green light to do something and it implies that there is a certain level of urgency.

Content is focal to a well-built trigger. A trigger must be carefully planned, one step at a time. Companies need to smartly persuasive when building their triggers. The level of urgency must be created from within, not layer upon.

Fogg (2009a) compares trigger to swimming. The idea is that no one expects someone to jump in the water and just start swimming. It is a learning process. People start learning step-by-step, often starting at a young age, under supervision. Like swimming, customers' behaviour must be affected in a similar way; when companies provide them with simple, small steps and guide them forward to the behavioural goal.

3.5 Towards a Simplified Monomyth-Player Journey CJM model

The analysis of the abovementioned models and frameworks indicates that stories work better when there are emotions involved. The user, as the foremost dominant person in a story (in our context, the Launchpad USA Journey) often acts on emotion, on how the experience from the point of getting acquainted with the product till the point of final purchase, makes him/her feel.

The sensation that the user is the central hero of a game is exciting. It is engaging, unique and immersive – provided that the user's journey is supported by an equivalently exceptional storyline and that the journey itself is versatile and challenging. Considering the CJM models described in previous section, it is safe to support that the only model that visibly puts the user in the position of a player-hero, that takes into account principles of effective storytelling – therefore incorporating by default gamification mechanisms, appealing to emotion and attempting to achieve identification between the user and the notion of a hero – is the Monomyth. Therefore, the *Monomyth* will be used as the backbone of the Launchpad USA Customer Journey.

Concerning the presented frameworks for UX, both Fogg (2009a) and Hassenzahl (2007) concur that the attributes set on what a person experiences are very much related to the psyche of the user (designing for pleasure/satisfaction, making a desirable behaviour happen by stirring the appropriate abilities and triggers).

The vast majority of gamification models and frameworks focus on bringing the fun part into the picture (Sweetser & Wyeth, Kim), identification with the main user/character (Kim) and the fact that the story itself should comprise a memorable learning experience (Kim, Beresford). The key success factor for all models is *player enjoyment* – an attribute that the UX frameworks seem to recognize as well.

We will thus focus on player satisfaction and utilize the journey to transform the 40-step process to a learning experience for the Launchpad USA members; consequently we will gamify the Monomyth Journey using Kim's framework of *Player Journey* and base it on Sweetser & Wyeth's *GameFlow* principles of Player Satisfaction.

Last but not least, we will concentrate on making the Journey an emotionally engaging experience; thus, the underlying UX principles must appeal to the user psyche and attempt to tap into his behaviour. Both Fogg's and Hassenzal's frameworks on UX will be utilized in this context.

Let's list down the main elements that, according to literature, can result in a successful journey/game. Note that these elements are ought to happen concurrently:

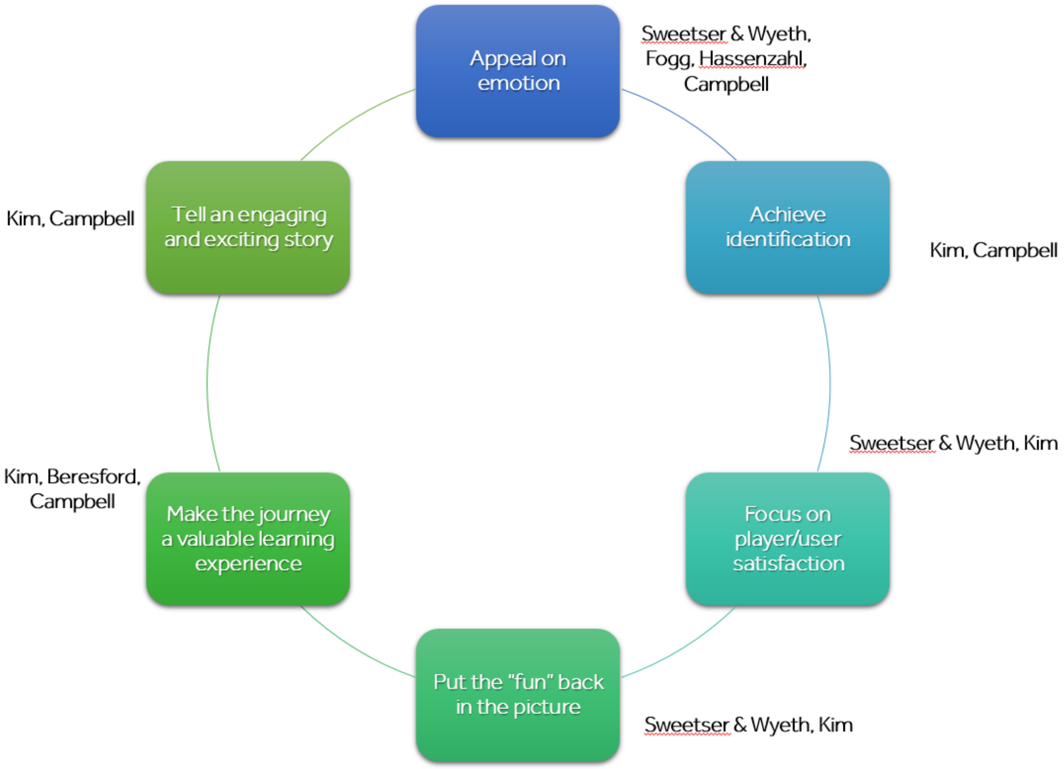

Figure 14: Underlying principles for a successful Journey

The Monomyth is, by nature a complex, often challenging framework to be used as is. Taking into account that the model was created in the 1920s, mainly for written experiences, and later on, in filmography, I will simplify the Monomyth and adjust it to the Launchpad USA Journey case, keeping the elements that can guarantee both short-term customer acquisition and long-term customer retention.

Fuhriman provides an excellent basis for the Monomyth CJM elements that can pledge for customer loyalty: *Offer powerful guidance* (the Rescue from without), deliver *real-world integrations* (The crossing of the Return Threshold) and give the *gift of freedom* (The Freedom to live).

Based on the above, I am introducing the Simplified Monomyth/Player Journey model (*Figure 15*) below:

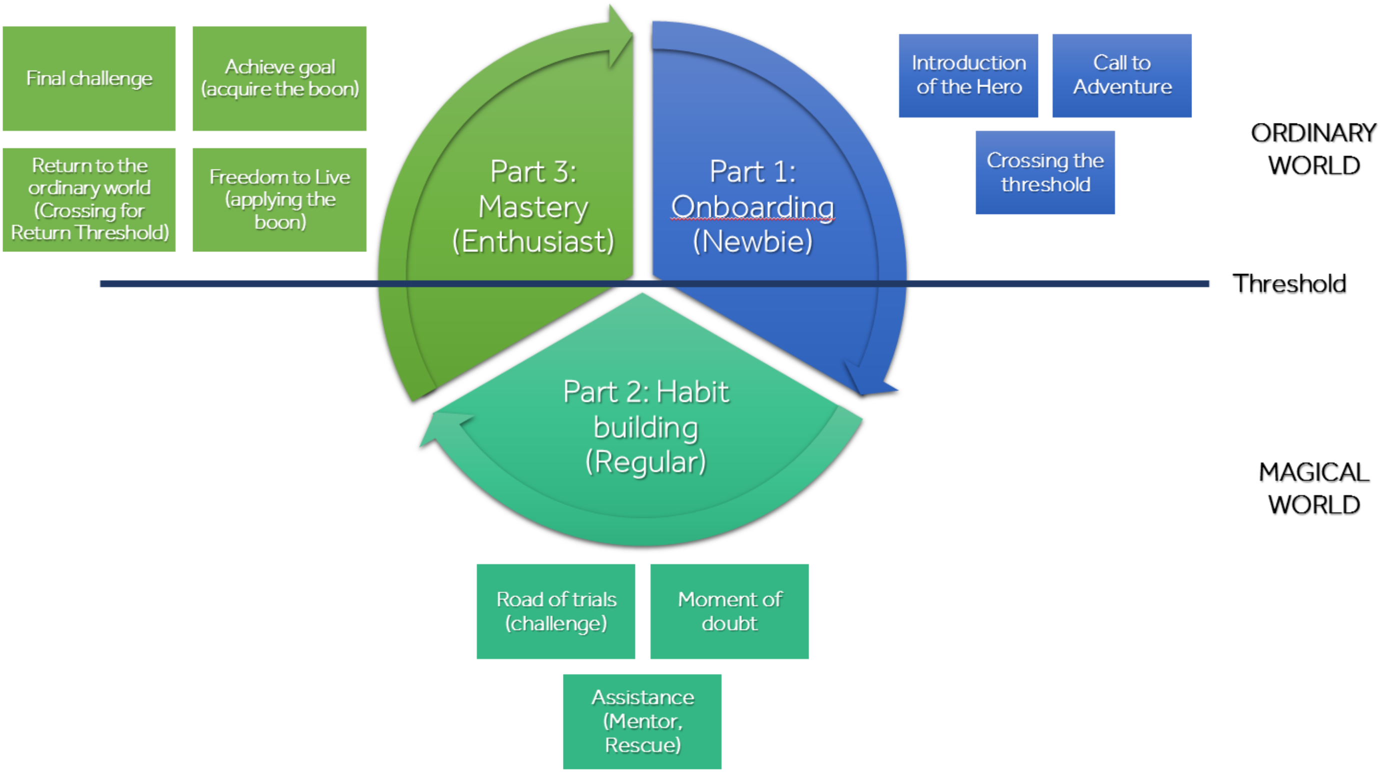

Figure 15: Simplified Monomyth-Player Journey model for Launchpad USA

The model utilizes the key Monomyth elements, but instead of listing the individual steps, it divides the Journey into three distinct parts (acts), each of which corresponds to the Player Journey model gradual acquisition of skills, knowledge and self-knowledge (learning) and levelling up:

- **Onboarding**
  The Story revolves around three major milestones: Introducing the User/Player/Hero and his world, calling the user to begin his journey and the pivotal moment, when the user begins his journey by traversing from the ordinary world to the “magical” world of Launchpad USA (*“I am going from Finland to the U.S.”*).

- **Habit building**
  The Journey helps the user build his skills and advance from the Newbie state to the Regular Player state. In this section, the user faces his road of trials, which – due to the complexity of the process (journey to the U.S., large market, several pitfalls, different legislation systems etc.) - potentially might cause the user to feel doubtful on whether or not he can proceed; however, the Mentor figure is there to provide advice, to solidify confidence, to assist the user to progress with his journey and face the final challenge.

- **Mastery**
  The user, having completed the set of trials, is now faced with the one and final challenge that will determine whether or not his Journey has transformed him/her as a person/company; whether the Journey itself has been a valuable and memorable learning experience and whether he has been equipped with what he needs to achieve the final goal/boon (enter or expand to the U.S. Market). The Journey does not end there; the user must return to the ordinary offline world, use his Freedom to live and apply the boon (acquired knowledge and confidence) to his everyday working life. The storyline itself is always at the Master/User's disposal to revisit and re-learn or chose different experiences to re-live.

At this moment, there are no similar studies in the Nordics. Since the Monomyth and the Player Journey have not been extensively used in online user journey experiences, this study serves as an excellent opportunity to test their suitability for such projects.

4 Research Methodology

4.1 The framework

The research methodology for this project was born from the combination of different research frameworks, which were applied throughout the research process, depending on the nature of each task.

Empirical research is based on empirical evidence. It is supported by direct and/or indirect observations or experiences; this is actually its way of acquiring knowledge. The recording these observations or experiences is then analysed either quantitatively or qualitatively, depending on case. Empirical questions should be answered by solid evidence (data). Qualitative and quantitative data can be combined, especially when the questions in focus do not demand for laboratory, hard data to be collected. Such methods are usually met in fields of social sciences and in education (Wikipedia Contributors, 2016). Empirical research methodologies can be further broken down into different techniques, such as summarization, visualization as well as, modelling, exploratory methods, hypotheses testing and predictions. Cohen (1995) summarizes that empirical research is a mould of exploratory and experimental methodologies.

The overarching framework for gaining knowledge on the topic, as well as acquiring, analysing and evaluating the necessary data is based on empirical research. The way of gaining knowledge was done by means of direct observations, set in an experimental environment (where the storyboard/journey constituted a controlled variable).

Observational research comprises research methods that intend to observe end-users in their natural habitants interacting with certain services and/or products. Observational research methodologies are particularly popular in business environments, as they ensure that the customers are usually not aware that they are observed (monitored or recorded), which, in its turn, allows for an objective analysis (Wikipedia Contributors, 2016).

A case study can be defined as a study, aiming at acquiring a deep understanding of a – usually – real-life event or entity at a particular time in history. Willig (2013) points out, that, case studies “*are not characterized by the methods used to collect and analyse data, but rather its focus on a particular unit of analysis: a case*” (p. 74).

In order to acquire the necessary knowledge on the 40 step/8 area process, comprehend the problem area and realize how the solution would assist in resolving the issue, I chose to follow the observational research method. As the topic under research is set in a real-life environment, tested with actual companies and internal stakeholders, as well as the fact that the outcome of the research will be used in real-life situations as a service offering by the Launchpad USA program, the research can constitute an excellent Case Study for aligning ICT with business in a non-profit organizational environment.

Constructive Research or *Constructivist knowledge production* (Ackermann, 2001), describes that the construction is produced by mixing knowledge that already exists with innovation; that is knowledge is constructed by using new innovative ways and adding missing links.

Constructing the end product demands for design thinking, theories and artefacts; the process looks into the future and based on the initial idea, it fills the gaps by including tailor-made knowledge blocks (Crnkovic, 2010).

Constructive research methods were used for gathering the requirements, setting up the CJM criteria, preparing the plan, developing the simulated plan, performing the benchmark prototype tests, interpreting the results and giving feedback. I followed the practical implementation of the framework, as my research deals mostly with empirical data, rather than theoretical knowledge. The construct in my case will be the new CJM plan, based on the introduced own Simplified Monomyth-Player Journey CJM model. As mentioned in the first chapter, the plan will be used for the development of the actual gamified Journey.

4.2 Hypotheses

The research hypotheses will be a paring down of the problem context into something testable and falsifiable.

1. What is the process of a CJM for Launchpad USA?

The expected results will answer the question on how the process for the CJM for Launchpad USA should be, in a simplified, clarified, understandable and user-friendly way.

- The 8 areas will effectively replace the full 40-step process;
- The 8 areas will constitute the skeleton for gathering the requirements for the gamified CJM interface;

2. What are the requirements for a CJM interface?

The expected results will answer the question on what the requirements for the Launchpad USA CJM interface should be in order to build the CJM plan and develop the gamified prototype. The requirements will be finalized based on iterations, testing and feedback from test users.

- The requirements will comprise points from the 8 areas of the process;
- The requirements will take into account all the necessary sub steps within the 8 areas, in a seamless way;

3. What are the main criteria for optimal UX of the CJM using gamification mechanisms?

The expected results will answer the question on what the criteria for optimal User Experience in the CJM are, when using the selected gamification model as the underlying principle.

- The criteria will derived based on the Simplified Monomyth/Player Journey model;
- The criteria will utilize the UX principles of Hassenzahl (2007) and Fogg (2009a);

The feedback from the testing session will determine whether the proposed plan will effectively replace the Excel sheet of the 40-step process, as well as whether it will be used for developing the actual product.

4.3 Limitations

There are some unavoidable limitations in this research study. First, because of the time limit, and the imminent summer holidays (many people were off the grid for several weeks), the research was conducted only with a small number test users that were available for the testing of the prototype. Therefore, to generalize the results for a larger group of companies, the study should have involved more participants.

Second, due to the fact that part of the membership is based in the U.S., the research with the member companies on that part of the world was physically impossible, as well as costly. In an ideal environment, both sides of the membership should have been involved; however in this context, only the Nordic side participated in the workshops. Therefore, to generalize the results, the study should have involved more participants from the U.S. side.

Last but not least, due to the non-profit nature of the company there were considerable cost limitations, related to the infrastructure and tools used to conduct the research. A limited amount of on-site laptops were available for the mixed brainstorming sessions, which effectively meant that not all participants had the necessary hardware available at all times. The tools used during the research were strictly open source which posed some limitations in the quality of the mockups generated in the prototype plan. Enterprise tools were not considered, due to cost constraints. Therefore, to generalize the results, the study should have utilized better infrastructure (more laptops) and a bigger variety of tools to use (both enterprise and open source) for results of higher quality.

4.4 Research Tools

In order to conduct the empirical part of the research study, I used certain tools for the storyboard, the development of the prototype, the setting up of the testing and the presentation of the results.

4.4.1 Microsoft Visio

Microsoft Visio is a diagramming, a UML application and a part of the Microsoft Office family. Visio was used to build the concept maps describing in depth the 40 step/8 area process in full. Constructing visually the workflow behind the process was a complex, lengthy, but necessary step in order to fully comprehend the rationale, the areas, the steps, the conditional statements, the diverse end results for the process and effectively the different journey paths users can choose based on their needs.

See **Appendix 3** for more details.

4.4.2 InVision

InVision is an open source Interactive web app prototyping, collaboration and workflow platform, specifically addressed to UX designers, which allows for optimal interactivity. Through the platform it is possible to upload ready-made design files and add animations, gestures, and transitions to transform static screens into clickable, interactive prototypes. Test users can comment directly on the designs, which makes the feedback collection easier, and faster.

See **Appendix 4** for more details.

4.4.3 Gamification Model Canvas

One of the biggest issues when designing gamified applications is that the game design must be broken down into easily comprehendible elements. The Gamification Model

Canvas tool, created by Sergio Jimenez, assists in finding and evaluating applications with gamified elements and in stimulating specific behaviours in traditionally non-game environments.

See **Appendix 5** for more details.

4.4.4 Customer Journey Canvas

The Customer Journey Canvas is an experience mapping tool and an oriented graph which aims at outlining the journey of an end user by visually describing the touchpoints when the user interacts with the product or the service in focus. The interactions are represented in a step-by-step mode with emphasis on specific points, such as the devices used or the flow of information. The canvas outlines the journey at a higher level: redundant information or too many details are not included.

See **Appendix 6** for more details on the different personas Canvases, as well as on the overall CJM.

4.4.5 Behaviour grid

The Behaviour Grid, developed by BJ Fogg (2009b), classifies different ways of behavioural change along two axes. When populated, the grid forms a table with 35 cells. The horizontal axis categorizes the type of behaviour change, while the vertical axis outlines the time or scheduling of behaviour types. **Appendix 10** illustrates target behaviours from our Journey, mapped on the Grid, showing typical persuasion patterns.

4.5 Development of prototype

The prototype screens were constructed from scratch, based on the combination of the Visio flowchart (functionalities) Customer Journey Canvas (touchpoints, personas and emotions), the Gamification Canvas (game design elements) and the Behaviour Grid (target behaviours and persuasion patterns), over a course of four weeks. The development of the prototype was done using illustration tools (Adobe Illustrator) and were uploaded to InVision. Gestures and transitions were added on top of the screens, creating the desirable interactive effect.

5 Implementation

The Data Collection supporting this research study was comprised of diverse methodologies (See *Figure 16*). The process started in January 2016 and was finished in August 2016. The initial research began with preliminary internal brainstorming sessions amongst Amcham Finland Internal Stakeholders. The project team was then formed and the exploratory process kicked off.

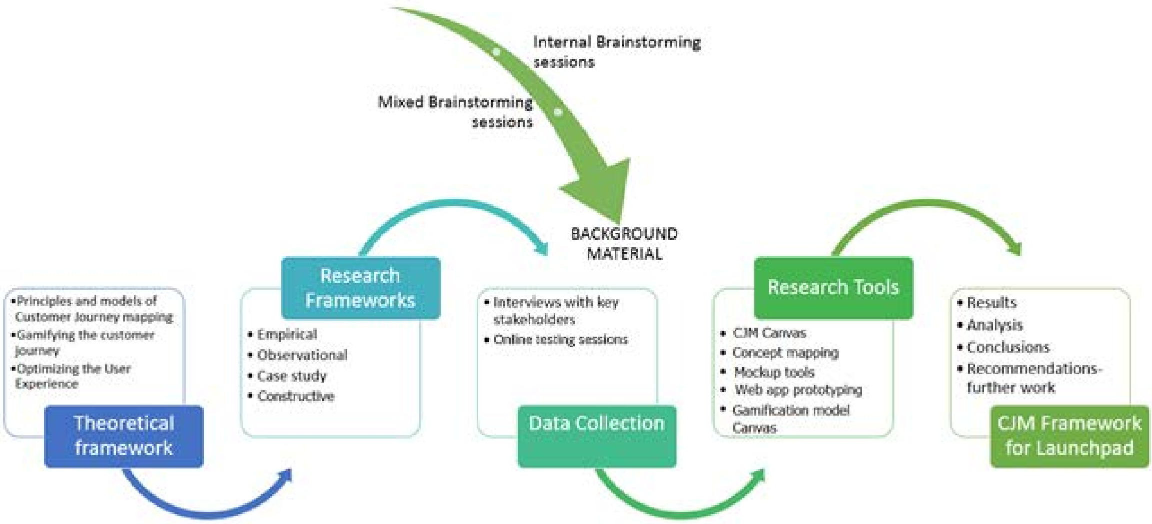

Figure 16: Research Methodology

Because of the nature of the project and the internal resource limitations, it was decided to invite a team of external contractors to the Amcham premises, whose role was to assist the exploratory design process and help produce the initial concept maps for the Customer Journey. The interactions between the Amcham Team and the external contractors took place between January 2016 and March 2016. The contractor team was based in New York; a few visits to the Helsinki Amcham offices were held as well. All sessions took place once per week, at 16.00 in order to accommodate the time difference between the two places; the communication between the two parties was achieved by using Skype and screen sharing. A total of 9 mixed (internal/external) and 4 internal sessions were held.

The brainstorming techniques that were used were a mix between Guided and Question brainstorming, allowing for a certain structure during the process and stimulating the participants to use their creative insights and critical thinking, while taking into account time and technology constraints. Following the iterative sessions, the participants emerged with further ideas and opinions, logged for further brainstorming; questions that were still unanswered were recorded and prioritized in a structured list, while an action point list was also formulated each time, aimed to set the base and pace for further sessions. Any off-line discussions or questions, as well as all discussed material/notes were uploaded and saved in a web-based project management tool (Basecamp), primarily managed by the external contractors.

Once the base idea was set, the contractors were released and the integral management of the project came to Amcham's internal stakeholders. Phase Two of the project started in April 2016 and ended in August 2016. This phase included in-depth interviews with the Launchpad USA Director at Amcham Finland, as well as with the Managing Director for Amcham Finland USA. At the same time 3 two-hour one-on-one workshops with the Launchpad USA Director were separately held to examine in depth, fully comprehend and map the 40 steps/8 areas.

The interview with the Launchpad USA Managing Director took place by end of May 2016. The interview was audio recorded to save on time and efficiency. The form of the interview was semi-structured. The reason for conducting it was to deeply comprehend the nature of the Launchpad USA Program, the 40 step/8 area process, as well as the need and desires of member companies in both the Nordic and the U.S. side. The interview with the Amcham Finland USA Managing Director took place on-site in August 2016, when the Director was in Helsinki, visiting the Amcham offices.

The outcome of the interviewing process, as well as feedback from previous stages set the base for the first round of planning for the CJM. The results from the Literature research were presented to and reviewed by the Launchpad USA Director. The selected model (Simplified Monomyth/Player Journey) was approved and the initial planning began in June 2016.

The one-to-one workshops took place during the first two weeks of June 2016. The 40-step process was thoroughly analysed. The results of these workshops provided valuable feedback for the concurrent task of creating the different journey paths – first on paper and then on-screen – as well as constructing the diverse scenarios the Customer Journey should incorporate. The data taken into account were derived from real-life situations with member companies that had asked assistance in the past.

The third and last Phase of the project started mid-August 2016 and ended in beginning of September 2016. During this period in the project, selected users involved with the Launchpad USA Program were invited to review and test the interactive prototype. The prototype screens were fed into the InVision online prototyping tool, allowing for distance testing. Feedback was collected in the form of emails and face-to-face interactions, as well as by using the InVision's built-in commenting feature.

The online testing sessions aimed at the following:

- Test the gamified elements of the prototype;
- Test the UX of the prototype;
- Collect further feedback on potential missing functionalities;
- Validate the interactive prototype and solidify the requirements for the CJM plan.

Details on the form and nature of the online testing can be found in **Appendix 7**.

5.1 Mixed Brainstorming sessions

The nature of the mixed brainstorming sessions was twofold:

To explore the Launchpad USA Identity, construct the Program's touchpoints, branding elements and identity system and to use the abovementioned material as background information and input in order to provide the member companies with a game-like personalized, engaging and interactive experience.

The initial sessions were aimed at understanding the nature of the Program, its value offering, the 40-step process, target audiences, potential game-like structures that could represent the journey, as well as identifying key communications touchpoints to use as examples throughout the design process. The design exploration took place in parallel with the branding process; the Customer Journey initial exploration was considered as an integral part of the Launchpad USA service offering, and therefore was done together with the production of the new brand as a whole.

The different game-like structure examples that were considered visually during the design process included a buy/sell structure (Monopoly game - *Figure 17*), a problem/solution structure (board game – *Figure 18*), and If/Then Trigger/Action structure (*Figure 19*), a Journey structure (*Figure 20*), a Simultaneous Tasks structure (*Figure 21*), an Overlapping Tasks structure (*Figure 22*), a series of Point A-to-Point B structures (*Figures 23 to 25*) and a card deck structure (*Figure 26*). The initial learnings for the interactive journey were as follows:

- A pedagogic overview of available advisory resources;
- An overview of the advisory process - illustrated through the 8 key disciplines (areas);
- A ‘heads up’ on US market entry planning needs;
- A prelude to a consultation with a Launchpad advisor;
- A sense of ‘customized’ advice - based on user input.

Figure 17: Monopoly game (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

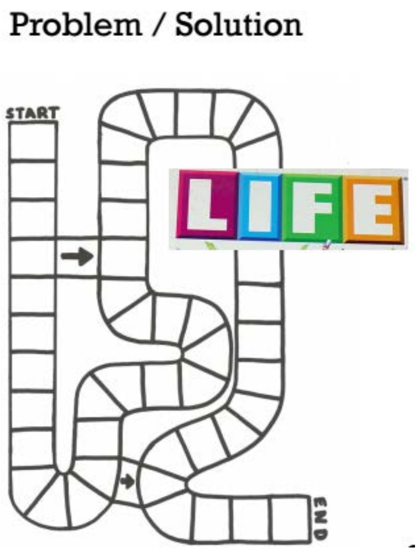

Figure 18: Board game (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

If / Then, trigger/action

Figure 19: If-then-else loop (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

A journey

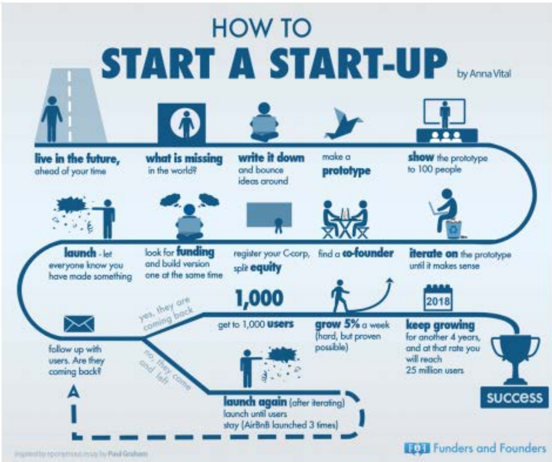

Figure 20: A journey (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

Simultaneous Tasks

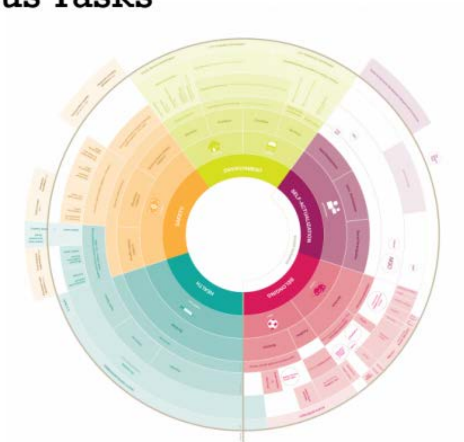

Figure 21: Simultaneous tasks (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

Figure 22: Overlapping tasks (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

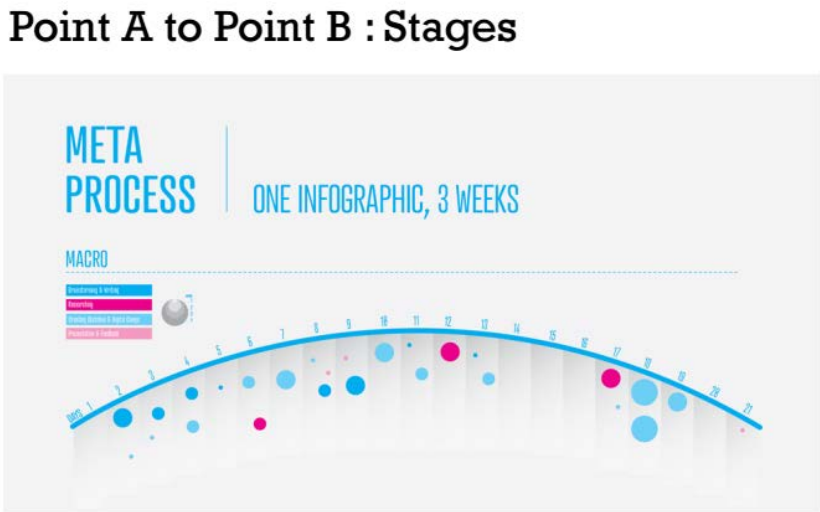

Figure 23: Point A to Point B Meta Process (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

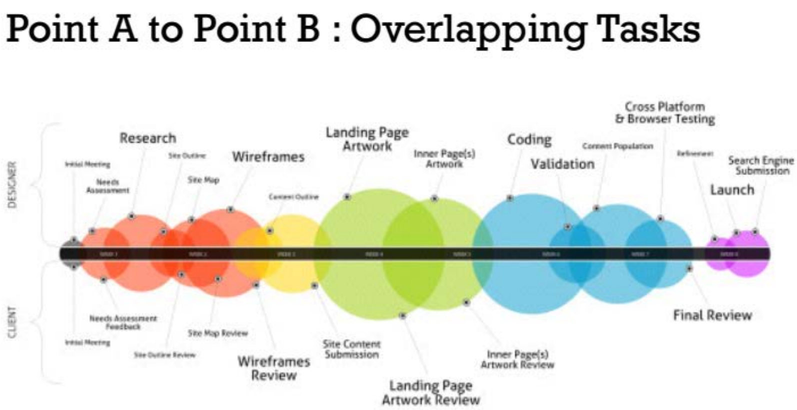

Figure 24: Point A to Point B Overlapping Tasks (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

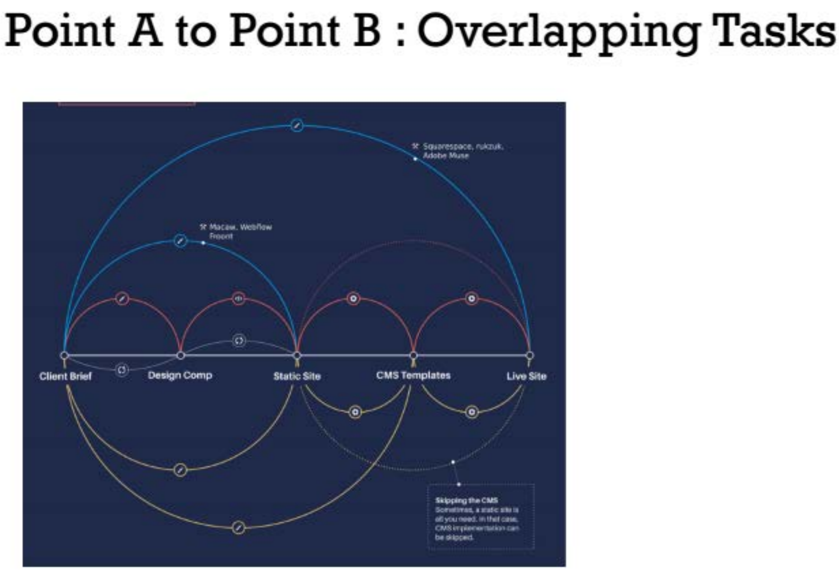

Figure 25: Point A to Point B Overlapping Tasks V. 2.0 (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

Figure 26: Card Deck (Courtesy of GROW Unlimited)

One of the most fundamental principles of the design, as stated by the Amcham Internal Stakeholders was simplicity. The users would always have to understand what they are looking at and what is happening during every step of the process. The card deck was selected as the visual representation of the Journey Touchpoints (not the actual underlying process), as it was a common feeling that this structure was the simplest to represent and visually construct. The selection of the card deck was the result of the First Phase of the project, during the mixed brainstorming sessions. In order to accommodate the Monomyth/Player Journey principles, The Journey structure (*Figure 21*), was deemed to be the most appropriate approach as it comprises a very familiar beginning-to-end representation of an actual journey for the customer. Further below I will elaborate on the rationale behind these choices and how the visual storytelling is effectively backed up by them.

5.2 Internal Brainstorming Sessions

The internal brainstorming sessions were held on-site in the Amcham offices. The aim of those sessions was to digest the result of the mixed brainstorming sessions and iterate further. The sessions took place solely at the Amcham offices, between internal Stakeholders, as well as with the Amcham Finland USA Managing Director, who, due to distance restrictions, was participating in the sessions through Skype and teleconferencing from New York.

Four iterations were held in total, following the mixed brainstorming sessions and when decision making from the Amcham side was deemed necessary. Not every mixed brainstorming session was followed up by an internal counterpart.

The choice of the “road” as the visual representation of the Journey was unanimous for both internal Amcham people and the external contractors and constituted the final decision of Phase One.

5.3 Interviews

The Interview with the Launchpad USA Director, Mike Klyszeiko, was a truly learning experience. The form was semi-structured, giving space for both him and me to ask questions, clarify vague parts, reflect on answers and discover the Launchpad journey together. During the 1-hour interview, the Program’s principles and aims were analysed, the customer segments and each segment’s needs and desires were outlined, and, of course, the 40-step process and its challenges were defined and the need for an automated digital tool was pinpointed. The results of the interview was an eye-opening experience for me, as the complexity of the process was comprehended and the immediate need for obtaining a platform to serve all the diverse needs of the member companies was fully grasped.

The Interview with the Amcham Finland U.S.A Managing Director, Erika Sauer, involved an in-depth exploration of the psyche and profile of the U.S. based members (Inc. partners), the differences between the Nordic and U.S. Market, the potential of the Journey as a tool for communication, as well as the importance of emotions and personal interactions between the two sides (Nordics/U.S.). The interview was semi-structured and lasted for approximately half an hour. The interview was also very fascinating, as the Inc segment of the Amcham membership is somewhat an unexplored land, mainly for the Nordic counterparts, due to the specificities in the style and profile of the companies residing in the U.S., the fast-paced and over competitive nature of the U.S. market and the different sales and marketing techniques used there in order to promote a product or a service.

Edited transcripts of both interviews can be found in **Appendix 1**.

5.4 Online testing

Testing of the interactive prototype took place in a span of 3 weeks. Out of the 8 users invited for the testing, 5 replied, setting the response rate to 62.5% - an acceptable figure for internal web-based testing (Fryrear, 2015).

During the online testing sessions, the participants were presented with the Customer Journey interface, set up in an interactive format (generated by InVision). They were instructed to follow diverse journey paths, based on real-life scenarios, according to their experience with Launchpad USA companies and driven by the most common company cases (Company Formation, Sales and Marketing, Immigration, HR and Real Estate).

The participants were given an initial set of guidelines, which described the purpose of the testing, the setting of the screens and where to place special attention (user experience, the feeling of being the Hero/central character in the Journey, if there are parts that might be missing, their intake for future amendments). In addition to these, the participants were given the freedom to send open non-structured comments and were encouraged to unremittingly send their feedback as a means to continuous improvement, outside of the boundaries of this project.

The game scenario used for the prototype, as well as the guidelines for the online testing can be seen in **Appendices 8 and 9**.

6 Evaluation

Evaluation utilizes standard social research methodologies, and it is typically deployed as a research method, and as a process aimed to assess, which uses specific practices distinctive to evaluating social programs (Powell, 2006). This type of study usually regulates the outcome of a particular process or program (Berndtsson et al., 2002).

In this section I will present my observations from the brainstorming sessions, the Interviews and the online testing sessions as a means to explore whether my initial planning, as well as the chosen custom gamification model that will suffice for the production of the CJM plan.

The data collection was vastly based on non-structured brainstorming, open feedback techniques and semi-structured interviews. The participants/players were set free to explore their imagination and creativity, discover parts that were missing, propose new areas and techniques. Although all sessions came with an initial set of guidelines, the ground was eventually open for new ideas, as a means for learning and realizing the potential of the tool.

6.1 Brainstorming sessions (mixed/internal)

The evaluation of the brainstorming session was based on the “Gut Feel Index”, originally developed by the Rand Corporation and presented in the “Making or Breaking of the VE Workshop” paper by Kaufman and Carter (1994). The process itself is gamified; based on business simulations and experimental exercises (Faria & Schumacher, 1984).

The evaluation workflow (*Figure 27*) is a modified version of Kaufman & Carter’s model, specifically customized for the internal and mixed brainstorming sessions of this project. It describes the rationale that applies logic and judgement to the creative process during the brainstorming sessions, pinpoints the obstacles and pitfalls and outlines the steps taken towards decision making, based on the championing idea (in our case the road/card deck representation of the journey).

Note that the brainstorming sessions strived towards determining the branding of the Launchpad program in general, including the strategy placement as well as the tone/language. In this section, I will only analyse and present the project-relevant parts of the sessions that deal with the Customer Journey. The rest of the data is out of the boundaries for this project.

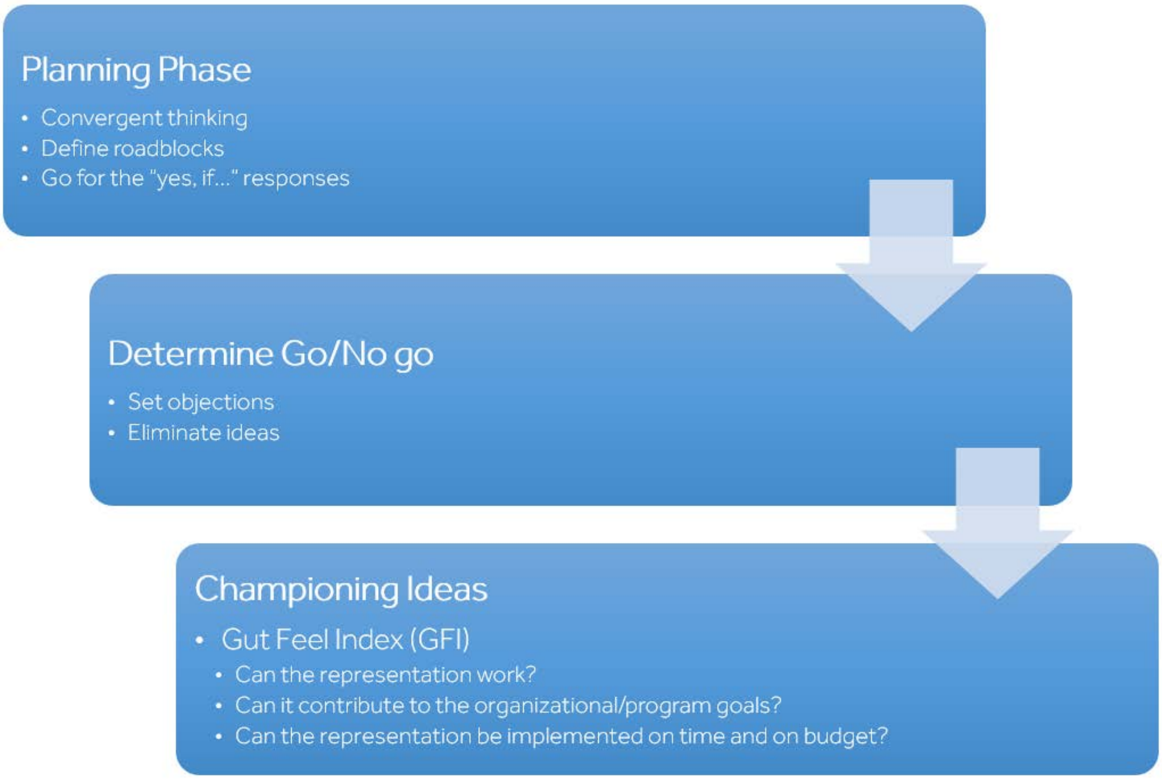

Figure 27: Evaluating Brainstorming Ideas (Kaufman & Carter, 1994)

The planning phase comprises the sorting and screening process which aimed at presenting the requirements, the potential features, the rationale, and desirable features the Journey should incorporate. The initial part of the planning phase did not require extensive creative thinking – it is based on the theory of convergent thinking (Guilford, 1967), which attempts to set the boundaries and to apply judgment by standardizing the creative process. In our case, the standardization came with an already pre-set of potential Journey visual representations. The divergent thinking that drove the underlying creative process took place partly in the mixed but mostly in the internal brainstorming sessions, where the participants were free to converse and divide the championing from the "un-championing" ideas. The initial planning also identified the roadblocks that could prevent the materialization of the ideas into solutions.

The iterative sessions followed the same evaluative process, where the "overlapping/simultaneous tasks" visual representations were given a non-go, whilst the Journey/Card deck and If-then-else trigger representations were given a go. These three different constructs were ranked according to the Gut Feel Index (GFI).

The GFI is a method that is based on the underlying theory of the Delphi Technique (Helmer, 1967). This technique indicates that each member of the team should, on their own, unobstructed by the opinions of other members determine the probability of success of a specific idea.

The GFI technique involved providing each evaluator a deck of cards with values alternating from 1 to 10. The facilitator of the mixed brainstorming sessions (in our case the external contractor) explained the ideas' rationale and clarified the vague points in Q&A sessions, typically taking place in the beginning of each brainstorming session. In the internal brainstorming sessions the participants used the cards to vote for their favourite visual representation.

The parameters set for deciding which representation would work the best were set to be the following:

1. Can the representation work?
2. Can it contribute to the organizational/program goals?
3. Can the representation be implemented on time and on budget?

The participants' vast majority leaned towards the Journey/Card Deck visual representation as the best way to both engage and facilitate the users. A final Go was given and the decision was made to move forward with this particular structure to the next phase of the project.

6.2 Interviews

The nature of evaluation used to derive the outcomes of the two semi-structured interviews is an ex-post evaluation. It took place directly after completion and focused on results and impacts. The tool used to analyse the answers and determine the needs/aspirations for the tool was an evaluation design matrix (Table 2 and 3). The interviews were extremely helpful, both in different ways: The first which clarified the need for the tool, expounded the complex 40-step process and illustrated the different segments-target audiences of the future tool users. The second focused on the communicative potential of the tool, outlined the not so well known profile of the Inc members and provided a platform for reflections and potential future developments.

Table 2: Interview evaluation design matrix (Mike Klyszeiko)

Objectives	Questions	Outcome
Create a tool that would leverage the strengths of the program; bring together a strong international network of businesses, especially large, multinational companies.	The program was established to help growth companies do their business in the U.S.; either break into the U.S. market or expand if they are already there. How does it currently run and what are the tools and processes, used to achieve its business goals?	Basic project plan in an xls file, customized for each companies' needs. Manual process, many steps, getting lost on the way. Need for automation, need to get rid of the bottleneck.
Comprehend the 40-step process, break them down into 8 different areas; map the steps for each area in a logical way.	How many steps does a company need to take? Let's say a new company that wants to break into the U.S. market, that has no idea what to do, no idea who to talk with, no idea what is happening over there, comes to you and asks for your help. How many steps does that company typically have to take?	Typically 40 steps and 8 different areas. Depending on the companies' needs, there are obviously scenarios that include fewer steps.
	Ok. If you could focus a bit on this process, just to understand what kind of areas they need to look into if they want to enter the U.S. Market or expand their operations there. Could you describe these areas that they must take into account?	Company Formation, Immigration, HR, Sales and Marketing, Finances, Real Estate, Logistics, Risk Management. All areas are optional, apart from the Company Formation.
Need for change: The steps are necessary, the way of serving them to the members needs to change.	How would you say that this process is serving you at the moment? You said before that the format is not very user friendly that is a bit cumbersome for the companies. Is it in the plan that this 40 step process will be simplified, would turn into some-thing more	The Excel component has been "o.k." but the way it is formatted hasn't been clear to a lot of companies, so we've often had to have several follow up meetings to explain things. Sometimes the notes aren't that clear to the com-

	appropriate for the members? Have you had any feedback on that? Is a change something necessary to be done for Launchpad USA?	panies too, but the big bottleneck for the challenge with the current process is really connecting the companies to our partners in the U.S.
The tool needs to serve as a “bridge” between the business community in the Nordics and the business community in the U.S.	Could the tool be some kind of a bridge between the business community here and the business community in the U.S.? Will the tool help them communicate with each other and in a way take care of things by themselves to a certain extent?	Especially with some of the background information on some of the steps but also some of the aspects of doing business in the U.S., we want the U.S. partners to be able to share that information with the growth companies that are coming over. That is definitely an important part of it so then basically we can step to the side – not away but to the side – and let the communication flow more freely through a digital platform vs the way it is now.

Table 3: Interview evaluation design matrix (Erika Sauer)

Objectives	Questions	Outcome
Get rid of the bottleneck, bring the two diverse business communities together with minimum intervention from our side.	According to your experience and your interactions with our U.S. – based members what is it that they are looking for or expecting from the tool? In order words, what would they like to see, what is still missing from the Launchpad program?	Right now the process looks like a “bow”, where the bow is the human factor – Erika and Mike. Service providers from the U.S. are willing to help incoming companies for a fee but they do not have the channels to contact them directly. This poses delays and a waiting buffer that slows down the decision process for the incoming Launchpad

		companies. Aggressive/competitive approach is fine – the market works differently in the U.S. side.
Make the tool as the primary means of communication, with face-to-face meetings still very important but only pursued when necessary.	Would you say that the first part, where you recommend different types of service providers to the incoming companies, would it be something that'd be incorporated in the tool? This proactive recommendation of different service providers?	Let the service providers see where companies are in the process and approach them freely if they want to. When a Launchpad company over here uses the Journey tool, it depends on the service provider on the other side to track them. If they are active in tracking, they will be active in contacting and will probably get some business. Face to face communication should always be an option though. We should subtly be kept in the loop and intervene when possible as a help agent.
Future objective: match-making based on people's personalities. The "emotional" factor should at some point be considered. Direct communication permission from the incoming companies should also be encouraged.	So we have concluded that the tool should also serve as a communications platform. Is there anything that you think we have not covered from the INC side?	People value the personal connection. A future potential functionality of the tool could be matching the profiles of the different members, based on their personal characteristics. Typically, Inc companies use phone and skype (real-time communication) more than email and texting. Incorporate a functionality in the tool that allows Inc members to see if and when an incoming Launchpad company is available to take calls (phone or skype). Learning process for

		the incoming members to understand the psyche of the U.S. market.

6.3 Online testing

The method for evaluation the results of the online testing is based on chronicling customer emotions, in order to understand and develop the Journey map with an outside-in perspective (Offsey, 2016). The manifestation of the evaluation has the form of a quality scorecard/persona card, with the goal to capture the participant's feelings and emotions.

Understanding the customers' experience is ultimately understanding how they interact with the Launchpad brand and how this interaction makes them feel. It is of key importance that the brand delivered to them is capable of generating positive feelings, so that the customers will, by themselves, want to go back and relive the experiences they previously had.

Appendix 6 outlines the mapping of feelings and emotions that the online testing triggered. The structure includes the open feedback provided via emails or during face-to-face sessions as well.

7 Validation of hypotheses

7.1 What is the process of a CJM for Launchpad USA?

The project's starting point was an xls file – with all 40 steps outlined, in a ragged, inconsistent way. The process of producing each xls file separately, customized for every company was overly complicated and outdated; a unified file where all 40-steps were depicted did not exist. One of the project's targets was to categorize all steps into 8 integrated areas, with all steps and their interactions, as well as their interdependencies consistently described. The result of this phase was a comprehensive flowchart that comprises the backbone of the Launchpad activities. The flowchart can be found in **Appendix 3**, illustrated as a concept map.

The 8 areas do not constitute the Touchpoints for the Journey; however they comprise the skeleton for gathering the functional requirements – the actual procedure of traversing from one area/step to the other, as well as the touchpoints all areas share and entail. Purposefully, I did not chose to overcomplicate the process, rather than focus on the emotional triggers for the Journey. The requirements share a common denominator: seamlessness.

The online testing sessions and the customer feedback received showed that the mapping of the 40 steps into 8 distinct areas is the right way to move forward. The 8 areas replaced the steps and they solidified the requirement gathering basis. Therefore the 1st hypothesis is hereon validated.

7.2 What are the requirements for a CJM?

The data collection phase played a crucial role in tapping into the companies' perceptions, needs and wishes. The extensive online testing, the brainstorming sessions and the interviews provided a solid basis for outlining the requirements for the CJM to create engaging experiences, influence the customer emotions and harvest the means of persuasive technology towards desirable behaviour patterns.

Table 4 outlines the requirements for the Launchpad USA Customer Journey:

Table 4: Requirements for the Customer Journey

Onboarding		
Introduction of the Hero	**Call to Adventure**	**Crossing the threshold**
Identification	Call-to-action	Start the Journey by clicking on a path (one of the 8 areas)

"Hero" figure – a human agent representing the company	Provide sufficient messaging (guidelines, explanations)	Set status as "accepting calls" (phone calls, email, skype call)
Tell a story	Compelling content	
Provide comprehensive guidelines for the whole Journey	Use of Card Deck icons for every area	
Provide comprehensive guidelines for every Path		
Remind Hero that he can contact his U.S. partners		
Remind Hero that he can arrange a face-to-face meeting		

Habit building		
Road of Trials	**Moment of doubt**	**Assistance**
8 areas of exploration	Provide the Hero with more options in case he has not taken a specific route into account	On-screen tips
After completing an area, the area "deactivates" – that means that this trial has been completed. The rest of the areas are still available for exploration	Provide the Hero with the option to send feedback at all times/ask questions	Provision of links to related websites
Every step in each path is associated with an appropriate symbol. The Hero learns the meaning of the step by mentally and visually linking the symbol with the step.	Enable hero to contact the experts if needed (request face to face consultation)	Provision of templates for documentation
	Proactively indicate dependencies between different paths	Links to contact details of partner companies
	Force change of path in case a dependency is necessary before continuing	Enable hero to contact the experts if needed (request face to face consultation)

Mastery			
Final Challenge	**Achieve goal**	**Crossing for return**	**Freedom to live**
Complete one full Journey path	Reward Hero for a successfully completed path	Redirect Hero to the Community page	Encourage Hero to share his knowledge with the member Community

Complete all 8 areas/paths	Reward Hero for a successfully completed full journey	Provide options for follow-up meetings to discuss experience	Encourage Hero to be Launchpad's brand ambassador and share his experience through Social Media
	Share success story through Social Media		Include a reviewing (1-5 star) system for U.S. partners to boost competitiveness

The requirements apply on all 8 areas of the Journey and include all related sub steps within each area. The table was produced based on continuous iterations, derived from all sessions (brainstorming, interviews, online testing). Therefore the 2nd hypothesis is hereon validated.

7.3 What are the main criteria for optimal UX of the CJM using gamification mechanisms?

The key to understanding the Customer Experience in a Journey is to realize that the mapping is not standardized. It is not one-size-fits-all kind of thing. Of course, maps providing the best experiences are the ones that are comprehensive, highly customized and outlining the journey paths through the customers' eyes.

My experience in this project taught me that, a UX-optimized map does not necessarily entail cool graphics, high-quality design, artsy layout or typical old-school heuristic rules. What plays the most important role is the content, the triggers that affect customers' emotions and how seamless the process behind the development of the map is.

Having said that, here are the criteria for producing customer-centric, emotion-rich CJMs:

1. **Design from the customer's perspective**.
   The best CJMs are the ones that offer experiences as seen from the eyes of the customer. In other words, before you start laying out the actually process behind a journey, take some time to review this experience from your customer's shoes. You will be surprised to see that this will give you valuable insight on aspects that you have not taken into account, or aspects that you cannot control directly. The

Launchpad USA member community has a strong social media presence; they are technologically savvy and most of them have already done their research on how to enter and expand in the U.S. market, long before landing into the Launchpad program. The key to engagement is to make them feel that the Launchpad Journey is the optimal choice. The areas of interest, represented in the journey are the ones they have the most impact. In order words, it is smart to make the Journey an absolutely necessary tool for them.

2. **Represent Customer profiles in the form of Personas**.
   This is something that became very apparent through the online testing. Not all companies have the same needs and typically all of them have different experiences. For example, Persona 1 was exclusively interested in the process of acquiring Visas for their personnel and perceived this path as the most vital part of their own personalised Journey. Persona 2 on the contrary, was interested in employing exclusively local people.

   An optimized CJM should take into account all the different profiles of companies and create personalized experiences, separately for each profile. Building a one-size-fits-all experience would result in confusion, dissatisfaction and disengagement.

3. **Take into account your customers' objectives**.
   The CJM should describe the customer's objectives at all times, in every stage of the experience. Often, customer goals change and evolve while they progress through the Journey; for example, Persona 2 began her journey aiming to understand the actual path – what to do next, what the next step is; at the end of the journey path and after she started to understand the process, her shift changed to where she can obtain more information on a specific step.

4. **Make the experience emotion-centric**.
   Managing to tap into your customer's emotions is by far the most important part of the customer experience. There is no standardized way to do this – it vastly depends on each customer's profile. In the Launchpad U.S.A. CJM case, I used the Monomyth/Player Journey structure to make the user identify with the Hero figure. The fact that the journey was presented as a road of trials worked miracles.

5. **Carefully outline all touchpoints**.
   Take some time to illustrate the critical times when the customers and your com-

pany interact. Outlining all touchpoints in a Journey is vital to understand what the customers need the most and at which points in the Journey obstacles occur; by doing this, it is much easier to plan how to help customers overcome them.

6. **Tailor the Customer Experience.**
   The Launchpad journey was designed to offer companies different experiences, as not all companies have the same targets. They try to accomplish different things, they utilize the Journey paths in different ways. Tracking how different customers use the journey in different ways is a good practice so that the Journey can be continuously tailored to satisfy their needs and desires at all times.

7. **Offer opportunities to share knowledge.**
   Often, many customers are reluctant to use a tool and experience a journey path, especially when they are the first ones to do so and do not have any points of reference. Allowing them to send feedback, as well as to share their experiences with other community members helps them decide which journey path to take and what to do next.

8. **Align your brand targets with the Journey objectives**. Journey mappings constitute another company brand channel. The mapping should always be done, keeping in mind that the experience should align with the general brand value offering. Successful CJMs indicate whether the customers believe that the company brand delivers or not. The result can impact their loyalty and behaviour.

The criteria are based on the results from the testing sessions. The design exploration chosen for the sessions was based on the custom Monomyth/Player Journey model and the behavioural principles of Hassenzahl (2007) and Fogg (2009a). Given that the feedback from the sessions was positive and the design was given green light for development, we can deduct that the 3rd hypothesis is also validated.

8 Discussion

8.1 On the value of CJM as an emotional means of exploration

> *"The key to success for a CJM is a cocktail of emotions and experienc-es"*

What CJMs often do is to focus almost exclusively on the aim, the goals, on touchpoints and practical hands-on experiences. Many times this happens bluntly, without taking into account the emotional part of the experience – the type of effect it has on a person's psyche and how it affects his behaviour and further choices. Focusing only on the end-goal is not enough. It is the experience of going through the journey that matters most to a person. A Customer Journey should employ experiences mostly on an emotional basis; in our case this is even more important than bringing out the end goals – the rational element of the Journey.

People tend to believe that there is a clear line differentiating our emotions and our logic. But the reality is a little bit different. We tend to favour the superiority of our species as thinking logically, that we can train our brains to control our emotions.

Nevertheless, the majority of our thoughts and actions is the manifestation of our psyche – our personalities' own, unique emotional processes and patterns. Many might find its existence funny, but this fact is of key importance to help us understand how people – and furthermore how customers – function and react.

The data collection, on purpose, focused on the emotional part and triggers of the Journey, without, of course, omitting the logic and functionalities behind it. But the overall purpose was to produce a structure that would speak to the emotions, not the logic. The models used for mapping the journey to a UX supported gamified scenario have been repeatedly proven by literature to trigger emotions and feelings of engagement and satisfactions – each model separately. The results in this project support the fact that the combined Monomyth/Player proves that ***using an emotion-based model can increase the user/player's happiness, engagement and satisfaction.*** We can therefore derive some useful conclusions on how to create Costumer Journey Maps that can make the experience unforgettable:

1. **Focus on emotional triggers.** UX deals with one's emotions and satisfaction in any case.
2. **Don't let logic stop your creative process**; when creating personas for your journey, do not focus only on the traditional user/buyer profiles. Models that describe the psychology of the user are extremely helpful as well.
3. **Avoid generalizing**. Each customer is a unique, wonderful entity and should be treated as one.
4. When creating touchpoints for the journey, try to come up with **milestones that would excite, engage, trigger the user**. Subtle, unconscious triggers are very important as well.

Bottom line: If you want to create the ultimate experience for your users, take a step back and reflect on what you would want to experience y. What would your own behaviour and decisions be affected and triggered by? Both the interviews and the online tests came to one solid conclusion: When you are choosing a path for you/your business, you want to feel comfortable, you look up to a friend. You may select a certain path, based on rational criteria, but ultimately, and many times subconsciously, you select based on your gut feeling. Being 100% objective is nearly impossible. Subjectivity is by definition much more powerful than we think.

Of course, nothing is perfect; one cannot possibly expect that the CJM can cover all possible scenarios, neither that every users' psychological profile can be taken into account; however, in our case, the personalized face-to-face interactions fulfil this purpose: to dive into the emotional profiling of the people behind a member company. Generalizations are unavoidable, but when there is a will there is a way.

8.2 On the value of gamified customer journeys

"Bring fun back to the game"

Customer engagement has always been a problematic issue; especially today, when the online world poses one additional obstacle in the customer interactions: facelessness. Gamification as a means to overcome this obstacle is a great way to bring engagement back in the picture by placing the customers in the driving seat: the customer can now be the focal character, the game Hero that uses his skills and reaches the final goal – with a little help from our side. The benefits, as outlined in the literature review, are multiple;

however, many times they are sporadic. Somehow, many gamified environments fail to harvest the desirable results.

Let’s look into our results; the approach uses game principles but without focusing on cool graphics or overly complex journey paths. Often, something big is also very complex and overwhelming; it fails to satisfy and engage. The point of the project, as far as gamification is concerned is to revert back to the basics; that is don’t focus on the surface, but on the substance. Here are a few points to consider:

1. **Bring the fun back to the picture - use playfulness to engage.**
   Build your product or service around playfulness. Do not focus on nifty graphics. The end result does not have to be overly complex. Building a simple game-like structure that appeals to people’s instincts and natural problem-solving – like a puzzle or a simple exploration challenge can many times be more than enough.

2. **Keep things simple.**
   Do not make your interface too busy. If you want people to engage, make sure that the whole layout, the design elements and interactivity of the journey focuses on the user; by producing an easy-flow, simple – but not simplistic - user experience.

3. **People remember.**
   If you use structures that are associated with a positive feeling that users can associate with a typically familiar experience, the users will come back.

4. **Know your user.**
   Cultural associations are far more important than we believe – especially in the digital world. Start with a demographic segment of users you already know well and build on that. Going into completely unexplored waters almost certainly guarantees failure.

5. **Give something back to your users.**
   Engagement and continuous participation, especially in cases of acquiring customers on a long-term term basis very much depends on rewarding them. Give something back to your users; either award points or physically i.e. a discount or other freebies. Online journeys are perceived a manifestations of one’s status in an online community. People pay a lot of attention at their status – online or offline. Social pressure should not be underestimated.

8.3 On the value of emotion-based UX in the Customer Journey

“X” marks the spot

Every time someone interacts with your brand – online or offline - they go through a certain experience. The positivity or negativity associated with this experience can depend on different factors: how easy and unobstructed the navigation is, how engaging and valuable the whole experience is, whether it helps them complete their objectives, if they get help on the way, whether they are able to provide feedback etc.

The cluster of emotions that customers experience when using an online tool (in our case the online customer journey) has a traceable influence a company’s brand positioning. Users that identify with other brands, cannot excuse and accept a brand with emotional impact any less than what they have already experienced. Negative emotions, such as disappointment, frustration and confusion will drive them away. A brand that provides them with the ultimate user experience will engage and attract them.

Drawing customers and creating leads can be quite a frustrating process when creating a Customer Journey. Sometimes it feels like an unavoidable struggle to finally understand our customer segments in depth, offer them the service or product they exactly need, communicate with them better and provide them with the perfect customer experience. Nonetheless, despite all our efforts, still our strategies might fail. I touched the topic of emotions and personal interactions in the Customer Journey; a great area for future explorations, as well as a key element often missing from Journeys of this kind is how vital role the customers’ emotions play in their decision-making process.

Although logically-driven data such as statistics, rational profiling, facts and figures are still important, they key to win the hearts of our target audiences, is to take into account their conscious and unconscious emotions. They are the factors primarily driving their online behaviours – behaviours we aim to affect.

Let’s reflect on some important points on how our customers’ emotions could possibly define the success or failure of the Journeys we provide to them and how you can design experiences that can optimize your customers’ emotional journey.

Solidify a reference line for your customers’ emotional journey

Transforming the notion of emotion into a focal element in your strategy is a demanding, conscious and meticulous process. And it is doomed if you do not do some serious pre-work. The first step in optimizing the emotional journey is comprehending the important role emotions play in our society today. Do not underestimate them! Ascertain those emotions that can attract or drive away your target audiences: What are they looking for? Where are they trying to get to? If you have any success stories, look into them for reflection. What kind of emotions are they relevant to your own business? How have your customers’ decisions been made in the past?

Comprehending these emotions is vital; this comprises the baseline for the next step: mapping them out to meaning, fulfilling experiences. Set your objective to acquire a clear picture of the emotions your customers are feeling not only throughout the journey but when they interact with your brand in general. The means to achieving this is multifaceted but the starting point is usually the same: involve your key users throughout the process.

Designing experiences should involve all your customers’ emotional journeys

Efficiency is not a panacea; it is also significant to guarantee that emotion is not thrown out of the window. When designing a journey, you will eventually map out its touchpoints; play special attentions to those that will potentially cause both positive and negative emotional variations. The desired emotional behaviour should be your point of focus. Detect and defuse the touchpoints that would trigger negativity and ensure that positive emotions will be on the table.

An emotionally focused endeavour cannot be a one-time initiative only

In case you wish your business to be wholly emotionally connected with your customers, include this point in your overall business strategy. Utilizing the organization’s digital channels is one thing; a solid understanding of the vitality of emotion across an entire business is another.

The process of actively incorporating emotion into a customer experience is time-consuming and – many times – gruesome. But look into the bigger picture: as your business strives for stronger and better emotional bonds, the benefits derived from such a change can be invaluable: better brand placement, customer satisfaction, lower costs, internal employee turnover. From whatever side you may look into it, an emotionally and user-centric backed-up strategy can put you in front of the curve.

8.4 What happens next?

As I stated above, the CJM plan I produced for Launchpad USA is the solid basis for the development and execution of the actual product, planned to take place in 2017. Therefore, the plan itself is not, in a way, the end of this project's Journey.

In order to give Launchpad members the opportunity to get actively involved and provide their own value offerings to the rest of the member community (and to Amcham as well), there is currently a plan to look into the membership for companies that offer gamification platforms and/or customized gamification services and partner with them in order to execute the current CJM plan.

Amcham is a very fast paced business environment. It continuously develops its programs and expands its operations. Launchpad USA, being one of the fastest-changing programs, is very possible to require potential additions to its Customer Journey, which, in its turn, will very likely require changes in the CJM plan as well. The basic value offering (8 areas) is not planned to change; however each area might be amended with additional steps or functionalities (for example, the match-making of different partners). I have based my development on the Lean startup methodology; therefore the addition of extra requirements does not at the moment pose a problem.

Last, but not least, it is worth noting that Amcham Finland is planning to allow other Amchams in Europe to use the Launchpad USA program, for a fee. There is no specific timeline for this, but it is a strategic move that will eventually take place in the future. If this plan materializes, there will be tremendous potential for the Launchpad USA Customer Journey to expand and serve a vast member pool with companies coming from all over Europe; thus involving target audiences different than the N&B.

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10 Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1: Interview Transcripts

10.1.1 Interview with Mike Klyszeiko

Concerning the program, the 40-step process and the business case for a change.

Hello Mike and welcome to this session. Could you tell me a bit about yourself, who you are, your background and your position here in Amcham Finland?

Sure! So I am an American, originally from Silicon Valley, from the San Francisco area. I grew up there, worked there, I've worked for a couple of start-ups, doing various jobs, that my father was involved with and then friends of ours who had their own start-ups so I got a good taste of the start-up scene in the Silicon Valley, you know, working there while I was studying at UC Berkeley. Afterwards I graduated, I spent 6 years as an Officer in the Navy - not much really going on there – but after I left the Navy I went to Finance and worked for Morgan Stanley, in the wealth management group as an Investment Advisor sorting corporate clients and managing clients all around the U.S. So through that I really got to understand some of the cultural differences in businesses amongst the various regions in the U.S.

I am married to a Finn, so I have been here in Finland now for 6 years. When I first came here, I had a private company, where we were doing business development work for Finnish companies in the U.S. in a white label fashion* so we were working with Finnish companies helping them develop sales and marketing plans in the U.S. We had a small team in New York who then actually executed part of the sales plans for our clients. We worked with about 14 companies over that time, mostly tech companies, mostly start-ups, a couple preferably well established companies, so I really got to understand, you know, how Finnish companies in particular, what were the differences and gaps I would say there are in sales and marketing between Finland and the Nordic region vs the U.S. is some of our companies' business actually started to grow and develop very nicely in the U.S.; they needed to wrap up operations, so they then turned to us to advise them on the aspects of everything involved with that, so I guess after that I came to understand what are the challenges Finnish/Nordic companies face when, you know, actually establish operations in the U.S. My partner actually went to work for one of our clients, which eventually led me here to Amcham. We were a member of Amcham, so I knew the organisation well, so I was brought here to develop a program to serve Finnish growth companies that were looking into break into the U.S. Amcham didn't really have any program to serve them and there was a regular request from the business community to help guide Finnish companies going to the U.S.

So, that led to establishing what we have now, which is the Launchpad USA program. It is a program that's really based on my experiences with working with Finnish companies, knowing what the common challenges are, and when I say common, what are the challenges that a startup company would face as well as a very well established company; there are similarities in many respects and of course there are differences. Also, I wanted to create a program that would leverage what I believe are the strengths of our organization; that's a strong international network of businesses, especially large, multinational companies. So that's what led to the Launchpad USA program, which I run here.

Ok! And you have been running it for how long?

Well, I've been here about 3 years and two months and we didn't establish the program until August, of course we needed to develop the idea, so, basically it's been two and a half years - a little more than two and a half years we've been running the program.

You talked about growth companies. Could you explain what does the term really mean in this context? What are growth companies?

Yeah, so we like to use the term Growth Companies – I mean I guess you could say all companies need to be a growth company, all companies need to grow, but primarily, we are working with companies that have products or services in the market that are generate revenue. That's our focus in terms of the members and types of companies we want to work with, or I should say that are better fitted for the program; we have worked with some startup companies, so I would say startups are not quite at the growth stage, they are still struggling with their revenue, but again, growth companies are those companies that are generating revenue, maybe profitable, maybe not but nevertheless they are on that aperture direction in terms of revenue and customer acquisition.

Alright. Basically, to my understanding the program was established to help growth companies do their business in the U.S.; either break into the U.S. market or expand if they are already there.

Now could you tell me a little bit more about the program at this moment – how it currently runs and what are the tools, what are the processes, what kind of means are used to achieve its business goals? I would suppose that not all companies

have the same needs, not all of them have the same business model, so not all of them would need the same plan from our side, from the Launchpad side.

Yeah. So, I will start with what's the mission, what we are trying to accomplish with the Launchpad USA. So, what we want to do is we want to prepare companies for their Journey. To my experience, many companies go into the U.S. without a really solid plan to enter the U.S. market, without understanding the U.S. market in relation to or in the context of how their business fits into the U.S. market. So, we want to work with companies and help them first understand the U.S. market, help them understand the diversity of the market, the competitive nature, the risks associated with doing business in the U.S. So how we do that? It really starts with us sitting down and talking to companies and understanding what it means for them when they say they want to go in to the U.S., because that means different things for different companies. Once we understand what their objectives are, when they say they want to go in to the U.S., what does that mean, we can then develop a plan of action. So we can develop a plan of action again to help the companies understand what are the steps they need to take, when they need to take them to get to the point that they want to be in the near term, taking into consideration all the issues related to doing business in the U.S.

So, the process is really the exploratory discussions and then us going and, based on those discussions, developing this roadmap which currently manifests in an excel sheet – we deliver it to them as the basic project plan, outlining the steps, the timeframes, we put them in the proper sequential order and then we also like to attach notes to each steps – in those notes we usually articulate the reasons for this step, what are some of the conditions that need to be met to fulfil a certain step. So, for example, when it gets to opening a bank account, we put a note in there, explaining what the typical requirements to open a bank account in the U.S. are.

So, it's a very manual process, I would say at this point, where we have to generate each Excel, as you said, to specifically meet their needs, because each company is different. Some companies want to set up a U.S. subsidiary; they want to have an office somewhere in the U.S.; they want to hire people, they want to move people lower. The steps to get there are many more versus a company that is just looking maybe for its first five customers or a company that wants to be in a position to attract venture capital funding from a U.S. venture capital firm. Obviously, they don't have to take nearly as many steps vs a company that wants to have maybe a fully functional up and running U.S. subsidiary and employing people. So, there is a lot of work for us there to put the steps together, to make sure they are accurate, but then a big part of the process is then connecting the growth companies to our partners – as well call them – in the U.S. So these are experts, they cover all steps that a company needs to take in establishing, entering and growing their business in the U.S. So, we want to connect them to our partners at the right time, so that they get proper guidance on certain aspects, on certain areas related to going in to the U.S. And, again, this is a very manual process right now because we basically maintain an Excel spreadsheet with all of our partners in the U.S. based on their industries and what services they provide and we can then attach them at a step. Let's take the bank example again. So, we can connect them to two or three banks we have a relationship with, so we take the Excel data that has the bank contact information and send it. So, it is a very manual, not user-friendly experience for our companies. They are getting loads of emails from me with introductions and different names of different law firms or even resources; so, it's very disjointed, I guess you could say.

How many steps does a company need to take? Let's say a new company that wants to break into the U.S. market, that has no idea what to do, no idea who to talk with, no idea what is happening over there, comes to you and asks for your help. How many steps does that company typically have to take?

There is typically about 40 steps and you could say that there's 40 steps and there is really 8 different areas. Within those areas there are multiple steps. So, again, there is 40 steps that a company wants in order to have a functioning office in the U.S. So, of course, you can take some steps out, again, as I mentioned earlier, for companies that don't need an office, but they need to have a local presence through virtual office, then there is obviously much fewer steps and some companies might not want to do all the steps at one time; we often work with some companies that they need to have a subsidiary, they need to have a virtual office and that's it for now, so there is maybe 8 steps – you know – much shorter, and then, when they are down the road they might say, you know "now we want to hire a person". So then, we can plug in, we can give them those steps. But, to answer your question, there's about 40 steps we advise companies to take to have a fully functioning, properly set up U.S. subsidiary.

And the only tool to follow this roadmap – the 40 steps – is the Excel file?

Yes, it is the Excel that we generate. Yeah.

Ok. If you could focus a bit on this process, just to understand what kind of areas they need to look into if they want to enter the U.S. Market or expand their operations there. Could you describe these areas that they must take into account?

Yeah. Well, I would say the first thing to look at is registering a business into the U.S. – and compared to Finland, this is much more complex. There is the whole business registration side, so that is establishing a legal entity of your business. That is usually the starting point for companies. Another big part of the 40 steps is the Immigration component because obviously the founders or the executives of a company have to go to the U.S. and some go for short periods of time, sometimes to set up a business necessitates that they are there for longer periods of time. So the immigration part is a big, big step, one that usually comes up early in the discussions, helping companies understand what are their options in terms of Visas, for moving their key employees over, either short term or long term and then more importantly what are the requirements for some of the visas that they are eligible, because many of the U.S. visas have very strict requirements and often those requirements involve high costs. So there is that with the Immigration; then there is the Financial Management, you know if you are doing business in the U.S. so managing the books, the accounting issues – again because there is basically 50+ tax laws in the U.S., there is federal taxes, state taxes, so understanding the tax environment is very important. So, there is the financial management component and within that there is banking. Another big part of the 40 steps is the Human Resource component that is the recruitment and hiring and employing U.S. personnel – again very complex because there is several state local employment laws that companies have to adhere to, so there's many steps. For example, in the U.S. even a job post is considered a legal document so you have to make sure that it doesn't have anti discriminatory language in it. So, under HR there is quite a few steps from job postings, to employee handbooks, to offer letters. Within the HR there is the payroll, managing insurances under the human resources – which sends us to another big part of the 40 steps and that's the Risk Management. Risk Management can be accomplished in few ways. One is through the company formation but also the insurances. So identifying or at least understanding what are the basic insurances that are required in the U.S. and then also what are the other insurances companies might need to have to protect their overall business. Especially more established Finnish companies don't want to put their business at risk because the U.S. is a very litigious society and there's a lot of law suits but there are ways to insulate your business. So that's another big part of it. Then there is of course the acquiring of office spaces, leases, things like that; there we also include Marketing and Branding, developing a marketing plan, what's your brand etc. These are not necessarily must-do steps, but ones that we put there to remind companies that they should be thinking about.

So, these are part of the package anyway. They can choose to follow them or not.

Right. Exactly. And we make it clear – I mean these things that they absolutely have to follow, we do make that clear. And it is also important to know too that those companies that are going to employ people into the U.S., as a mentioned earlier, the State Laws and the state notifications when you establish your office in a state – when you hire people from multiple states you need to notify those states that you have new hires, so we like to include in there, into the 40 step plan links. A lot of that can now be done online, so we like to include links, so that they can click on them, they can go and take care of the notifications themselves. There is also the Logistics, so there are actually companies that are shipping physical goods. We mentioned the Logistics and we mentioned again the penning on who they make trade with in the U.S. so, for example, if a company is exporting goods to be sold through regional retailers, especially large retailers, there are certain requirements that U.S. retailers would put on to the companies to fulfil their requirements – there are a lot of companies that are not aware of that. SO we will add those on to the companies that are actually trading physical goods.

So, basically to sum up, we have Company Formation, the financial aspects, the Immigration, Sales and Marketing, Human resources, Logistics, Risk Management and Insurances and also the Real Estate. So these are, let's say kind of breaking down or scaling up the 40 step process into 8 large areas that include sub processes and sub steps depending on the company needs and the company plans.

How would you say that this process is serving you at the moment? You said before that the format is not very user friendly that is a bit cumbersome for the companies. Is it in the plan that this 40 step process will be simplified, would turn into something more appropriate for the members? Have you had any feedback on that? Is a change something necessary to be done for Launchpad USA?

I can tell you that the 40 step plan has been very valuable to the companies that come to us and have actually used it to go to the U.S. The feedback has been very very positive – because without it what companies end up doing are endless Google searches and hoping that they get it right. These are companies that don't have experience and so they are trying to put the pieces together on their own without any experience. The "smart" ones will call companies that have had that before – that's assuming that they've done it right – and we do know that companies that have used our plan have gotten into the U.S. market on time, on schedule and have not had any problems. Companies that have gone without it, for the most part do face problems, they miss certain things and the process takes a lot longer. So it is a very valuable service to our members and to the business community as a whole. The Excel component has been "o.k." but the way it is formatted hasn't been clear to a lot of companies, so we've often had to have several follow up meetings to explain things. Sometimes the notes aren't that clear to the companies too, but the big bottleneck for the challenge with the current process is really *connecting the companies to our partners in the U.S.* at least from my side. When I am working with several companies at one time it is a lot of work and very manual, a lot of emails. I know companies would really like it if the user experience was more favourable, where we can do the same level or some minimal consultation but then the companies would be able to go and basically through some minimal consultation and then also just by answering some basic questions could then put together the 40 step process, we can review it, make it accurate, but then digitalizing that would enable us to link even more information to the steps and then also make our partners in the U.S. more visible. So as companies go through, you can think of it as a card deck, there is one card as a step and that has all the information and the contacts. There is definitely a way to streamline and it would be great for me because obviously it would save me a lot of time, but also for the companies, because there are a lot of them that do need this guidance and want it and it would allow is I think to reach more of them more efficiently.

Basically, to my understanding it is also some kind of a bridge between the business community here and the business community in the U.S. and using this tool helps them communicate with each other and in a way take care of things by themselves to a certain extent, without having to come to us every time asking for information.

Right. Especially with some of the background information on some of the steps but also some of the aspects of doing business in the U.S., we want the U.S. partners to be able to share that information with the growth companies that are coming over. That is definitely an important part of it so then basically we can step to the side – not away but to the side – and let the communication flow more freely through a digital platform vs the way it is now.

Alright, I think that's it from my side. Do you have any questions, or comments that you'd like to add?

We are bringing a service to the surface and we are trying to automate it as best as we can that is basically what we are trying to do. That's all.

Thank you Mike.

Thank you!

10.1.2 Interview with Erika Sauer

Concerning the INC (U.S. members), their intake in Launchpad U.S.A., some insights for the U.S. market and how the Journey could help eradicate the communication bottlenecks in both sides (U.S. and the Nordics).

Hello Erika and welcome to this session. Could you tell us a bit about yourself, a small introduction of you, who you are, your background and your position here at Amcham?

Ok! So, my name is Erika and I am the Managing Director of our New York office, which is a daughter company of Amcham Finland. We are mainly servicing in NY the incoming Launchpad Companies, so in practice it means that we are helping the Nordic or Northern European Companies who want to enter the U.S. market in various ways; via networking, by relationship building and by organizing events and in any other way possible, depending on what their needs are.

About my background – it's always a challenge to explain – in simple words, first, there was a 10-year period when I was working for the Academia. I was doing my Doctorate in the area of Business Administration at the same time. My thesis lasted 4 years, and then the next 4-5 years I was doing my Post-doc research and teaching at the University. I did Management consulting meanwhile. Afterwards – let's say my third life phase, here in Finland, I was helping companies in practice and not on the academic side, as a consultant, but hands-on.

Thank you! If it is ok with you, we can move on to the main topic. So, based on the interview that I held with Mike, one of the targets for Launchpad USA this and next year is to provide members, both in the Nordics and also on the U.S. side with a tool that will serve them as a "journey" when they want to move to the U.S., but also as a communications platform for the INC members. I have sufficiently covered the first "journey" part. According to your experience and your interactions with our U.S. – based members what is it that they are looking for or expecting from the tool? In order words, what would they like to see, what is still missing from the Launchpad program?

Yes. So far, our weak point, as I see it, has been that we look like a "bow" and in the middle of it there is a knot. Mike and I are the knot and we are kind of the bottleneck between the Launchpad companies and the INC members (the U.S. service providers). So, the Service providers are more than eager to help, to do business with the incoming Launchpad companies. So they want to help them, but of course, since they provide services, they want to do it for a fee. We have chosen them, they are all members but we cannot “force” any of the incoming companies to use the services of the service providers but “the membership of the Amcham Finland INC members is like an invitation to a dance”. No one will guarantee you a dance partner, no one will guarantee that you’ll get to be on the dance floor. But you were invited. And this is it, that’s what we are promising. So, so far Mike and I have been there in the middle, introducing companies one-on-one to each other. We will not stop this. But the tool could be a way for the INC companies individually to establish contact with the incoming members. So we can cease to be the “middle men” and also, if I understand correctly, maybe the service providers in the U.S. will be able to see where in the process the incoming companies are and what kind of services they might need today, what kind of services they might need in a month and what kind of services they will need in three months. It’s like a two-way communication; they can inform the incoming companies about their own services and about themselves already before incoming companies might need them. So, when the time comes it will not be a surprise to me when the people on each side of the table are “old friends”. It’s also a learning tool for the U.S. side companies. They will learn how to interact with the Nordic companies, because the interaction should be perhaps a little bit different and vice-versa.

When you say “different”, do you have something specific in your mind?

Yeah, I will explain this to you. I think Mike is a bit reluctant to leave the communication completely in the hands of the service providers because he is somehow afraid that they will be too aggressively approaching the incoming Launchpad members. So, you would, you know, get 10 phone calls from 10 different law firms every day – you’d get spammed in a way. But, this is my example: Let’s say that you are a Launchpad company moving to the U.S. market. If you are not willing to deal with these “aggressive” approaches, then maybe you are not ready for the U.S. market. We will be protecting you for the wrong reasons. We shouldn’t be protecting them from the real world. We should push them towards the service providers and say “you need to choose. We can help you choose”. These are the choices that we are providing through Amcham Finland; there is another completely different world, where there are other service providers but let’s start with ours; let’s see if some of them could be suitable for you. You will make the decision in the end of the day, depending on the price, depending on the quality of the services and so on. It’s better to have more options than just one.

Ok. So, it is also a learning process for the incoming Launchpad companies on how the U.S. Market is and how aggressive in can be when they actually go there.

Yes, sure.

Could you describe how the U.S. market is at the moment? What would a Launchpad company expect to come up against when they decide to move their operations there?

Concerning the New York area, where my base of operations are – my experiences might not be applicable for the Mid-west or the West Coast – the main differences I think they are the very tough competition, aggressive competition, which is probably not based that much on how good your services or products are, but how good you are at marketing it. And then the second one is how very very fast paced things are compared to how it is happening over here; so these two, the speed and the way of marketing are just different. So, there is a lot of sugar coating, there are lots of aggressive pitching and speeches. And the way of speaking about your own service, we are not used to doing it like that over here and we need to start doing it. You should not be similar to others, you need to differentiate yourself. You have to believe in yourself. If you don't believe in your product, if you cannot show your enthusiasm and your confidence to your own service, you cannot expect anyone else to do it for you. The speed factor relates to the fact the decisions are made often very quickly; if they are not made quickly, the process of making it might be really long. I think these are the two main differences. What comes closer perhaps to our life here is that it's much more people-oriented and relationship-depended than we would think. The market there is so big that you have indefinite options. If you have such a big amount of options, then naturally, you trust your friends, you trust your peers and you trust people that you have in your networks and you are guarded by them. You are saving time.

Is this also a part of the communication that we are weak at? If an incoming company asks for recommendations, do they get this personalized service from us?

Yeah, I do think that they do. Sometimes we might be reluctant to actively do that as we are not promoting one member to the other. But we are helping them. Let's say again that you are an incoming Launchpad company and I am me, Erika, and I am telling you that we have these law firms as members; company A is an expensive one but they are offering superb services in a specific area of expertise. Company B is very cheap, there are only two lawyers working and they are specializing in this and this area but they cannot help you with other possible challenges that you might face in the future. And then there is company C which is a mid-market size but they might have excellent relationships exactly with the people that you want to get to know. Then I could say, you know, maybe Company C would be good for you, but at the end of the day, you have to choose those service providers and will help you go forward. You can, if you want chose the cheap one, especially if you are low on budget, but this might mean that this choice might prologue your journey and maybe your success also. Maybe I would not be using exactly these words, I would be a little more obscure, leaving more space to the individual to decide, but I would be telling them as truthfully as I can about the characteristics of the company, help them make their own decision, but I would ask them to meet all of them.

That's very interesting. I asked that because I am pretty sure this conversation would take place face-to-face, it would be something necessary to happen. Now, going back to the tool, would you say that the first part, where you recommend different types of service providers to the incoming companies, would it be something that'd be incorporated in the tool? This proactive recommendation of different service providers?

Yes, I think that it is fair that we are letting the service providers see where companies are in the process and to approach them freely and in an aggressive way if they want to because this is how the market works. If someone is more active than the other fine. Because everyone has the same knowledge, everyone can follow, so it's a "democratic" tool in that sense. When let's say that a Launchpad company over here uses the Journey tool, it depends on the service provider on the other side to track them. If you are active in tracking, you are active in contacting, good for you. Probably you will get some business. If you are just sitting and waiting that someone calls you that leads to nowhere.

But the possibility of a face to face consultation is still very much there.

Yes, because I think this is always the strongest way of communication. I think that it increases the trust in every way. The trust towards us, the trust towards the Launchpad Company, the trust towards the people on the table. That is why I think it's a strong tool but obviously we need to become a little bit more efficient. I think this can be a very good "secondary" tool.

We would still though need to be in the loop in the whole process.

Yes.

Could you provide me with an example, a case where we, physically, would need to be an absolutely necessary step? What I mean is where would a face to face consultation be needed where the tool would not be enough?

Yeah, I can think of one, actually easily. Sometimes, you just see, you have a strong feeling that this person should be working with this one because there is an obvious match and you cannot explain that in an algorithm, or you have a feeling that these two people should never even meet because they could never work together. They are not a good match. So, should they somehow decide to work together through this channel, that working together is a bad idea, I would probably not be able to interfere anymore but I think this would be a situation where I'd say that face to face communication would be absolutely necessary.

This could be the next step (laughs) – "match-making" in the journey.

Yes! This is something that probably nobody can explain – why I think this person is not a good match or why I think they could benefit from another one. I am not sure if something like that could be translated into a mathematical formula. It's something that has to do with whether you know this person or not.

So we have concluded that the tool should also serve as a communications platform. Is there anything that you think we have not covered from the INC side?

One thing that I think we have not covered and would wish to see is that the service providers – and Launchpad companies – would want to know also about the people, not only about the company. To make the interactions a little bit more personal but not in an intrusive way. I do not know how this could be done, and I am not saying that you should do it but it is this personal part that is probably missing here. When you are clicking on a company you will visit the website and you can see what they are doing and you can also probably find out though other channels – probably through LinkedIn – their people and who they are; so it is not entirely true that you cannot connect to people; however this is not done on an "emotional" level. Maybe it's a bit too far-fetched. It could be something to be considered in the future. Making it easy for people to talk to each other. In the U.S. people use phones all the time. I am receiving phone calls much more often than I did, here in Finland. Here everyone is emailing all the time – or texting. There, people are calling. I don't know if that's something that we would like to make possible. That every time there would be the possibility of skype calling or so.

Probably we'd need permission for that, but, for example, when companies take the journey real-time, service providers would be able to see a message from their side "I am available for calling, or available for skype call" etc. allowing direct contact.

Exactly!

One last question for you today: I need to thoroughly understand all our target audiences, so could you describe the profile of a typical INC company?

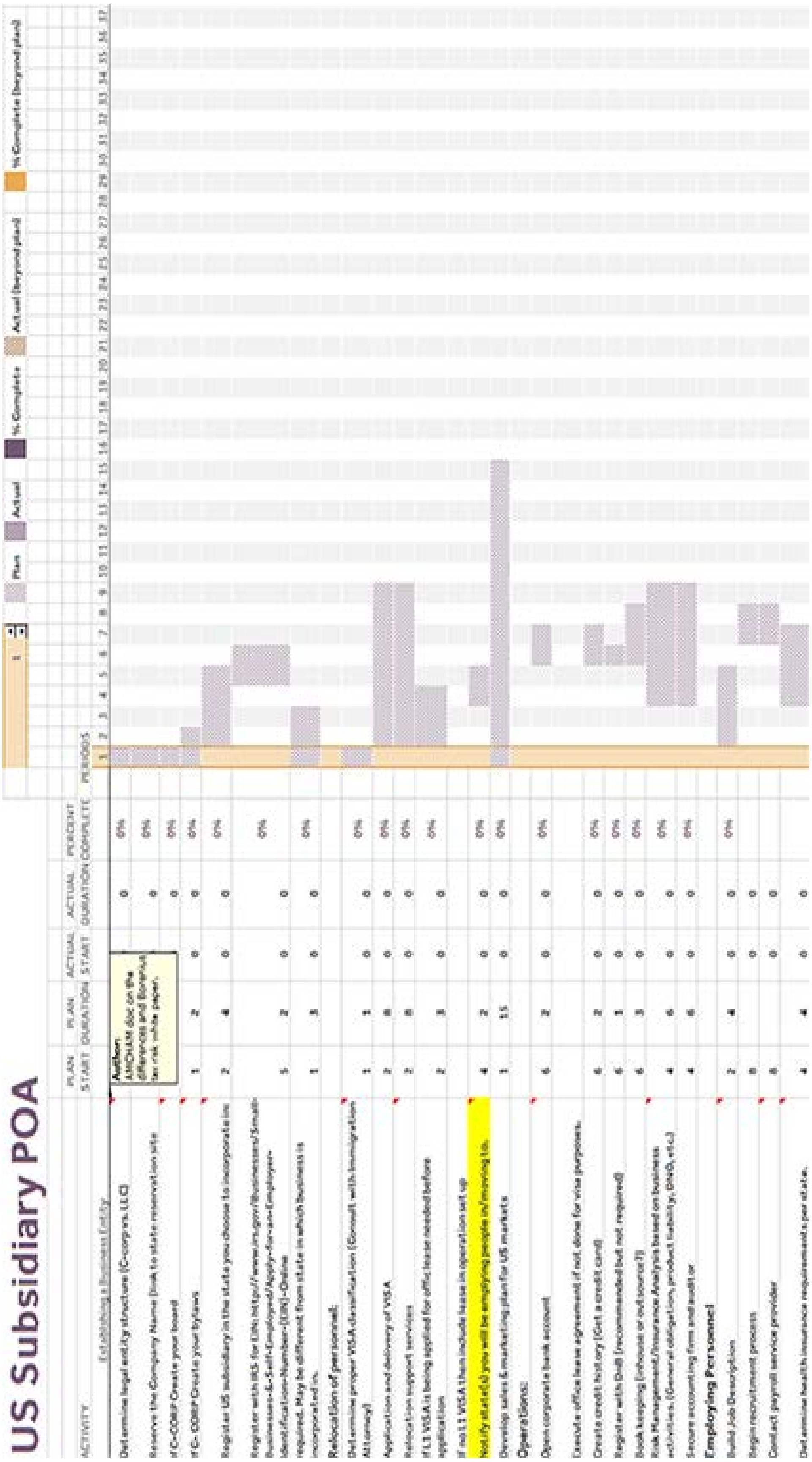
A typical INC company would be a law firm or an accounting company – so expert services – mid-market, New York based and very much NY style, so stereotypically loud middle-aged men (laughs). But in a good way. In a very warm way also. So, they are fun people to work with.

One thing I'd like to point out, going back to the nature of the U.S. market, the incoming Launchpad companies need to start buying services. Here we have this DIY culture that you are doing everything yourself, in house. But over there, if you DIY, you will probably make very expensive mistakes, if you can even do i.e. the tax filing yourself. It is unbelievably complex. That's why I say that you need to start budgeting the usage of the service providers. Put your energy into finding customers, into marketing your services and let somebody else do all the rest. Outsource everything you can, because otherwise you are wasting valuable time, doing things that are not pushing your business forward.

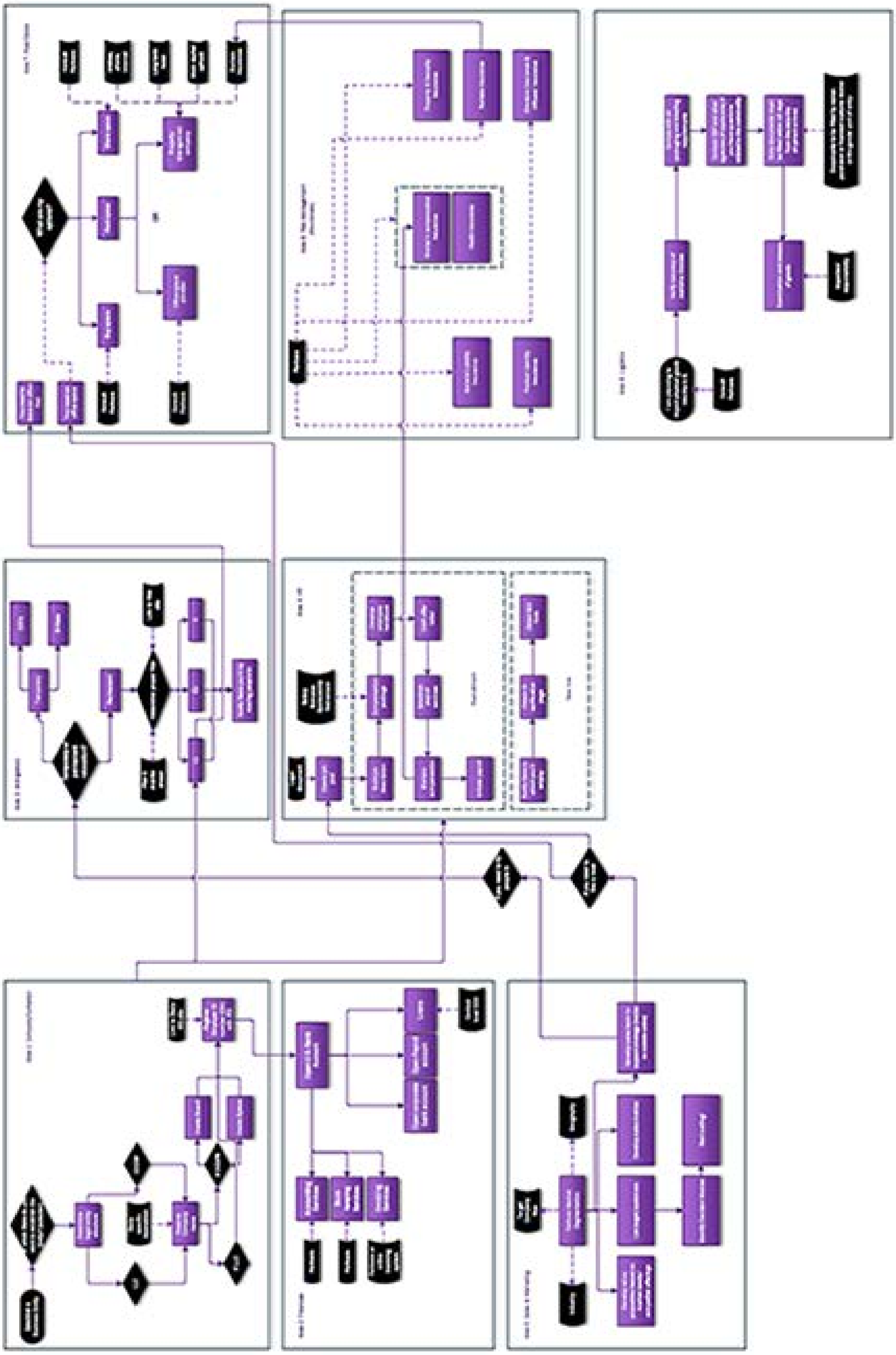
Thank you Erika! I think this is all from my side. Is there anything else you would like to comment or add?

Thank you! I do not have anything at the moment, but I will definitely contact if something comes to my mind – and the same goes for you.

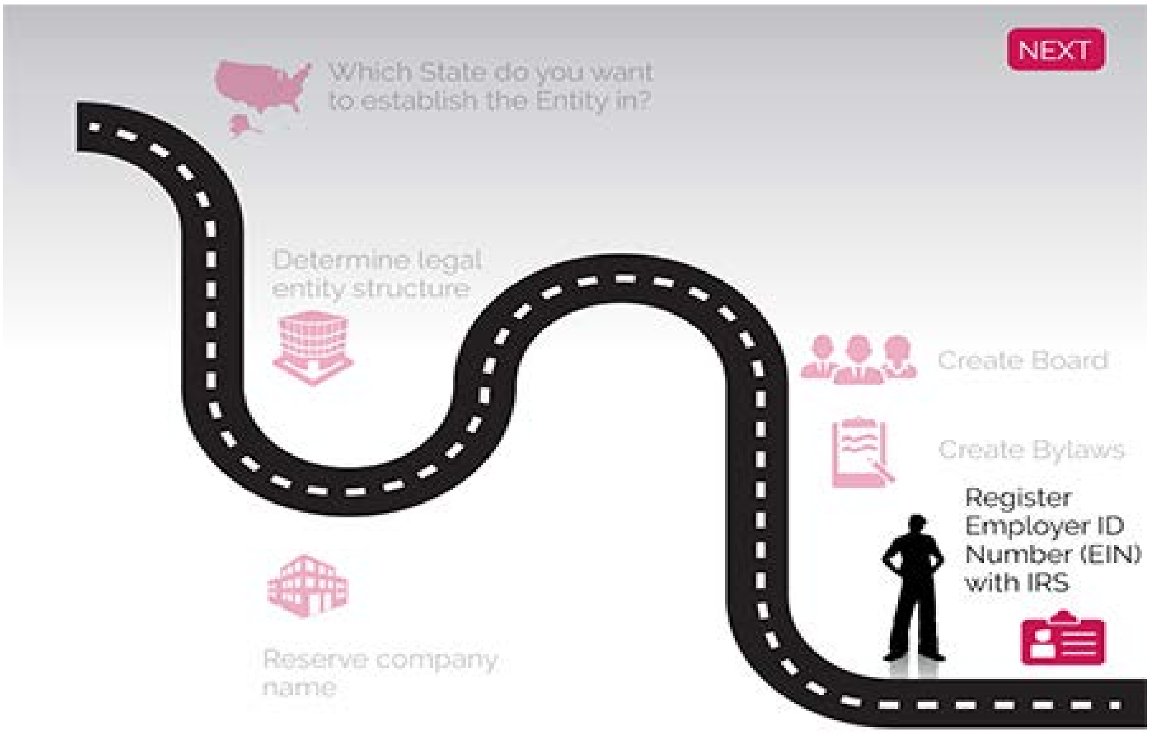
10.2 Appendix 2: Sample of the 40 step process



10.3 Appendix 3: Visio Concept map



10.4 Appendix 4: InVision interactive prototype sample screens


NEXT
Which State do you want to establish the Entity in?
Determine legal entity structure
Create Board
Create Bylaws
Register Employer ID Number (EIN) with IRS
Reserve company name

10.5 Appendix 5: Gamification model canvas

Gamification Model Canvas For:Launchpad CJ By:K.P Date: 03.09.16

FEATURES
Describe the features you have available for incorporating mechanics

- Introduction of the Hero (You).
- Call to adventure (so you think you can enter the U.S. Market?)
- Instructions: How do you do that?
- You are "Company name"
- Develop from Nordics (the whole/ complete journey)
- What do I do if I am not sure? (moment of doubt)
- Road of trials – you can unlock once you have done them
- After regular playing and exploring, the player knows how things work.
- Final challenge/boon: Achieve your goals

MECHANICS
Describe the rules of the game with components for creating game dynamics

- It is your journey to the U.S.
- Complicated, long, with a lot of obstacles
- But we are here to help!
- Platform-like game with different options for different areas. Each area is represented by the individual card with the appropriate symbol
- What do you wish to do? (crossing the threshold/different scenarios)
- Mentor/Assistant always there if needed (in the form of tips/help agent/request face to face consultation)
- Trials: different areas. Like in an rpg game you can explore your environment (different houses/ different areas and within a house rooms are representing the different steps. Some rooms are required to be searched (required steps), some are not (optional steps))
- Once achieved, the player enters the ordinary world (all areas have been un-locked/explored) and the user can move around wherever he wants. Open world. Freely.
- Freedom to live, return to the ordinary world, share the knowledge

DYNAMICS
Describe the behaviour of the mechanics acting on the player over time

Status
Progression
Identity
Creativity
Reward

COMPONENTS
Describe the elements of the game to create mechanics or give feedback

Levelling up
Achievements
Progress bar
Virtual/Real Prizes
Virtual helper

AESTHETICS
Describe the desirable emotional responses evoked in the player when they interact with the game

Challenge
Virtual narration
Identification with Hero
Discovery
Community
Fellowship

BEHAVIOURS
Describe the behaviours or actions necessary to develop our players in order to get returns from the project

Follow path
Communicate with partners
Follow a tip
Go to a website
Recommend and share knowledge

PLAYERS
Describe who and what the people are like in whom we want to develop behaviours

Launchpad companies
U.S. partners

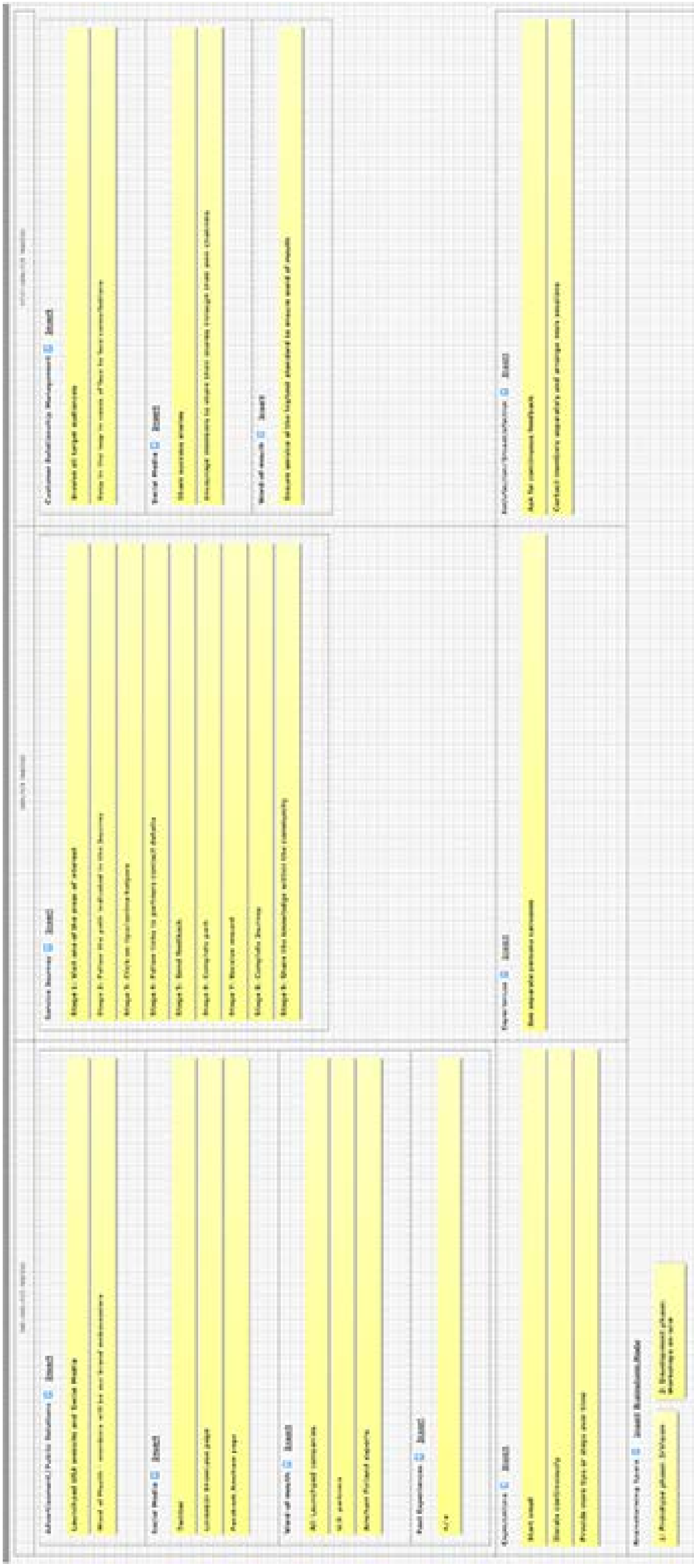
COSTS
What are the main costs in designing and implementing the game What is the budget available for achieving the goals. Can the costs be phased?

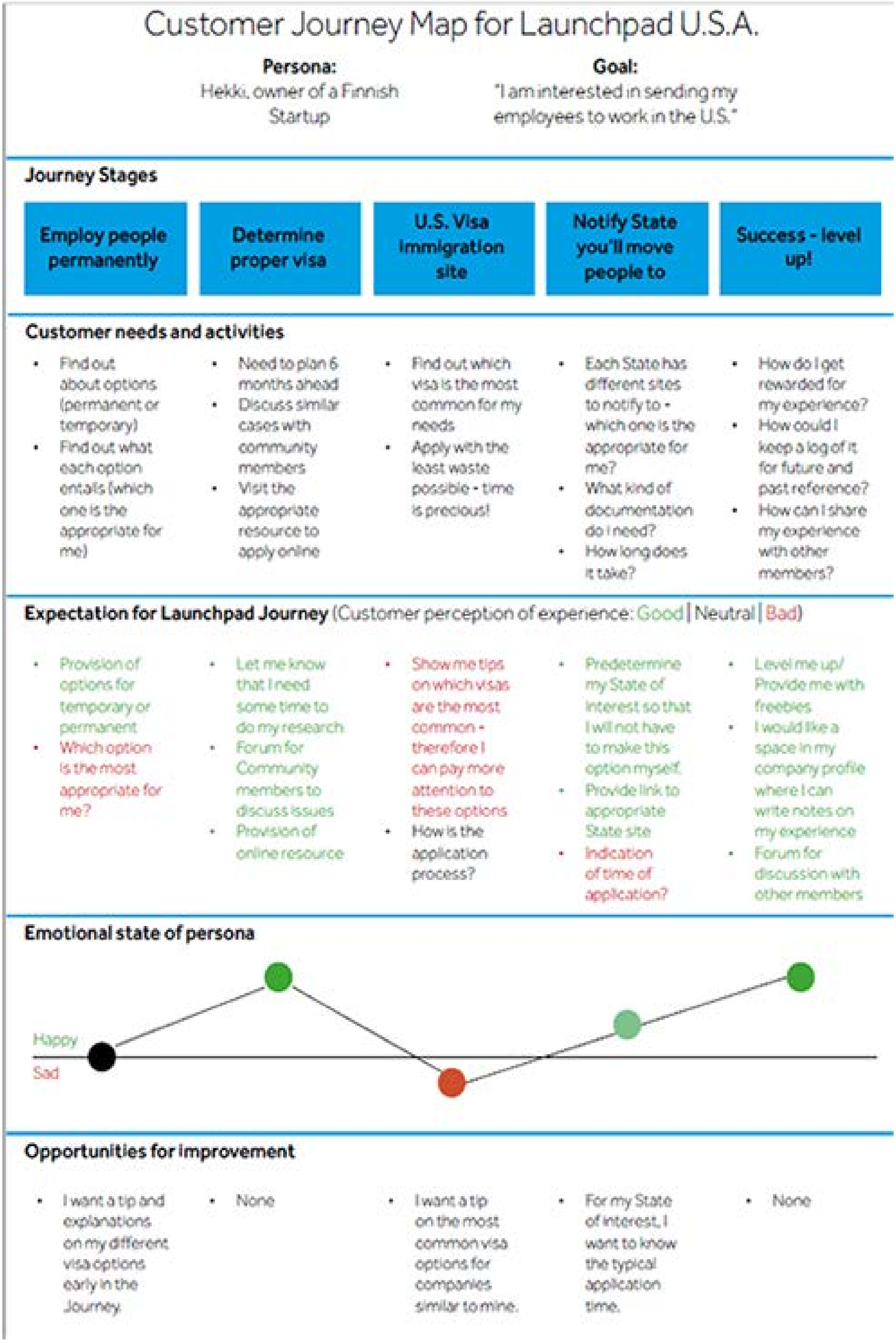
No budget yet - non-profit so if possible, to be done with internal resources.

BENEFITS
Describe the tangible outcomes of the success of the project in introducing gamification into the learning How is success being measured? What results do we hope to achieve?

Increase engagement | Identify with companies | Remove bottleneck | Optimize communication

10.6 Appendix 6: Customer Journey canvas





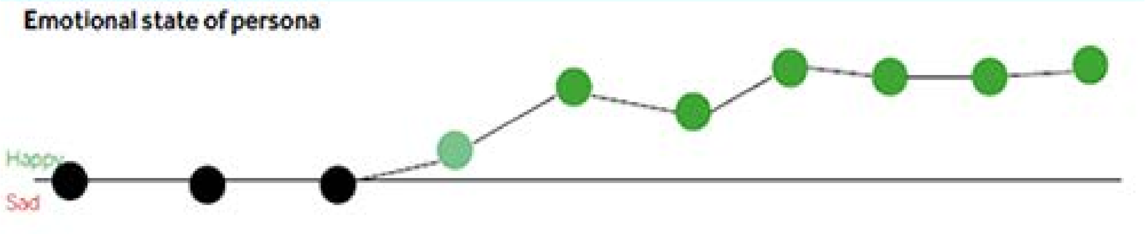
Customer Journey Map for Launchpad U.S.A.

Persona: Hekki, owner of a Finnish Startup

Goal: "I am interested in sending my employees to work in the U.S."

Journey Stages

Employ people permanently	Determine proper visa	U.S. Visa Immigration site	Notify State you'll move people to	Success - level up!
Customer needs and activities				
• Find out about options (permanent or temporary) • Find out what each option entails (which one is the appropriate for me)	• Need to plan 6 months ahead • Discuss similar cases with community members • Visit the appropriate resource to apply online	• Find out which visa is the most common for my needs • Apply with the least waste possible - time is precious!	• Each State has different sites to notify to - which one is the appropriate for me? • What kind of documentation do I need? • How long does it take?	• How do I get rewarded for my experience? • How could I keep a log of it for future and past reference? • How can I share my experience with other members?
Expectation for Launchpad Journey (Customer perception of experience: Good | Neutral | Bad)				
• Provision of options for temporary or permanent • Which option is the most appropriate for me?	• Let me know that I need some time to do my research • Forum for Community members to discuss issues • Provision of online resource	• Show me tips on which visas are the most common - therefore I can pay more attention to these options • How is the application process?	• Predetermine my State of interest so that I will not have to make this option myself. • Provide link to appropriate State site • Indication of time of application?	• Level me up/ Provide me with freebies • I would like a space in my company profile where I can write notes on my experience • Forum for discussion with other members
Emotional state of persona				
Opportunities for improvement				
• I want a tip and explanations on my different visa options early in the Journey.	• None	• I want a tip on the most common visa options for companies similar to mine.	• For my State of interest, I want to know the typical application time.	• None



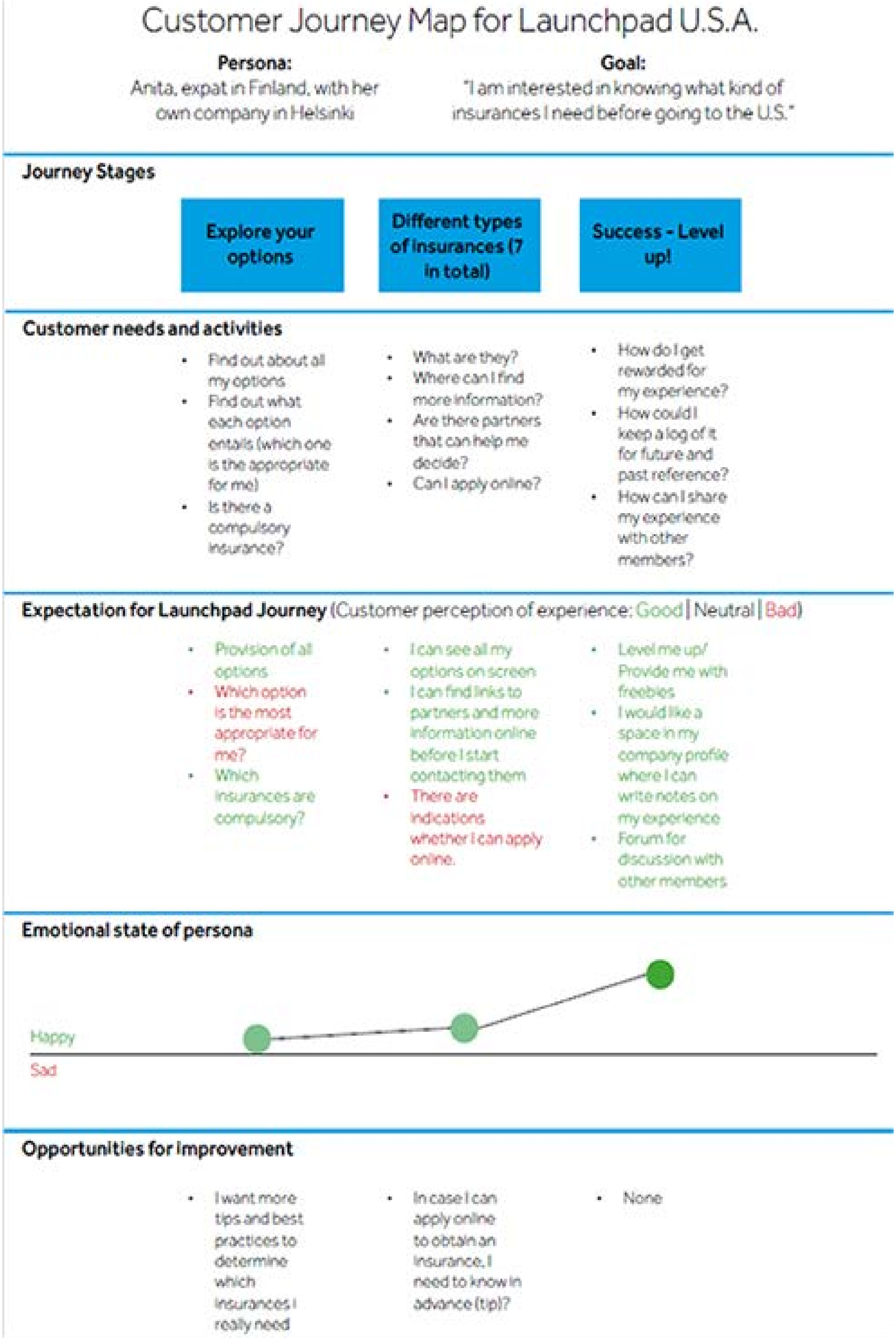
Customer Journey Map for Launchpad U.S.A.

Persona:
Laura, C.E.O. of a growth company that has already established a presence in the U.S.

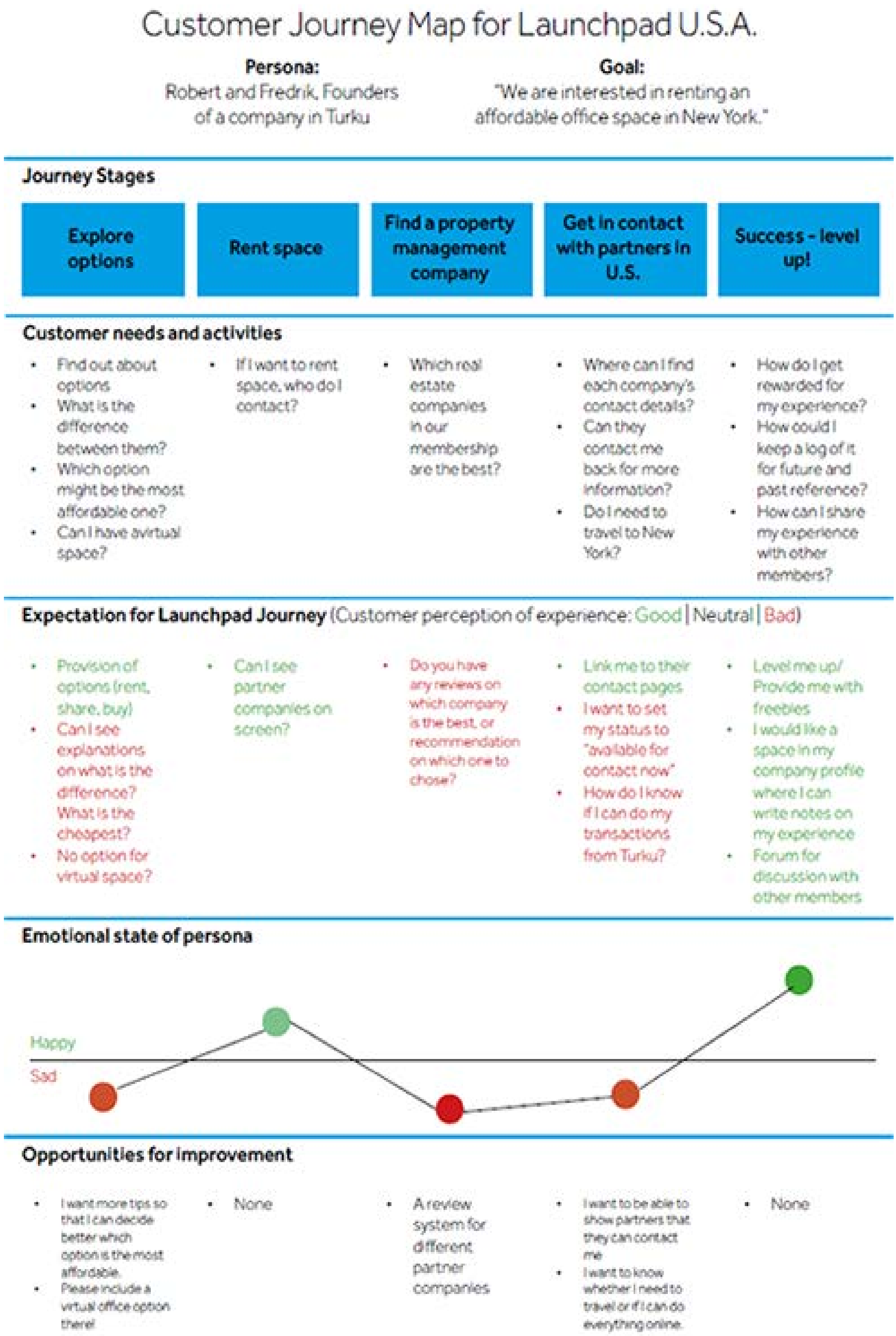
Goal:
"I am interested in employing local people in my company."

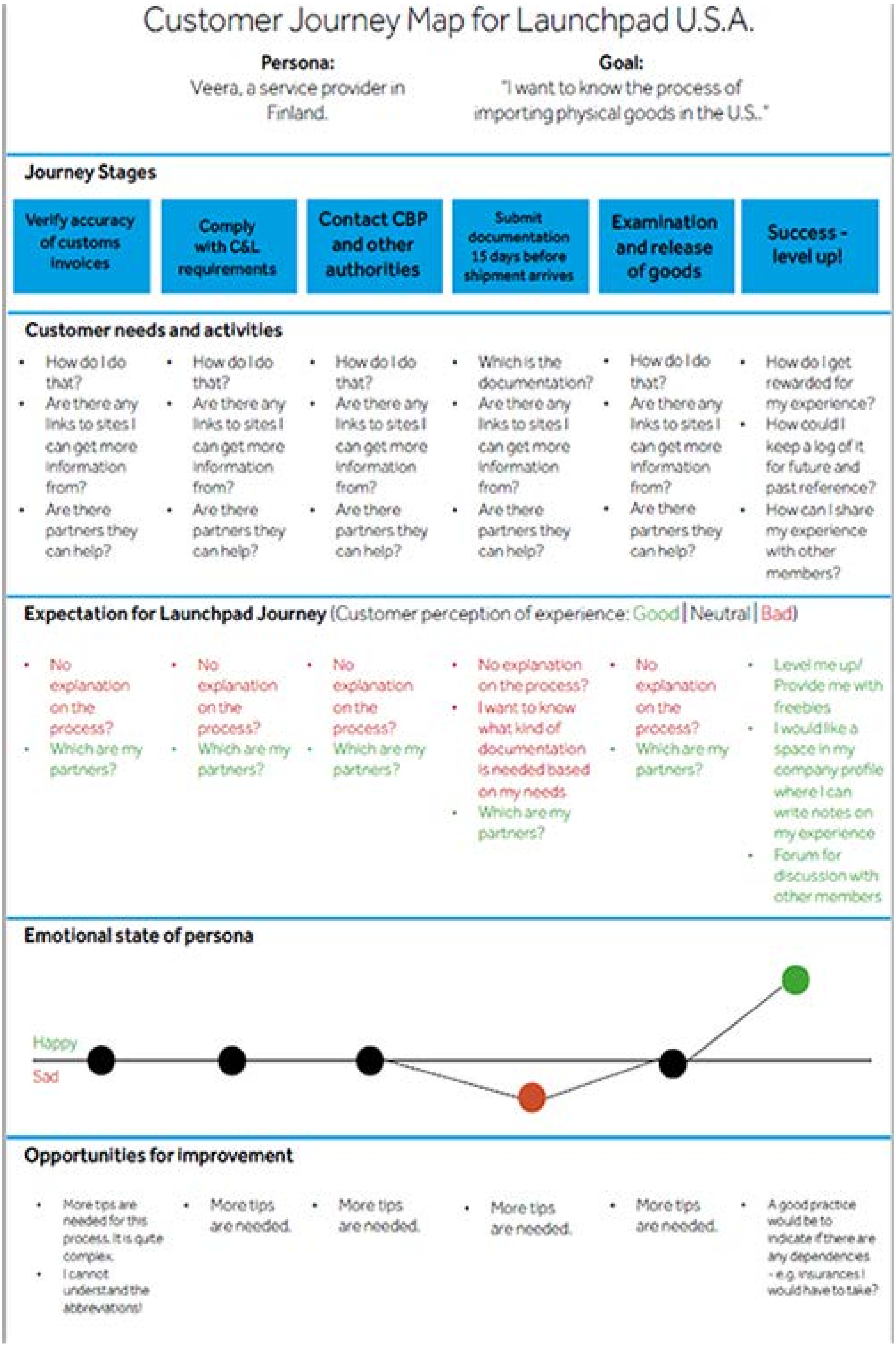
Journey Stages	Create job post	Create compensation package	Develop employee handbook	Draft offer letter	Get workers' compensation	Initiate payroll	Notify State	Obtain I9 form	Obtain W4 form	Success-level Up!
Customer needs and activities	What is my first thing to be aware in my Journey?	Determine the most important element when recruiting people. What do they expect from me?	None	I need a template (if it exists)	Are there any insurances that I need to take care of?	Who do I need to contact? Can partners help me?	Each State has different sites to notify to - which one to take? Documents needed? Time of notification?	Where do I find this?	Where do I find this?	Tips on what I can do next? Do I get rewarded? Can I log and share my experience?
Expectation for Launchpad Journey (Customer perception of experience: Good | Neutral | Bad)	Indicate the first and most important step to start with. How do I do this?	What do I need to do next? How do I do it? I want a link to a site or a partner.	What do I do next? How do I do it?	What do I do next? Can you provide a link to a template? What do I do next?	Indicate clearly if there are any insurances I need to take care of first. Please provide me a link to the insurances.	What do I do next?	What do I do next? Predetermine State so that I will not have to search myself. Provide link to State notification site.	What do I do next? Please link to the correct website.	What do I do next? Please link to the correct website.	Level me up/provide freebies! I want to see what I can do next. Forum for discussion and profile log
Opportunities for improvement	Provide more tips on the actual process - not just the steps!	Provide more tips on the actual process - not just the steps! Links to partners	Provide more tips on the actual process - not just the steps!	Provide more tips on the actual process - not just the steps! Links to appropriate forms!	None	None	None	None	None	None

Emotional state of persona



Customer Journey Map for Launchpad U.S.A.
Persona:
Anita, expat in Finland, with her own company in Helsinki
Goal:
"I am interested in knowing what kind of insurances I need before going to the U.S."
Journey Stages
Explore your options
Different types of insurances (7 in total)
Success - Level up!
Customer needs and activities
Find out about all my options
Find out what each option entails (which one is the appropriate for me)
Is there a compulsory insurance?
What are they?
Where can I find more information?
Are there partners that can help me decide?
Can I apply online?
How do I get rewarded for my experience?
How could I keep a log of it for future and past reference?
How can I share my experience with other members?
Expectation for Launchpad Journey (Customer perception of experience: Good | Neutral | Bad)
Provision of all options
Which option is the most appropriate for me?
Which insurances are compulsory?
I can see all my options on screen
I can find links to partners and more information online before I start contacting them
There are indications whether I can apply online.
Level me up/ Provide me with freebies
I would like a space in my company profile where I can write notes on my experience
Forum for discussion with other members
Emotional state of persona
Happy
Sad
Opportunities for improvement
I want more tips and best practices to determine which insurances I really need
In case I can apply online to obtain an insurance, I need to know in advance (tip)?
None


Customer Journey Map for Launchpad U.S.A.
Persona:
Robert and Fredrik, Founders of a company in Turku
Goal:
"We are interested in renting an affordable office space in New York."
Journey Stages
Explore options
Rent space
Find a property management company
Get in contact with partners in U.S.
Success - level up!
Customer needs and activities
Find out about options
What is the difference between them?
Which option might be the most affordable one?
Can I have a virtual space?
If I want to rent space, who do I contact?
Which real estate companies in our membership are the best?
Where can I find each company's contact details?
Can they contact me back for more information?
Do I need to travel to New York?
How do I get rewarded for my experience?
How could I keep a log of it for future and past reference?
How can I share my experience with other members?
Expectation for Launchpad Journey (Customer perception of experience: Good | Neutral | Bad)
Provision of options (rent, share, buy)
Can I see explanations on what is the difference? What is the cheapest?
No option for virtual space?
Can I see partner companies on screen?
Do you have any reviews on which company is the best, or recommendation on which one to chose?
Link me to their contact pages
I want to set my status to "available for contact now"
How do I know if I can do my transactions from Turku?
Level me up/ Provide me with freebies
I would like a space in my company profile where I can write notes on my experience
Forum for discussion with other members
Emotional state of persona
Happy
Sad
Opportunities for improvement
I want more tips so that I can decide better which option is the most affordable.
Please include a virtual office option there!
None
A review system for different partner companies
I want to be able to show partners that they can contact me
I want to know whether I need to travel or if I can do everything online.
None


Customer Journey Map for Launchpad U.S.A.
Persona:
Veera, a service provider in Finland.
Goal:
"I want to know the process of importing physical goods in the U.S.."
Journey Stages
Verify accuracy of customs invoices
Comply with C&L requirements
Contact CBP and other authorities
Submit documentation 15 days before shipment arrives
Examination and release of goods
Success - level up!
Customer needs and activities
• How do I do that?
• Are there any links to sites I can get more information from?
• Are there partners they can help?
• How do I do that?
• Are there any links to sites I can get more information from?
• Are there partners they can help?
• How do I do that?
• Are there any links to sites I can get more information from?
• Are there partners they can help?
• Which is the documentation?
• Are there any links to sites I can get more information from?
• Are there partners they can help?
• How do I do that?
• Are there any links to sites I can get more information from?
• Are there partners they can help?
• How do I get rewarded for my experience?
• How could I keep a log of it for future and past reference?
• How can I share my experience with other members?
Expectation for Launchpad Journey (Customer perception of experience: Good | Neutral | Bad)
• No explanation on the process?
• Which are my partners?
• No explanation on the process?
• Which are my partners?
• No explanation on the process?
• Which are my partners?
• No explanation on the process?
• I want to know what kind of documentation is needed based on my needs
• Which are my partners?
• No explanation on the process?
• Which are my partners?
• Level me up/ Provide me with freebies
• I would like a space in my company profile where I can write notes on my experience
• Forum for discussion with other members
Emotional state of persona
Happy
Sad
Opportunities for improvement
• More tips are needed for this process. It is quite complex.
• I cannot understand the abbreviations!
• More tips are needed.
• More tips are needed.
• More tips are needed.
• More tips are needed.
• A good practice would be to indicate if there are any dependencies - e.g. insurances I would have to take?

10.7 Appendix 7: Notes from online testing

Persona 1:

Immigration

I think the options should be:

- I want to relocate to the U.S. https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/permanent-workers
- I want to visit the U.S. on business https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-nonimmigrant-workers

TIP: Focus on the most commonly applied visas (E and L visas)!

More tips to be added to steps please!

Overall comments:

"Very exciting! I'm impressed.

As a stickler for language I think – as you might expect – that some of the terminology could be a bit more idiomatic and/ or smooth but it's already very close.

What will happen next?"

Persona 2:

HR

- Highlight that it is absolutely necessary to take workers compensation insurance first.
- Remember to put navigation buttons everywhere!
- EMBED MORE TIPS/BEST PRACTICES!

Overall comments:

"It is very evident how much thought and effort has gone in. It is a wonderful, very advance starting point. I have some technical questions about the execution and maintenance and scalability, but these are small details.

I look forward to seeing the go forward plan!"

Persona 3:

Insurances

- Start with Key insurance (most important ones) and then propose other later.
- Key: General Liability (most important to start with, when registering your company)
- Include an END message/reward when someone has completed ALL levels

Overall comment:

"It is good - we need to start populating it with useful tips and maybe more clear guidelines. Cool to see the process in this format - much better than the xls file!"

Persona 4:

Real Estate

- Add "Virtual Office" option along with the rest -> Link to Virtual Office package in the website.
- Notify state on your address - add step

Overall comment:

"*Looks like a promising start! Happy to test the final product!"*

Persona 5:

Finances

- Loans: change to Growth Financing
- No abbreviations please! Difficult for first timers. I.e.: EDO = Economic Development Officer or?...
- Take out "Establish Invoicing Services" – it is the same as Bookkeeping services

Logistics

- Companies should also review Product Packaging, Product claims, User Manuals, Warning Labels etc. - this is associated with product liability.

Overall comment:

"Well done ☺ - Still needs work but it is a very promising start – we have been missing a tool like that! Keep me posted on future updates."

10.8 Appendix 8: Game scenario

ONBOARDING

- Introduction of the Hero (You).
- Call to adventure (so you think you can enter the U.S. Market?)
- Instructions: How do you do that?
  - It is your journey to the U.S.
  - Complicated, long, with a lot of obstacles
  - But we are here to help!
- You are “Company name”
  - Platform-like game with different options for different areas. Each area is represented by the individual card with the appropriate symbol
  - What do you wish to do? (crossing the threshold/different scenarios)
- Develop from Nordics (the whole/complete journey)
  - Virtual presence in the U.S.
  - Relocation of people from the Nordics to the U.S.
  - I want to hire local people
  - I want to import goods
  - I want to develop my sales and marketing plan in this market

HABIT BUILDING

- What do I do if I am not sure? (moment of doubt)
  - Mentor/Assistant always there if needed (in the form of tips/notehelp agent/request face to face consultation)
- Road of trials – you can unlock once you have done them
  - Trials: different areas. Like in an rpg game you can explore your environment (different houses/different areas and within a house rooms are representing the different steps. Some rooms are required to be searched (required steps), some are not (optional steps))
  - REWARDS – points, freebies, levelling up
- Habit building is achieved when the player is accustomed to exploring and understands that in order to be as experienced as possible when going through the journey is to explore as many areas as possible.

MASTERY

- After regular playing and exploring, the player knows how things work.
- Final challenge/boon: Achieve your goals (I have now successfully entered the U.S. Market, I have successfully moved my people to my company there etc.)

- Once achieved, the player enters the ordinary world (all areas have been unlocked/explored) and the user can move around wherever he wants. Open world. Freely.
    - Freedom to live, return to the ordinary world, share the knowledge
- Onboarding/Habit Building/Mastery is represented with levels. Each time a user unlocks an area and completes all steps, he advances a level. Levels are as many as the areas (8).

Aim of the journey is the player transformation: from a newbie, someone that initially does not know where to go and how to proceed, becomes, in time, experienced, achieves his goals and can apply his learnings in the real world. The player discovers, with the help of the Journey, his potential.

10.9 Appendix 9: Guidelines for online testing

Dear [name],

The first draft of the Launchpad USA Customer Journey is finally here!

You might remember that the Launchpad USA was offered to you in the form of a 40-step process – quite comprehensive, but maybe not so easy to use. Now the process is presented to you with a twist: you can experience it as a visualized journey that will take you all the way from the very beginning (if you want to create a company there) to different paths, depending on your needs.

Remember. This is just a mockup, intended for testing, just to make sure that we got things right and that we can offer you the best possible experience. All possible paths are included and you can already now start testing it.

In order to check the mockup, first you need to visit this address:

https://invis.io/7J84VBCCU

Got it? Now, a few basic explanations:

- Think of a possible scenario for your company: What do you want to do? What it is you are looking for? If the scenario is real-life and not fictional, even better!
- The mockup comprises screens that are different parts of your journey.

- Clicking on the icons will take you to the next step of the journey. Clicking on the question marks will show you tips related to the specific step.
- Write down what you feel when you use the tool: you are the Hero! You make your own path, but maybe the path you'd take is not the easiest one. Here are some questions you can ask yourself while travelling into the unknown:
    - What are your initial goals?
    - Which parts of the journey are the most memorable to you?
    - Which parts of the journey are the most important in terms of your organizational goals?
    - Are there things there missing that you'd like to see?
    - Are there things that are there, but you'd like to change?
    - What is your overall experience?
- Of course, you can also write down everything that comes to mind – do not feel obliged to answer only the questions I provided you.

Your feedback is valuable for us to continue providing you with the best personal experiences.
If you need any more clarifications on any of the screens, let me know!

Happy travelling!

10.10 Appendix 10: Behaviour grid

	GREEN (Do a new, unfamiliar behaviour)	BLUE (Perform existing, familiar behaviour)	PURPLE (Increase behaviour intensity or duration)	GRAY (Decrease behaviour intensity or duration)	BLACK (Stop behaviour)
DOT (One Time)	DO NEW BEHAVIOUR ONE TIME (GreenDot): Visit one of the 8 areas Contact a partner Complete one full path	DO FAMILIAR BEHAVIOUR ONE TIME (BlueDot) Click a tip to find out more about a step	INCREASE BEHAVIOUR ONE TIME (PurpleDot) Click on a tip (helper with a question mark on) Browse a new area of interest	DECREASE BEHAVIOUR ONE TIME (GrayDot) Travel through a journey path instead of directly contacting Amcham Experts to request consultation	STOP DOING A BEHAVIOUR ONE TIME (BlackDot) Try phoning a partner instead of sending an email
SPAN (Has Duration)	DO NEW BEHAVIOUR FOR A PERIOD OF TIME (GreenSpan) Use the Journey exclusively for a month for your business	DO FAMILIAR BEHAVIOUR FOR A PERIOD OF TIME (BlueSpan) Click on the tips and browse through the helper websites for the duration of a full Journey path	INCREASE BEHAVIOUR FOR A PERIOD OF TIME (PurpleSpan) Call your partners and arrange meetings on your own Use the tips provided for each step	DECREASE BEHAVIOUR FOR A PERIOD OF TIME (GraySpan) Calling Amcham experts when in doubt. Try this for a month.	STOP A BEHAVIOUR FOR A PERIOD OF TIME (BlackSpan) Phone partners instead of emailing them for a week
PATH (Done from Now on)	DO NEW BEHAVIOUR FROM NOW ON (GreenPath) Set a phone number of skype call ID for the U.S. partners to contact you Make notes on your progress Track your partners' progress	DO FAMILIAR BEHAVIOUR FROM NOW ON (BluePath) Always use tips when in doubt Make a phone call instead of sending an email	INCREASE BEHAVIOUR FROM NOW ON (PurplePath) Always use tips when in doubt Make a phone call instead of sending an email	DECRASE BEHAVIOUR FROM NOW ON (GrayPath) Arrange face-to-face consultation sessions with Amcham experts whenever in doubt	STOP A BEHAVIOUR FROM NOW ON (BlackPath) Never browse information on your own