
**Developing tourism services for Russian customers in
Valkeakoski**

Improving tourist access to Finland to foreigners one town at a time



Bachelor's thesis

International Business

Valkeakoski, Autumn 2013

Marina Svetlanova

Clarification of signature



Valkeakoski
International Business
Option

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Author | Marina Svetlanova | Year 2013 |
| Subject of Bachelor's thesis | Developing tourism services for Russian customers in Valkeakoski | |

ABSTRACT

The thesis commissioner is the city of Valkeakoski. The research question is "How to develop tourism services in Valkeakoski to attract more Russian customers?"

The objectives are the following:

- To learn tourism services of Valkeakoski.
- To study Russian tourists as customers.
- To collect feedback from Russians about Valkeakoski and Finland.
- To find potential ways of developing tourism services in Valkeakoski for Russian customers.

As theory, material from books of Kotler, Raju, Durovich and other authors were used. Main concepts about the tourism product were taken in order to understand how to create, develop and promote them to customer.

A survey and interviews were conducted among current and potential Russian customers of tourism services of Valkeakoski. The results showed that Valkeakoski has good opportunities to attract more Russian customers and offer them more services. But there are some challenges connected with cross-cultural communication between Finns and Russians.

A development plan was written, in which recommendations to tourism services providers of Valkeakoski were given. The recommendations include advice to promote services to Russians through the Internet and use the Russian language where possible. It is also reasonable to take into account the aspects of Russian culture and the impressions of Russians about Finland.

Keywords Finland, Russian, tourist, marketing, communication.

Pages 63 p. + appendices 1 p.



CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------|---|----|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 | Background information | 1 |
| 1.2 | Tourism in Finland and Valkeakoski | 2 |
| 1.2.1 | Finland's nature | 2 |
| 1.2.2 | Finnish cuisine | 3 |
| 1.2.3 | Transportation in Finland | 4 |
| 1.2.4 | Valkeakoski | 5 |
| 1.2.5 | Hotel Waltikka | 6 |
| 1.2.6 | Museums, theatres and sightseeing in Valkeakoski | 7 |
| 1.2.7 | Sport and leisure activities in Valkeakoski | 8 |
| 1.3 | Research Question and Objectives | 9 |
| 1.4 | Research methods | 10 |
| 2 | TOURISM AND MARKETING | 12 |
| 2.1 | Marketing | 12 |
| 2.2 | Tourism service marketing mix | 12 |
| 2.3 | Tourism product | 13 |
| 2.3.1 | Tourism product's elements | 13 |
| 2.3.2 | Hospitality product | 15 |
| 2.3.3 | Attractiveness of tourism destinations | 15 |
| 2.4 | Pricing in tourism industry | 16 |
| 2.5 | Distribution of tourism services | 17 |
| 2.6 | Tourism service customers | 18 |
| 2.6.1 | Characteristics affecting consumers' behavior | 18 |
| 2.6.2 | Customer's motivation in buying tourism services | 19 |
| 2.6.3 | Aspects of consumer psychology | 20 |
| 2.6.4 | Stages of purchase process | 21 |
| 2.6.5 | Consumer emotions in purchasing process | 21 |
| 2.7 | Tourism services promotion | 22 |
| 2.7.1 | Marketing communication | 22 |
| 2.7.2 | Promotion mix | 23 |
| 2.8 | Cross-cultural communication | 24 |
| 3 | RUSSIAN TOURISTS | 27 |
| 3.1 | Russian travellers to Finland and other countries | 27 |
| 3.2 | Types of Russian tourists | 27 |
| 3.2.1 | Sport, extreme, fishing and hunting tourism | 28 |
| 3.2.2 | Cultural tourism | 28 |
| 3.2.3 | Spa, resort and leisure tourism | 29 |
| 3.2.4 | Tourism for children | 30 |
| 3.2.5 | Religion tourism | 30 |
| 3.2.6 | Business and event tourism | 30 |
| 3.2.7 | Ecological and rural tourism | 31 |
| 3.2.8 | Food tourism | 31 |
| 3.3 | Holidays and leisure activities in Russia | 31 |
| 3.4 | Reviews of Russian customers of Waltikka Hotel | 33 |



| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| 3.5 | Survey results | 34 |
| 3.6 | Interviews | 38 |
| 4 | PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES | 39 |
| 4.1 | Communication between Finns and Russians | 39 |
| 4.1.1 | Image of Finland in the eyes of Russians | 40 |
| 4.2 | Knowledge of foreign languages in Russia | 40 |
| 4.3 | Population and demography in Russia | 42 |
| 4.4 | Russian tourism in Finland | 43 |
| 4.4.1 | Medical tourism from Russia | 44 |
| 4.4.2 | Decrease in number of Russian tourists in 2013 | 44 |
| 4.4.3 | Finnish companies in serving Russian tourists | 45 |
| 4.4.4 | Possible Finland-Russia visa-free travel | 45 |
| 4.5 | Finland's competitors on Russian tourist market | 46 |
| 5 | DEVELOPMENT PLAN | 47 |
| 5.1 | Marketing mix | 47 |
| 5.1.1 | Promotion | 47 |
| 5.1.2 | Place | 48 |
| 5.1.3 | Physical evidence | 49 |
| 5.1.4 | People | 50 |
| 5.1.5 | Price | 51 |
| 5.1.6 | Production | 52 |
| 5.1.7 | Product | 53 |
| 5.2 | SWOT Analysis of tourism services in Valkeakoski | 54 |
| 6 | CONCLUSION | 56 |
| 6.1 | Tourism in Finland | 56 |
| 6.2 | Tourism in Valkeakoski | 57 |
| 6.3 | Tourism marketing theory | 57 |
| 6.4 | Popular types of tourism among Russians | 58 |
| 6.5 | Recommendations | 58 |
| 6.5.1 | Product | 58 |
| 6.5.2 | Promotion | 59 |
| 6.5.3 | Place | 59 |
| 6.5.4 | Physical evidence | 59 |
| 6.5.5 | People | 59 |
| 6.5.6 | Production | 59 |
| | SOURCES | 60 |

Appendix 1 Survey Questions



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

Tourism is very important for economy and business of every country. The same is true for Finland. Finland is quite successful in tourism industry and has good opportunities for developing its tourism services.

Finland attracts visitors for many reasons. First of all, it is not as overcrowded as other countries. Thus, people who are tired of communicating to many people in everyday life can enjoy the atmosphere of peace and quiet. The rich nature of Finland is also good for relaxation. The numerous trees and water create picturesque scenery, which soothe the human mind. Moreover, for many people Finland is an unusual place, which is suitable, when they want to change the everyday environment. (Why come to Finland?)

In Finland, there are very good roads, which connect cities all over the country. Thus, tourists who prefer to travel on their own cars, have good opportunities to visit all the cities they want and see many places. Along the road, drivers can enjoy the view of forests and lakes. In cities, they can go sightseeing and shopping, visit cafes and take pictures. (Why come to Finland)

Finland has very good natural resources, which are available for tourism activities like skiing, skating, swimming, sailing and so on. These physical exercises are good for health. Moreover, Finland is a country with a very good ecological situation, where people can improve their health through fresh air, clean water and a lot of oxygen from the forests. (Why come to Finland?)

Finnish culture involves old sauna traditions. Sauna is good for warming after winter sports, for improving health and detoxifying the body. Saunas are available for visitors in most hotels in Finland. Additionally to sauna, other spa treatments services are developing in the country nowadays. There are many spa hotels and water pools in Finland, where people can take massage, aromatherapy, stone therapy, mud wrapping and other spa services. Many tourists like to visit water pools with their children. (Why come to Finland?)

Russian tourists constitute the biggest group of foreign visitors to Finland. Moreover, during the last several years the number of Russian tourists in Finland is stably increasing. This information comes from news agencies and statistical data.

The Finnish media agency Yle informs in the article "Finland remains popular destination for Russian tourists" that during the last winter season about 400,000 visitors from Russia were expected to come to Finland and about 350,000 visitors actually crossed the border during the New Year

period. As the Finnish Border Guard told Yle, it is about 30,000 more than in the previous year. Yle interviewed some visitors from Russia and there were positive feedbacks about friendly services in the Russian language in Lapland and southeast Finland. Nonetheless, the respondents had some negative experience in the service sector in the Helsinki region. (Finland remains popular destination for Russian tourists, 2013)

In 2012, the overall number of visitors to Finland from other countries constituted 7.6 million people and increased by five per cent from 2011. Foreign travellers spent EUR 2.3 billion in the country, which was three per cent more than in 2011. The largest number of foreign visitors comes from Russia. In 2012, 3.6 million Russians travellers came to Finland constituted 47 per cent of all visitors. Moreover, the number of Russian travellers increased by 10 per cent comparing to the previous year. (Tourism from abroad to Finland increased in 2012, 2013)

Table 1 Foreign passengers visiting Finland in 2008-2012.

| Country of residence | Year | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| | 2008, (1000 pass.) | 2009, (1000 pass.) | 2010, (1000 pass.) | 2011, (1000 pass.) | 2012, (1000 pass.) | Change 2011- 2012, (%) |
| All visitors | 6 072 | 5 695 | 6 182 | 7 260 | 7 636 | 5 |
| Russian | 2 331 | 2 192 | 2 561 | 3 261 | 3 578 | 10 |
| Estonian | 522 | 583 | 561 | 708 | 758 | 7 |
| Sweden | 765 | 753 | 712 | 681 | 702 | 3 |
| Germany | 376 | 332 | 363 | 399 | 342 | -14 |

Valkeakoski is a Finnish city that also has good resources for providing tourism services to Russians. Russian tourists regularly choose Hotel Waltikka in Valkeakoski on the booking.com website. Since, the number of Russian tourists in Finland is growing, Valkeakoski has opportunities to attract more Russians and increase tourism sales. In order to do this, it is important to understand: what kind of Russian tourists prefer Valkeakoski to other Finnish cities, what kind of services Russian tourists particularly like and why, how Russians find information about Valkeakoski, how to attract more Russians to come as tourists to Valkeakoski etc.

1.2 Tourism in Finland and Valkeakoski

1.2.1 Finland's nature

Finland is situated in the north of Europe and has three neighbor countries: Norway, Sweden and Russia. Finland is the 8th largest country of Europe. Its total area is 338,144 km. The Finnish area extends 1,157 km from north to south and 542 km from east to west. Finland's coastline stretches 4,600 km. There are 81,534 islands along the coast. (Finnish Facts & Figures)

The population of Finland is 5.4 million people, which makes it the most sparsely populated territory in the European Union. Finns used to live mostly in the countryside or in small towns, but nowadays many of them prefer to live in the urban centers. For example, in the Greater Helsinki region, there are about 1 million inhabitants. (Finnish Facts & Figures)

Finns love and respect nature, which is why there are 475,000 summer cottages and 35 national parks in the country. Both cities and countryside of Finland are kept clean and free of litter. Finland is officially a bilingual country. For 92 per cent of the population Finnish is their first language and 5.5 per cent is Swedish. Finland has an autonomous province to the southwest of the coast - the Åland Islands. The inhabitants of these islands are Swedish speaking. About 1,700 people that live in Lapland speak the Sami language. There are two official religions in Finland. 82 per cent of Finns belong to the Evangelical-Lutheran church and 1 per cent – to the Orthodox one. (Finnish Facts & Figures)

Finland is a great country for nature-lovers. 10 per cent of the Finnish territory is water and 69 per cent is forest. There are 188,000 lakes in Finland, which is why it is sometimes called “a country of the thousands of lakes”. The country is rich in forest - there are more trees than people. All these makes Finland attractive for people that like ski, water sports and fishing. (Nature Experiences)

Finland’s climate is milder than many other northern regions of the world. The reason of it is the warm current Gulf Stream. Furthermore, the Finnish lakes and the gulf of Botnia and Finland also help to make the climate milder. The mean temperature of the warmest month on the Finnish territory is 10C. The coldest month’s mean temperature is -3C. (Climate in Finland)

There are 80 mammal species in the country. Tourists should be aware of the following predators: the Brown bear, the Eurasian lynx, the Gray wolf and the wolverine. Finland is rich in different kinds of birds. There are 450 species of birds in the country, many of which are rarely seen in other European countries. Finland is a very good place for fishing, because it has a seacoast, many lakes all over the country and Lapland’s rivers. Tourists that come to Finland are usually impressed by the plethora of trees and plants. In the autumn, the Finnish forests are full of berries and mushrooms. Finns like to use them in their food recipes. The types of berries that grow in Finland include lingonberry, blueberry, crowberry, cranberry, buckthorn berry, wild raspberry and strawberry, rowanberry etc. The mushrooms can be picked cautiously, because many of them are of poisonous types. Among those suitable for eating are the chanterelle and the funnel chanterelle, the rufous, northern and saffron milk caps, ceps, slipper jack, pine mushroom etc. (Nature Experiences)

1.2.2 Finnish cuisine

The Finnish cuisine combines local culinary traditions with the Scandinavian food style and elements of cuisines came from other countries. For

example, the Finnish cold is similar to the Russian “zakuska” table and the Swedish smörgåsbord. The basic products that are involved in the Finnish cuisines are fish, game, mushrooms and berries. The Finnish culinary culture centers around four seasons. Each season has its special variety of dishes. (Finnish cuisine – east meets west in Scandinavian style, 2008)

In Finland, fish is prepared in many ways – by salting, marinating, steaming, smoking, frying etc. Fish soup that many Finns like is made of different kinds of fish and vegetables, spice and herbs. Game like elk, reindeer and wildfowl are valued in the Finnish culinary traditions. For example, Reindeer stew, which is a traditional dish of Lapland, is baked whole or cut into slices. The Finnish culinary traditions are also associated with mushrooms from the forest. For example, morels are served in soup and stew. Chantarelles often come with salad. Creamy mushroom soup with onion, pepper and herbs is always sold in Finnish supermarkets. There are many types of wild berries in Finland – cranberries, bilberries, raspberries etc. They are used for puddings, cakes, ice creams and other desserts. Moreover, a Finnish cook can serve them with a reindeer stew, game dishes and other kinds of meat. The Finnish cuisine includes pastries, tarts and pies, which are most often served with coffee. (Finnish cuisine – east meets west in Scandinavian style, 2008)

Finns prefer coffee to tea. It helps them to wake up on winter mornings, when it is cold and dark outside. According to statistics, coffee consumption was 11.92 kilograms per capita in 2008 in Finland, which is about 3.8 cups of coffee a day. Coffee is important for Finns. They serve it on special occasions at work, celebrations at home and for visits by friends. Usually, coffee is complemented with pastries. (How to survive winter in Finland and enjoy it, 2012)

1.2.3 Transportation in Finland

Finland has transport networks by air, rail, road and water. There are 27 airports in the country. Five of them provide international flight services. The main international airport is the Helsinki-Vantaa. Airlines that provide domestic flights include Finnair, Norwegian, Flybe and SAS. (Travel Information)

The Finnish rail network extends from Helsinki to Lapland’s Kolari. The trains are comfortable and clean. VR is the name of the national railway company. (Travel Information)

Also, Finland has a coach route network, which constitutes more than 90 per cent of public transportation. The companies that provide this kind of services are Matkahuolto, Onnibus and ExpressBus. (Travel Information)

Finland has good roads with the right-handed traffic. Finnish drivers are polite and follow the rules and law. Also, there are quite many petrol stations. It is possible to rent a car through companies like Avis, Budget, Europcar, Hertz, Scandia Rent and Sixt. (Travel Information)

There are many charter and sightseeing cruises along the seacoast and in the internal waterways. The companies that provide cruise services are Viking Line, Tallink Silja, Finnlines, St. Peter Line, Linda Line and Echerö Line. (Travel Information)

1.2.4 Valkeakoski

Valkeakoski is situated in the south west of Finland. It has good resources for tourism attraction: lakes, forests, supermarkets, restaurants, living facilities and transportation. It is a peaceful and beautiful place, especially in summer. Valkeakoski means “white rapids” in English. (Valkeakoski 2013, 5.)

As in most Finland’s territory, Valkeakoski has quite a mild climate. The average temperatures over the period 1961-1990 were the following: -7.5C in January and 15.8C in July. Due to the seas around the country, the average amount of days with precipitation per month is quite high in Valkeakoski - from ten in August, October and November to seven in February, April and May. (Norwegian Meteorological Institute)

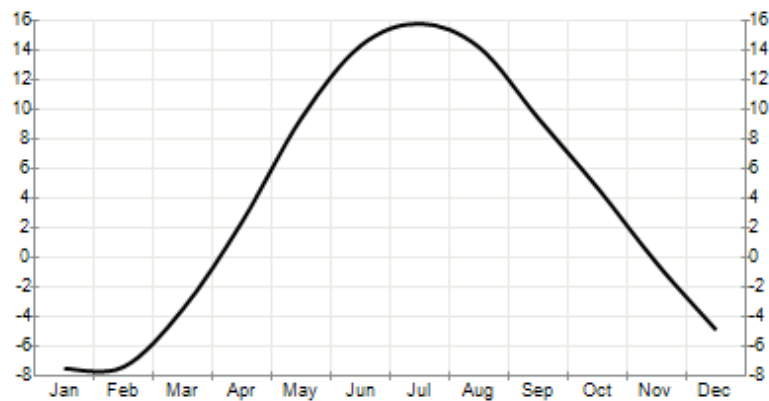


Figure 1 Average temperature in Valkeakoski per month (in Celcius).

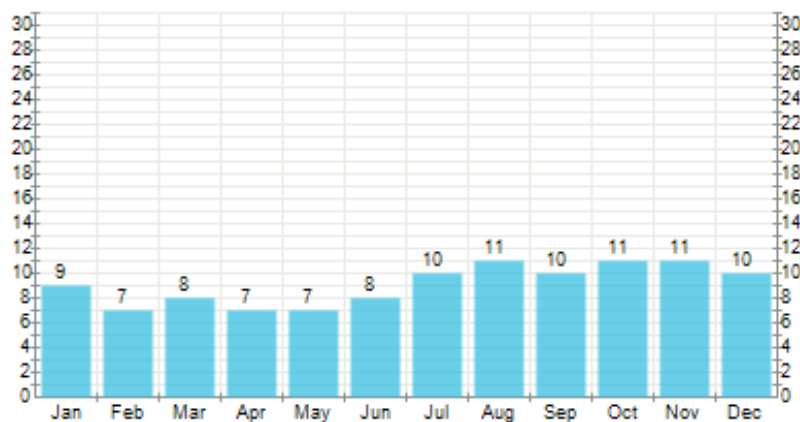


Figure 2 Average days with precipitation in Valkeakoski per month.

In Valkeakoski, there are two lakes, Mallasvesi and Vanajavesi. In the center of the town, a canal flows and connects these two lakes. In the south of Valkeakoski, there is the bridge Sääksmäki. Also, there are other bridges in the center of the town. Apia bay walking route is convenient to go for a walk and enjoy the scenery of Valkeakoski. (Valkeakoski 2013, 5.)

The 500-meter-long canal connects Tampere in the north and Hämeenlinna in the south. There are guest boat pierce at Kirkonranta and Lepänkorva. Apart from engine sails, there are also boat and canoe rentals. One more option for having a good time is fishing. Apia suspension bridges are convenient for this. Fishing permits are sold in Hotel Waltikka, Apianlahti Camping and Sportia-Seppo store. (Valkeakoski 2013, 5.)

Finnish Silverline lake cruisers take tourists from Tampere to Hämeenlinna along Pyhäjärvi and Vanajavesi lakes. They stop at the Sääksmäen silta bridge and the Visavuori museum. Both public and charter cruisers are available. (Valkeakoski 2013, 6-7.)

Valkeakoski is a compact. It is easy to go around it by bicycle. It is also convenient to drive a car inside the town, because a lot of parking places are available. The old industrial redbrick buildings mix with new modern looking ones. In the center of Valkeakoski, there are new shopping centers and a small market place. (Valkeakoski 2013, 8-9.)

1.2.5 Hotel Waltikka

The four-star Hotel Waltikka is situated on the shores of Lake Mallasvesi. Most visitors of Valkeakoski stay in Waltikka. The hotel is surrounded by peaceful park-like environment, which makes it suitable for people that want to get away from everyday routine of a big city. There are 83 rooms in Waltikka; each room has a balcony or a patio. In all rooms there is WIFI Internet connection. The room prices start from 42.50 Euros and include breakfast and sauna. Moreover, tourists can bring animals with them for additional price of 10 Euros per night. Waltikka has tree sauna suites. (Valkeakosken Waltikka)

Waltikka has facilities for training events, conferences and meetings, which makes it suitable for business tourism. There are eight meeting rooms for 180 people, and six workshop rooms in the hotel. In each room, there is a fixed broadband connection and wireless local area network, a PA system, a data projector and a DVD player. Waltikka is always ready to organize different kinds of events and entertainment for groups upon request. (Valkeakosken Waltikka)

In the hotel, there are sauna facilities that consist of four traditional Finnish saunas and one Turkish sauna. Also, sauna facilities include a lounge area for relaxation. Apart from good sauna facilities, Waltikka has an outdoor hot tub. Tourists have opportunities to take a hot tub all year round,

even in winter, and at the same time enjoy the fresh air and picturesque view of the lake and cruises on it. (Valkeakosken Waltikka)

Furthermore, Waltikka has sport facilities for tourists. For example, there are places for playing tennis and volleyball in the hotel, jogging paths around the building. In the summer, people can visit the beach on the Lake Mallasvesi. It is allowed to go fishing on the lake. In the winter, tourists can take the hotel's ice-fishing equipment. (Valkeakosken Waltikka)

There are two restaurants in Waltikka. The restaurant Scettro serves Italian and American food. The restaurant's menu includes Italian delicacies, American hamburgers, steaks and fresh salads. In the summer, hotel visitors can dine on the summer terrace and enjoy the great view of the lake. The other restaurant Walentina is intended for special events. There are seats for up to 350 people in the restaurant. Walentina is often a venue for concerts of popular rock and pop music bands and artists. (Valkeakosken Waltikka)

1.2.6 Museums, theatres and sightseeing in Valkeakoski

Myllysaari is an area of housed grain mills, which exists since Middle Ages. The first paper mill was built here 140 years ago. Eventually, the mill village grew into a whole paper town due to the large paper factory UPM. Myllysaari means "mill island". Nowadays Myllysaari factory building hosts two museums. Also, different kinds of social events are organized here. In one of the Myllysaari museums, called VANA, there is a new exhibition, where a multimedia presentation built around a Valkeakoski miniature model. (Valkeakoski 2013, 10.)

The Finnish football museum is situated near the Tehtaan kentä football stadium. In the museums, tourists can learn about the history of Finnish football. The museum displayed a 1930s locker room bench, uniforms and trophies. There is also a library and a spectator stand in the museum. (Valkeakoski 2013, 10.)

The Kauppilanmäki outdoor museum is situated on the canal shore. It consists of five houses, a storage building and a sauna. The museum displays the conditions of life of Finnish workers that lived a century ago. (Valkeakoski 2013, 11.)

Juuso's gondola is one of the interesting items in the museum of Myllysaari. Gondola is a unique artifact, because genuine gondolas were found only in Venice, Amsterdam, Hollywood and Valkeakoski. The Juuso's gondola was bought by the paper mill owner Juuso Walden for entertaining official guests of the town. (Valkeakoski 2013, 11.)

Sääksmäki village is a place near lake Vanajavesi. The origin of the name Sääksmäki is connected with a legend of the mid-1500s, which tells that an osprey built a nest on a spruce huge tree that grew in the place of the grey stone church. The church itself is built more than 500 years ago. It

hosts a lot of weddings. The beautiful scenery around the Sääksmäki suspension bridge is also worth seeing. (Valkeakoski 2013, 13.)

Visavuori is the museum of the life and works of sculptor Emil Wilkström and his grandson Karl Suomalainen. It is situated in the Sääksmäki village. The building of Emil's home is a Carelian style log castle. The original furniture and fireplace are available to see for visitors. There are also about 100 sculptures that the author created. In the museum, there is a café and a museum shop. (Valkeakoski 2013, 14-15.)

The Voipaala Art Center hosts exhibitions, galleries, cultural events, meetings and celebrations. For children there is the Kesäkäpälä workshop in summer. The baroque park is a good place to enjoy the nature or make a picnic. (Valkeakoski 2013, 17.)

Rapola ridge is a good place to hike to and enjoy the view. Because Rapola is 70 above the lake, there were ancient hill forts, which stone foundations still remain today. Rapola is the largest fort in Finland. The length of stone foundations is 1000 meter. There are also ancient fields, sacrificed stones and burial mounds, which are 3500 years old. Tourists also can visit the Helka festival, which takes place in the Ritvala village, where young women walk through the village and sing ancient Helka hymns. (Valkeakoski 2013, 17.)

The first theatre in Finland was opened in 1872 in Voipaala. Nowadays, it is called National Theatre of Finland. The Valkeakoski theatre works in an old beautiful building, which is situated in the center of town and was build by the paper mill. Christian Sandström is the director of the Valkeakoski theatre. (Valkeakoski 2013, 41.)

The new musical play "Ikuisesti sinun" (Forever yours) is performed in the autumn. The play was originally set in New York in the 1950s and is about the life of James Dean, who was an actor and died young in a car crash. "Siltalan pehtoori" (The steward of Siltala manor) is another play of the Valkeakoski theatre, which involves romance, triangle drama and music. (Valkeakoski 2013, 41.)

1.2.7 Sport and leisure activities in Valkeakoski

Valkeakoski is a place with a lot of opportunities for people who love sports. First of all, tourists can use paths round beautiful Lake Lotila or the Kauppilanmäki neighborhood for exercises. Such activities as horse riding, golf, bowling and tennis are available. In the town, there are also a swimming pool, sports center and ice stadium. Valkeakoski Lifelong Learning Center arranges different kinds of courses for people of all ages. (Valkeakoski 2013, 21.)

In Valkeakoski, young people have opportunities to practice street basketball, skate or disc golf. People who like to dance can visit ballroom dancing evenings at the outdoor pavilion in the lake setting of Kirjaslampi in summer. The Koskenpojat aerobics association is the top aerobics associa-

tion in Finland. The exercise and workout classes are available in the fitness centers of Valkeakoski. (Valkeakoski 2013, 22-23.)

Valkeakoski is a good place for families with children. First of all, the Apia adventure park offers log towers, bastions and other apparatus, where children can climb, hang, slide, run and play in all sort of ways. Apia beach and the skate park are also good for leisure. The children traffic play park is safe for children to practice skills in traffic. (Valkeakoski 2013, 30-31.)

Haka is one of the most successful football clubs in Finland. Haka has won the Finnish championship 9 times, and the Finnish Cup 12 times. FC Haka matches on the Tehtaan kenttä stadium welcomes spectators. Additionally to that, Haka is a sport club of several other sports, like skiing, skating, orienteering, boxing, basketball, athletics and veterans. The club offers both sport and leisure activities for people of all ages. (Valkeakoski 2013, 35.)

For people who enjoy winter sports, the Korkeakangas ski center offers free of charge 1 km long artificial snow track. There are 20 km of cross-country ski trails. The vertical drops of the two slopes are 62 meters and the lengths are 240 m and 330 m. There are also jumps, rails and presses. The prices of spending a day in this center are quite low. (Valkeakoski 2013, 36-37.)

Ainoklinikka provides medical and health improvement services in Valkeakoski, Helsinki and Tampere. The medical assistance of Ainoklinikka includes services of a gynecologist, a psychiatrist and a general practitioner. It is possible to stay at night in the clinic's sleeping room for 6-8 persons. Among the medical treatments of Ainoklinikka, there are low-frequency laser procedures, acupuncture, ultrasound examination, laboratory tests and etc. (Ainoklinikka)

Ainoklinikka offers traditional Finnish peat treatments, which involves application of peat on the body and relaxing in a sauna. Peat sauna is very good for health and advisable for people with different kinds of diseases. Other spa services providing by the clinic include regular sauna, infrared sauna and salty steam treatments, reflex therapy, massage, aroma massage and so on. Groups of tourists can buy LOGOART therapy and sauna yoga services from Ainoklinikka. (Ainoklinikka)

1.3 Research Question and Objectives

The research question is “How to develop tourism services in Valkeakoski to attract more Russian customers?”

The first objective of this thesis is “To learn tourism services of Valkeakoski”. It is necessary to explore the elements of the tourism product of Valkeakoski. The tourism product includes available transportation system, accommodation facilities, restaurants and cafes, supermarkets and stores, sport and recreation facilities. Also, the natural resources of the

travel destination play a major role as a part of a tourism product. These resources include forests and parks; seas, lake and rivers; animals and birds; the climate of the territory; scenery and landscape etc. One more important element of a tourism product is people that provide the tourism services to customers.

The second objective is “To study Russian tourists as customers”. In order to achieve this goal, it is reasonable to examine the current trends on the market of Russian tourists. Also, there are different types of tourism activities that Russians prefer. These types of activities should be found and classified. In order to detect the most favorite types of tourism activities among Russians a survey will be conducted.

The third objective is “To collect feedback from Russians about Valkeakoski and Finland”. To gather such kind of information, some Russian tourists in Valkeakoski and Finland will be interviewed to learn their opinion about the tourism services, their preferences, complaints and suggestions.

The fourth objective is “To find potential ways of developing tourism services in Valkeakoski for Russian customers”. To achieve this goal, it is important to find strengths and weaknesses of Valkeakoski in providing tourism services to Russian customers. The strengths of Valkeakoski should be used to attract more Russian customers and sell them services in an effective way. Furthermore, it is good to find some ways to improve those aspects of the tourism product where weaknesses are detected.

1.4 Research methods

The goal of marketing activities in tourism industry is to manage a tourism company according to the market demand at particular time in a particular place. It is not enough to rely on the previous experience, experts’ opinion or intuition. Marketing decisions can be influenced by many factors, which are difficult to predict. A tourism company should obtain reliable and timely information that shows the market’s state. Marketing research is implemented in order to collect, process and analyze data that can help to make the right marketing decisions. (Durovich 2001, 65.)

In this thesis, the marketing research was conducted in several stages. First of all, a secondary research was performed. Existing information was found. For this purpose, many available sources were used: newspapers, social research agencies’ reports, government publications, competitors’ reports etc.

Secondly, a qualitative research was done in order to study how current customers feel about the current tourism product and services of Valkeakoski, what they like and dislike and what they would like to change.

Also, a quantitative research was performed. A survey among potential customers was conducted. Based on the statistical numbers of this survey, graphs and charts were created to analyze the information.

Finally, using all the obtained information, a development plan was written for tourism services of Valkeakoski. This plan included recommendations about possible ways to develop the current tourism services in order to attract more Russian customers and increase customer satisfaction.

2 TOURISM AND MARKETING

2.1 Marketing

“Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others”. (Kotler 2008, 7.)

The marketing process includes five steps: “understanding the marketplace and customers’ needs and wants, designing a customer-driven marketing strategy, constructing an integrated marketing program that delivers superior value, building profitable relationships and create customer delight, capturing value from customers to create profits and customer equity”. (Kotler 2008, 7.)

The economic function of marketing is to answer the following questions:

- What kind of products should the company offer to the market?
- To whom should the company offer these products?
- When and on which terms and conditions should the company offer these products?
- How to bring the products to the customers? (Durovich 2001, 10.)

2.2 Tourism service marketing mix

Product: tourism services like any other kind of services have the following characteristics: intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, perishability and a lack of ownership.

- When a person travels by plane, the service is intangible, because it consists of the moving the traveler from one destination to another.
- A tourism service cannot be separated from the person and the company that provides it, because a customer needs to be there to consume the tourism services.
- It is very difficult to standardize tourism services. Even the same staff in a hotel may serve you differently at different time.
- Tourism services are perishable because they cannot be stored. For example, if all the tickets on a plane have not been sold before flight, the company will not be able to sell them after the flight.
- When a customer pays for a tourism service, he or she pays for the temporary use of transport or facilities. (Raju 2009, 45.)

Pricing: In case of a service the pricing is complicated because of the service intangibility. A service company can use a cost based pricing and market-oriented pricing. The market-oriented pricing is influenced by competition and customer orientation. It is reasonable to fix the price of a service at the same level as competitors or to keep the price lower to obtain a bigger market share (Raju 2009, 47-48.)

Promotion: when promoting a service it is important to remember that a customer has a subjective opinion about the service’s quality because of

the service's intangible nature. Also, the quality of the service is affected by the performance. People and processes involved in the creating of the services bring the customer an experience, which affect the customer's opinion about the quality of the service. Finally, it is difficult to understand what the service is really like before trying it. Nonetheless, the methods of promoting a service are the same as promoting a product. Services can be advertised in newspapers, magazines, radio, TV. Also they can be promoted through personal selling and sales promotion. (Raju 2009, 48-49.)

Place: It is reasonable to distribute the service at the location where it is possible to attract as many customers as possible. The service is inseparable from the customer and from the performer, and the customer usually needs to go to the location where he or she can consume the service. (Raju 2009, 49.)

People: In providing a service both consumers and performers of the service are important. Customers comprehend the service through people that create and perform it and through other consumers of the service. (Raju 2009, 50.)

Physical evidence: The physical elements of a service are important because it brings tangibility to the service and affects the comprehension of the quality. In tourism industry the physical evidence consists of elements that are needed for travelling and activities at the destination of travelling, like transportation vehicles, accommodation, food and other. (Raju 2009, 50.)

Production: to produce a tourism product, several sub-industries consolidate their activities. These sub-industries are: (1) tour operator and travel agents, (2) accommodation industry, and (3) passenger transportation. According to statistics, a 35% of a tourist's spending goes to transportation, 40% on food and accommodation, and 25% on entertainment and shopping. (Raju 2009, 51-52.)

2.3 Tourism product

2.3.1 Tourism product's elements

Tourism is associated with travel of people to a destination and their stay at this destination. Thus there are two elements of tourism: the journey and the stay including all activities during the stay. These activities happen outside of a tourist's place of residence or work. It means that tourism includes activities that a tourist usually does not do normally at his or her working or home. This journey to a destination and the stay performs with the intention to return in a few days, weeks or months. (Raju 2009, 2.)

In the modern world there are many kinds of tourism destinations and kinds. In the ancient times, traveling usually was performed for trading

purposes. But nowadays, since world population has extra money for recreation and leisure, tourism is becoming more and more popular.

The tourism product is a complex of different elements:

- Natural resources (air, water, sun, landscape), historical, cultural, architectural attractions, that can motivate people to visit the tourism destination;
 - Accommodation facilities, restaurants, recreation and sport facilities, which do not necessarily motivate people to come, but the lack of which can hinder possible tourism;
 - Means of transportation, which can be used by people for travelling.
- (Durovich 2001, 149.)

Any tourism product is a result of cooperative activities of several organizations. Also, it is reasonable to add here communication that is necessary for connecting the tourism services provider with its stakeholders. (Durovich 2001, 149.)

The tourism product can be divided into three levels. The first level is the product as it is planned. The core of any product is aimed at satisfying some need of a customer. It means that tourism companies should present information about particular benefits that customers get from buying the product. (Durovich 2001, 150.)

The second level is the product as it is performed. It includes a set of characteristics that provide the opportunity to satisfy a customer's need. Among these characteristics there can be quality, comfort, economy, safety, impression and so on. (Durovich 2001, 150.)

The third level is the product as it is supported. A tourism company's activities should be aimed at building customer relationships, helping customers in all possible situations of dealing with the product, providing additional and symbolic benefits. Product support contributes to retention of customers and can be achieved by efficient organizing tours according to customers' requests, polite communication with customers, conformance of the product as it is performed to the product as it was declared and so on. (Durovich 2001, 151.)

Despite the fact that information services are usually free of charge, they substantially increase opportunities for sales of a tourism product. To inform its customers a tourism company can use catalogs and brochures. These materials should be given to a customer as soon as he or she expresses the wish to buy some tourism product. Also, a customer should be informed about all the formalities that he or she need to comply to go on a tour, the climate of the travel destination, medical insurance and so on. (Durovich 2001, 152.)

Product positioning is a way to create a good impression of the product in a customer's mind. Positioning is closely connected to the market segmentation. There are different approaches to the product positioning: by a specific benefit for customers, by a type of customers, by a price/quality ratio,

by the company image and so on. It is often reasonable to position the product by several features at the same time. (Durovich 2001, 156.)

2.3.2 Hospitality product

Experience of a consumer with hospitality products comes from hotel and catering industries. There are several aspects of this experience: physiological, economical, social and psychological. Five characteristics of hotels affect customer satisfaction in case of hospitality services:

- Location: the actual geographical place of a hotel;
 - Facilities: conference rooms, restaurants, bars, swimming pools etc;
 - Services: personal attention;
 - Image: the overall way the hotel is perceived by customers;
- (Raju 2009, 55-56.)

There are different classifications of hotels. The most common is the RAC classification, which classifies hotels in the following way:

“1 Star: Simple in furnishing or menu or service.

2 Star: Formal reception arrangements and more employed staff.

3 Star: Small luxury hotels offering a high degree of comfort. Telephones in bedrooms. Bedrooms with private bathrooms. Full meals facilities.

4 Star: Large hotels with full brigade of professional staff. Reception portage and room service at all hours. Post Office and telephones in all bedrooms. Conference and recreation facilities.

5 Star: Large luxury hotels offering the highest standard of accommodation, service and comfort.” (Raju 2009, 57.)

2.3.3 Attractiveness of tourism destinations

Tourism marketing strategies of a country are connected with economic and historical development of the country and the development of the tourism industry itself. When a tourist thinking about visiting a particular country, the decision depends on how attractive the country seems to the tourist in terms of culture, finance, comfort, entertainment and other aspects. (Durovich 2001, 39.)

A country image is a combination of emotional and rational views coming from the country’s characteristics, personal experience and rumors. Every country has a set of symbols and ideas associated with it in the eyes of other nations. (Durovich 2001, 40.)

To assess the attractiveness of a tourism destination several characteristics can be used: activities, settings, facilities, service, hosts and management. Activities can be listed to describe a tourism destination in the sense of what kind of activities there are available for visitors. For example, tourists that are interested in entertainments may be attracted by promotion of tours that include amusement activities. More complex approach includes characterizing of activities on base of available physical resources like forests, rivers and so on. (Pearce 2005, 87-88.)

Characterization of tourism destinations through settings deals with natural environment. The term 'settings' defines biophysical aspects of a destination like clean water, unpolluted air, deep forests, walking tracks in mountains and so on. (Pearce 2005, 88.)

The approach for defining a tourism destination through facilities includes the facilities themselves and the microenvironment. This methods focus on a tourist's comfort, landscape architecture, color, sound and design. (Pearce 2005, 88-89.)

Services are used for characterization of a destination in order to make an accent on the service's 'friendliness'. In one kind of this approach, five aspects of friendliness are used: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. Reliability means that the service is provided as expected. For example, all the promised facilities are available in the hotel. Assurance means the service personnel's competency. For instance, the receptionist in a spa center can explain the services in detail. Tangibles mean the appearance of the service personnel and the place. Empathy and responsiveness are defined through abilities of the service provider react to customers' complaints and wishes. (Pearce 2005, p.89.)

Defining tourism destinations through hosts' focuses on the perceptions that the host communities of the destination have about tourism: how they communicate with tourists, the level of hospitality and interactivity. (Pearce 2005, 90.)

2.4 Pricing in tourism industry

The price of the service that a company provides should be low enough to stimulate a demand and high enough to produce a profit. The price's higher level is bounded by the customers' perceptions of the service's value. The prices lower level is bounded by the costs of the service's production. (Kotler 2008, 639.)

Price is an important element in the marketing strategy of a company. A well-chosen pricing strategy affects either the profit or the competitive advantage of the company. Price is a crucial factor for customers. Price serves as way to establish a certain relationship between the company and its customers. (Durovich 2001, 275.)

In planning of the pricing strategy, it is necessary to take into account the following features of the tourism industry:

- High price elasticity in different segments of the tourism market;
- Perishability of the tourism services, which brings the risk of the unsold stock of tourism products;
- High influence of competitors;
- High influence of the government in the area of transportation prices;
- Necessity of season price differentiation;
- Big level of orientation on the psychological features of the customer;
- High cost of operations in the tourism industry. (Durovich 2001, 275.)

External factors affecting the pricing strategy include: correlation between the supply and demand, the level and dynamics of the competitors' prices, the government's regulations in the economics as a whole and the tourism area in particular, customers. The pricing is also affected by the image of the company. When selling tourism services to customers, the company should understand how the customers perceive the services. Different kinds of customers perceive the company's image in a different way. Therefore, the pricing strategy should have a distinct kind of customer relationship with every market segment. (Durovich 2001, 277-278.)

It is essential to understand the value that the service brings to customers. Value-based pricing is a method of setting a price according to the customers' perceptions of the service's value. The value is created through all the marketing efforts of the company. Hence, the pricing is planned with the other elements of the marketing mix. (Kotler 2008, 640.)

In the cost-based pricing method, the company considers the cost of producing, distributing and selling services to set a price. Especially, it is reasonable for companies who find ways to work with low costs of operations. (Kotler 2008, 642.)

The company's pricing strategy is also affected by the competitors' costs, prices and offerings. Consumers often compare services of competitors that are sold for the same price and choose those providing more value. Thus, the pricing strategy of the company also changes its competition. (Kotler 2008, 655.)

2.5 Distribution of tourism services

Every company producing a product or a service needs to be able to deliver it to the customers. In order to do this, a company should build relationships also with suppliers and resellers. A company's partners participating in a value delivery process constitute a company's supply chain. Suppliers are called upstream partners of a company, whereas resellers are downstream partners. (Kotler 2008, 880.)

“Marketing channel (or distribution channel) is a set of interdependent organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or consumption by the customer or business user.” (Kotler 2008, 881.)

Members of a marketing channel can perform the following functions:

- Gathering information about the market;
- Promoting the product to potential customers;
- Contacting potential customers;
- Matching the offers to the customer's needs;
- Assembling and packaging of the product;
- Negotiating with the customer about the price and terms of the offer;
- Transporting and storing goods;

- Financing and so on. (Kotler 2008, 882.)

A tourism services provider can sell the services directly to the customers, organize sales through tourism agencies and use several distribution channels. A direct-marketing channel does not have intermediaries and includes only the tourism services provider and the customers. One-level marketing channel contains also a tourism agency – a company, which specializes in selling a tourism product on the base of a contract with a tourism services provider. Two-level marketing channel contains two intermediaries - a tourism agency and a travel agency, which play the roles of a wholesaler and a retailer. Distribution channels with a bigger level of intermediaries are used rarely, because it is difficult to control and manage. (Durovich 2001, 294.)

2.6 Tourism service customers

2.6.1 Characteristics affecting consumers' behavior

“Consumer purchases are influenced strongly by cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics”. (Kotler 2008, 239.)

The underlying motives of consumers' behaviour come from culture. People are born and grow up in a society. They learn values and attitudes from the society. That is why it is important to take into account the cultural environment of the particular customer segment. Within a culture there are often subcultures. A subculture can contain people who share common values according to status, religion, ethnic background or other factors. Most societies have a social class structure: a hierarchy of groups with similar economic status, values, interests and behaviour. (Kotler 2008, 240-242.)

A consumer's behaviour is affected by social factors, like small groups with which a consumer communicates, as well as the consumer's family, his or her social roles and status. The groups of people that affect a customer's buying behaviour are called membership groups. Primary groups, which a consumer belongs to and exchanges information with, include family, friends and co-workers. A consumer's behaviour is often influenced by reference groups, which he or she does not belong to, but communicates with. (Kotler 2008, 244.)

Personal characteristics of a consumer include age and life-cycle stage. People's buying behavior change when they grow older. Also, their family status changes their needs. Among different groups of people there are young children, adolescent children, adult customers who are single, customers that are married and do not have children, customers that are married and have children and so on. (Kotler 2008, 251.)

Economic circumstances of a customer influence his or her buying behavior. Due to this, companies take into account customers' incomes and sav-

ings. Furthermore, the whole economic situation in a country affects customers' wants and needs. (Kotler 2008, 252.)

One more characteristic of a customer is lifestyle. Lifestyle is described by a person's activities, interests and opinions. Psychographics is a technique for measuring lifestyles. The dimensions for measuring are such activities as work, hobbies, social event, holidays, entertainment, club membership, community, shopping and sports. Among interests there are family, home, job, community, recreation, fashion, food, media, and achievements. Customers' opinions can be about themselves, social issues, politics, business, economics, education, products, future and culture. (Kotler 2008, 252-253.)

Personality of a customer consists of his or her psychological characteristics, such as self-confidence, sociability, autonomy, adaptability, aggressiveness and others. A person's self-concept or self-image also affects his or her buying preferences. (Kotler 2008, 254.)

Such psychological factors as motivation, perception, learning, and beliefs and attitudes influence a customer's choices as well. A motive is a need that is strong enough to make the person to look for satisfaction. Perception is the way a person thinks about and understands the situation. Different customers have different perceptions of the same needs and wants. Learning refers to a person's change in behaviour according to his or her experience. Belief is a mental accepting of some statements. Attitudes are a person's positive or negative evaluations, feelings and inclinations to some objects or ideas. (Kotler 2008, 260.)

2.6.2 Customer's motivation in buying tourism services

People go on tours, because they need new impressions. Travelling helps them to distract from their usual environment, to forget about current problems and routine tasks and to relax outside of home and work.

The goals of travelling can be different:

- Leisure, entertainment: people need to relax, to spend some time in a new interesting place, to get new emotions and impressions.
- Sport: there are tours that contain different kinds of sport.
- Knowledge, studying, training: combining studying with tourism can improve the efficiency of the learning process.
- Health improvement: for this purpose different kinds of health and spa centers are available.
- Religious: pilgrimage tourism is also very common.
- Business: congresses and business trips is a big part of travelling and hospitality services consumption;
- Visits: many people need to visit their relatives and friends who live in other cities or countries.
- Hobbies: there are tours for people who are fond of particular activities like football fans or gourmet tours.

- Culture: many people are curious about culture and traditions of other countries. This kind of tourism includes sightseeing, visiting museums and exhibitions. (Raju 2009, 52.)

Cohen has come up with a cognitive normal typology. It is connected to the meaning of travel for different people:

- Recreational: It is the objective of travel that includes the wish to relax and relieve the stress.
- Diversionary: The travel is performed with the aim to get away from everyday routine and boredom.
- Experiential: The objective is to find something, which is available in other cultures, but not in that of the tourist.
- Experimental: The objective is to try new lifestyles.
- Existential: The objective is to try new spiritual experiences. (Raju 2009, 54.)

The kinds of tourists according to their reasons for travelling can be defined as follows:

- Explorer: tourists who are interested in learning new things.
- Elite: tourists who value tours, which are specially customized for them and not available to others.
- Offbeat: people who are willing to get away from everyday routine.
- Unusual: people who prefer strange trips, for example involving danger.
- Incipient Mass: tourists that use shared services, a steady flow.
- Mass: packaged tours.
- Charter: mass travel to relaxation destinations with standards and common procedures. (Raju 2009, 53.)

2.6.3 Aspects of consumer psychology

In studying the consumer psychology of tourism, hospitality and leisure there are several psychological aspects that are taken into account:

- Cognitive psychology – defined as ‘all processes by which the sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, and used’ (Neisser, 1967). Cognitive psychology is associated with subjects like perception, memory, language and thinking.
- Environmental psychology deals with the connection between the behavior of a person and the person’s environment. Environmental psychology involves phenomena like stimulation, adaptation, way-finding and other.
- Social psychology is a mix of sociology and psychology. It studies how a person’s behavior is affected by other people. The issues involved in this theory are social class, family traditions, cultural norms and so on.
- Economic psychology is a connection between cognitive and social psychology. It “studies the social-psychological mechanisms that underlie the consumption of products and services and other economic behavior. It deals with consumer preferences, choices, decisions and

factors influencing these behaviors as well as the consequences of decisions and choices in the satisfaction of needs”. (Crouch 2004, 3.)

2.6.4 Stages of purchase process

“A common way of conceptualizing consumer psychology is to consider the three primary stages of the consumption or purchase process: pre-purchase, purchase and acquisition and post-purchase” (Crouch 2004, p.3).

In each of these three stages the consumer behavior is different. Considering the tourism consumer behavior, pre-purchase stage usually happens more in advance than in other industries, because a consumer can perceive the intangible tourism service only subjectively, using a complicated mix of attitudes and knowledge and it usually takes a lot of time thinking about a service before buying it. The purchase stage involves the trip itself. The post-purchase stage is important because many tourism consumers experience emotions even when they come home discussing the trip with relatives and friends and giving souvenirs. The post-purchase stage in tourism customer psychology is important also because it affects the future decisions of the customer about returning to the destination again. (Crouch 2004, 4.)

People who travel abroad occur in another culture, so cross-cultural behavior is also important in tourism. Also, tourists meet new environment when going on a trip, which is why environmental psychology is applied in tourism consumer behavior as well. Many things that were common in tourists’ home environment become different and strange when they travel. They need to learn how to find by tickets, how to get around, whom to address questions. (Crouch 2004, 4.)

2.6.5 Consumer emotions in purchasing process

It is important for a service provider to understand how emotions affect the perception of the quality of the service. Mehrabian and Russell’s (1974) described three dimensions in their work on environmental psychology: pleasure, arousal and dominance. Pleasure means how much the consumer is happy and satisfied. Arousal means how much the consumer is stimulated with curiosity, fear etc. Dominance means how much the customer is in control of the situation. For example, waiting for a service longer than expected can create a feeling of less control of the situation, anxiety, and unhappiness. When consuming a service the customer experiences a combination of emotions and creates the mood of the customer. Influencing the mood, it is possible to affect the customer’s perception of the service quality. (Crouch 2004, 22.)

There was a research conducted among one- and two-star hotel guests in Austria. According to research, the factor that plays the major role and affects the decision making process the most is price (83% of the respondents). More than two-thirds of respondents say that location and the hotel’s surroundings are important in this sense. Slightly more than one third

think that the room is important when they decide if to buy a tour or not. The next in the list of priorities are food and drink, reachability, staff (friendliness etc.), hotel equipment and other aspects. (Crouch 2004, 13-14.)

The expectation of one- and two-star hotel guests concerns most often: cleanliness (40% of the respondents), bathroom (7%), shower (7%), good location (7%), good service (7%), good food (7%), TV (6%), cheap (4%), friendly (4%), comfortable (4%), good value for money (4%). (Crouch 2004, 16.)

Among things that have disappointed hotel guests, the most popular was the issue of hygiene and cleanliness (24% of the respondents). The next important factor is food (14%). Among other most frequently mentioned factors are room, staff, bed, noise etc. (Crouch 2004, 17.)

2.7 Tourism services promotion

Promotion of services is needed to stimulate demand for these services and increase sales. In order to do this, companies must communicate the value of their services to potential customers. Furthermore, companies must communicate with their suppliers, intermediaries and other stakeholders.

2.7.1 Marketing communication

Tourism services providers have to communicate with customers, banks, insurance companies and other tourism service companies. Through communication a tourism service provider creates and supports a desirable image of the company and its services in the eyes of potential and actual customers and other stakeholders. The role of communication is to ensure coherence in the work of all the company's divisions, as well as interactions with its external environment. (Durovich 2001, 307.)

Communication is a process of exchange of information between two or more people. The communication can be personal or non-personal. Personal communication can be performed between people, who talk to each other in person or with the use of some means of communication, like telephone or Internet. Non-personal communication is performed without personal contact and immediate feedback through print materials, radio, television, posters, brochures and so on. For a tourism service company, communication is 1) a source and medium of information; 2) means of influence on the market; 3) a tool to increase efficiency of marketing activities. Communication is effective when transferred information is understood correctly. (Durovich 2001, 307–308.)

Marketing communication are messages and media through which these messages are sent in order to communicate with the market. Tourism companies, unlike companies producing or selling goods, have more complicated tasks when performing marketing communication, because tour-

ism services are not tangible, therefore they are not visible to customers. For this reason, it is very important to describe in detail the services and all their benefits for customers. (Durovich 2001, 312)

Marketing communication strategies depend on the target audience and on the goals of communication. Every goal corresponds to the target audience's state. The possible goals are creating awareness, providing information, creating a positive image, establishing good relationships, ensuring image, forming preferences, motivating to buy a service, increasing sales, changing the target audience behavior and son on. (Durovich 2001, 313.)

Image is the perception that people have of a company and its services. Positive image increases the competitiveness of the company, attracts customers and increases sales.

2.7.2 Promotion mix

“A company's total promotion mix – also called its marketing communication mix – consists of the specific blend of advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling and direct marketing tools that the company uses to persuasively communicate customer value and build customer relationships.” (Kotler 2008, 691.)

Advertising is a paid form of promoting services to public. It can reach many people in a particular geographical area. Consumers tend to think of large-scale advertised services as standard and trustful, they accept such products easily. An advertisement can be repeated many times, so customers can understand and memorize the messages. Moreover, they can compare it with advertisements of competitors. An advertisement can be very expressive through design tools. Although, advertising is impersonal, which means it is not as effective in influencing a particular customer as personal sales. (Kotler 2008, 713.)

Sales promotion includes such tools of promotion like coupons, contests, price reductions, free gifts and other ways to stimulate sales. Sales promotion draws customers' attention and stimulates purchases. The purchases in this case occur quickly and increase sales for a short term. The promotional effect of this tool does not last long. (Kotler 2008, 714.)

Public relations are aimed at creating a good corporate image through spreading favorable news stories, rumors, sponsorships and events. Public relations are quite believable than advertisements. This promotion tool can reach customers who avoid salespeople and advertisements. (Kotler 2008, 714.)

Personal selling is a way of making sales through personal presentations of the service to potential customers by the company's sales force. Personal selling is very effective because a sales person can find out a customer's needs. It is easy to keep a customer's attention during a conversation.

Nonetheless, personal selling is expensive and time-consuming. (Kotler 2008, 714.)

Direct marketing includes direct mail, electronic mail, telemarketing and online marketing as tools to connect with individual customers. In direct marketing, the message is addressed to a particular person. It is easy to prepare and customize the message. Also, it is possible to receive a response from a customer. (Kotler 2008, 714.)

Effective marketing communication starts with identifying the target audience. For different types of audience the communication is planned in different ways. Then the objectives of the marketing communication are defined. The objectives depend on a particular buyer-readiness stage. There are six stages, which the buyer goes through during his or her purchasing process: awareness, knowledge, linking, preference, conviction and purchase. The aim of marketing communication is to motivate the buyer to advance through these stages to make a purchase. (Kotler 2008, 701.)

2.8 Cross-cultural communication

“Culture is the set of basic values, perceptions, wants and behaviors learned by a member of society from family and other important institutions.” (Kotler 2008, 240.)

A human is by nature a social animal. That is why social integration is an important aspect of every person’s life. A person needs to adapt to the social environment to avoid conflicts, isolation and loneliness. In order to integrate into the society, every individual learn standard behavior patterns and common ways of thinking. Along with social norms, a person gains cognitive, emotional and behavior similarities with people of the same culture. (Sadoin 2004, 29–32.)

When a person communicates with people from other cultures, he or she most often cannot predict their behavior on the base of his or her own cultural norms and rules. Usually, it is necessary to understand the meaning of every particular action of an individual from other culture, because the meaning can be hidden in the traditional perceptions about normal behavior. (Sadoin 2004, 38.)

Most people think of their perceptions of the world as normal and natural. For this reason, they believe that their culture is better than other cultures. Moreover, they consider everything that is not consistent to their own norms, habits and behavior patterns as ugly and unmoral. When two persons from different cultures communicate they both consider their behavior natural. On the other hand, everything that is inconsistent with their norms is considered to be strange. Therefore, a person from other culture often seems stupid, ignorant and evil. The reaction to behavior of people from other cultures can vary from simple amusement to anger and rejection. (Sadoin 2004, 42–61.)

However, behavior of people from other cultures can be learned. Many researches have been conducted in this field. Cross-cultural researcher Edward T. Hall has identified several parameters that define different types of cultures. According to his studies, the nature of communication depends on how much the process of information exchange depends on situational hints, non-verbal clues and personal relationships. Cultures where these factors play a big role are called high-context. Cultures with smaller influence of these factors are low-context cultures. In high-context cultures, people communicate a lot with other family members, friends, colleagues, customers and others. Usually these cultures are homogeneous. At the same time, low-context cultures are often less homogeneous. People of these cultures obtain little clue from the context and need give each other more information verbally. (Sadohin 2004, 82.)

Also, Edward T. Hall studied perceptions of time in cultures. Every culture has its system of using time. All cultures can be divided into two types according to their perceptions of time: monochronic and polychronic. In monochronic cultures, people prefer to perform tasks one after another during particular time. Monochronic time is broken down into segments and everything is planned to concentrate on one task at a time. Polychronic perception of time involves many tasks simultaneously. In polychronic cultures, communication between individuals is more important than plans. Tasks can be interrupted at any moment and plans can be changed. (Sadohin 2004, 86.)

Another cross-cultural researcher Geert Hofstede has defined the following parameters of cultures: power distance, individualism and collectivism, masculinity and femininity and uncertainty avoidance. Measurement of the power distance parameter means comparison of cultures by their concentration of power within different levels of organizations. This parameter shows what significance the power has in people relationships. (Sadohin 2004, 87.)

Measurement of cultures by their individualism and collectivism parameters shows social connections in contrast to individual independence. In individualism cultures goals of a person are more important than goals of a group. In collectivism cultures, on the contrary, is divided into social groups that take care of their members. (Sadohin 2004, 91.)

The masculinity and femininity parameters show the importance of masculine and feminine values in a culture. Masculine values include achievements, pride, prosperity and success, whereas feminine values are personal relationships, cooperation, understanding and care about others. In masculine cultures the roles of men and women are more distinctly separated, than in feminine ones. (Sadohin 2004, 94.)

The uncertainty avoidance parameter is used for comparison cultures to understand how much people in these cultures accept deviations from standard norms and rules. People in high uncertainty avoidance cultures constantly feel stress because of the indetermination of the future, resist changes and secure themselves with systems of rules. In low uncertainty

avoidance cultures, people tend to take risks, favor new ideas and resist rigid rules. (Sadoin 2004, 97.)

3 RUSSIAN TOURISTS

3.1 Russian travellers to Finland and other countries

Finland is the second in the list of countries that Russians visit most. Among the most visited countries, there are also Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Abkhazia, which are countries that used to belong to the Soviet Union. That is why Russians have many relatives and friends in these countries and can travel quite often to pay them visits. It means that Finland is the country that Russians visit most among all the “really foreign” countries. (The most popular destinations of travels of Russian citizens from Russia to other countries in 2012)

Table 2 The most popular destinations of travels of Russian citizens from Russia to other countries in 2012.

| Country | Travellers |
|------------|------------|
| Ukraine | 9,464,215 |
| Finland | 5,118,780 |
| Kazakhstan | 3,438,937 |
| Abkhazia | 3,367,243 |
| Turkey | 3,334,727 |
| China | 2,312,199 |
| Egypt | 2,246,440 |
| Estonia | 1,825,932 |
| Germany | 1,385,363 |
| Thailand | 1,112,253 |

3.2 Types of Russian tourists

Russia has a large geographical area and rich wildlife. The territory of Russia extends 10,000 km from west to east and 3,000 km from northern arctic latitudes to southern subtropical ones. Russia has resorts on the costs of the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea, which gives Russian opportunities for beach vacation and sea spa. The mountains on the territory of Russia provide possibilities of mountain tourism services and mineral water spa. Large rivers like Volga, Yenisei and Lena are suitable for boat cruises and fishing. Lakes in Karelia and the Baikal region are clean and picturesque. The forests of the central part of the country, in Caucasus, Siberia and Far East are full of bears and animals. These natural resources bring opportunities for hunting and ecological tours. (The main types of tourism in Russia)

Furthermore, Russia has a rich history, which was related to ancient Vikings, Slavs, Mongol-Tatars, Scythians, Swedes, Teutons, Greeks and other cultures. Russians’ ancestors inherited religions, traditions and languages from them. It makes Russians from different parts of the country interesting to each other and stimulates internal tourism. Due to all these

facts, tourism in Russia is very diverse. (The main types of tourism in Russia)

3.2.1 Sport, extreme, fishing and hunting tourism

Sport and extreme tourism in Russia includes hiking, skiing, watersports, cycling, mountaineering, horse sport, car sport and caving. These activities are a means of increasing sport skills and good exercises. There are competitions in sport and extreme tourism. As in actual sport, in sport tourism there are sport categories and the title of master of Sports. (Sport and extreme tourism)

Caving involves travelling to natural or man-made caves and labyrinths. It is interesting because of the variety of terrain that create obstacles like wells, narrow slits, underground rivers and so on, as well as extreme physical conditions. All these make the caving tourism very adventurous and attractive for young people. There are more than 5,000 examined caves in Caucasus, Altai, and Urals. The most interesting from them are popular tourism destinations. Mountain tourism involves a journey on mountains' slopes, ridges, glaciers, crossing passes and mountain slopes. Mountain tourism includes climbing, mineralogical and geo tourism. Water tourism is hiking along rivers, lakes and seas on inflatable boats, kayaks, catamarans, rafts and so on. It combines elements of sport, leisure and health improvement and available for all healthy people. Water tourism is well developed on the rivers such as Volga, Oka, Yenisei and so on. (Sport and extreme tourism)

The ski sport and tourism is very popular in Russia. The biggest ski resorts are situated in Caucasus and Karachay-Cherkessia. Sportsmen and tourists have been visiting these resorts for 40 years. Recently, snowboarding has also become popular. This region also attracts people, who are in fond of alpinism, mountain ski, paraplanerism and mountain river crafting. (Ski tours)

Russians are fond of fishing and hunting. In most places fishing and hunting is prohibited, that is why tourism companies hire jaegers that know exactly when it is allowed and where. Hunting tourism is developed in the Astrakhan region. Fishing tourism is popular on the banks of River Volga, in Murmansk and other places in Russia. (Fishing and hunting tours)

3.2.2 Cultural tourism

Cultural tourism is connected with tours where people learn something from culture, history and architecture. These tours develop tourists' intellectual skills, expand their view of the world and entertain them. This type of tourism is mostly developed in the central part of the country where main Russian historical and architectural attractions are situated. For example, in Moscow there are popular tours to Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral, Cathedral of Christ the Savior, Novodevichy monastery and other architectural monuments. Furthermore, Russian capital hosts more than 70

theaters, almost 100 art museums like Tretyakov Art Gallery and Museum of Fine Arts named after Pushkin. Tourists come to Moscow to attend festivals, exhibitions and fairs. Moscow International Festival and Moscow Tourism and Travel Exhibition are popular events that many people visit. (Cultural tourism)

Cultural tourism is very important for Saint Petersburg. Russians consider Saint Petersburg the most romantic city of the country. Ancient embankments and drawbridges make this city mysterious and charming. Tourists like to walk along the Nevsky Prospect and on the Palace Square, sit on the benches along the alleys of Tsarskoye Selo and Summer Garden. Beautiful and delightful Peterhof open its sculptures and fountains for tourists in summer. Saint Petersburg is sometimes called Northern Venice. Russians and foreign tourists also like to visit famous Mariinsky Opera and Ballet Theater, the Hermitage and other cultural places. (Cultural tourism)

The Golden Ring of Russia is a ring of ancient towns, in every of which there are many historical monuments. For example, Novgorod has a kremlin of 11th century. Pskov has a museum-reserve Pushkin Hills. In Ivangorod, Gdov and Porohov, there are ancient fortresses. Valaam's monastery is one of the spiritual centers of Russia, which appeared in 15th century. Travelling along the Golden Ring of Russia is a perfect way to learn the Russian culture and traditions. (Cultural tourism)

3.2.3 Spa, resort and leisure tourism

Beach tourism has been popular in Russia for many years. This kind of tourism is developed on the coasts of the Black, Azov, Baltic and Caspian Seas. The Black Sea coast is a completely resort region. It is the only region with a subtropical climate in Russia. On this coast there are several types of beaches: soft fine sand, hard pebbles, rocks and quartz sand beaches. The resort season on the Black Sea coast lasts from May to October. The most developed tourism regions of this area are Sochi, Anapa, Tuapse and Gelengik. Besides, the Black Sea provides opportunities for different kinds of sport activities like diving, surfing, yachting, water ski, aqua bike and so on. Sochi is the summer capital of Russia. There are 161 sandy beaches, 120 of which belong to hotels and health resorts. Anapa hosts spa resorts and tourism services for children. The Azov Sea coast is an ideal place for family holidays with children, because the sea is shallow and warmer than the Black Sea. On the Azov Sea coast there are many small towns, which are popular with tourists who want to stay in a calm place without crowds of people. (Beach tourism)

Health tourism is a kind of individual tourism, which depends on the desired effect on health and can be divided into climate, sea, mud or water kinds of therapy. Health tours in Russia usually last 21-24 days. Among popular destinations of health tourism there are the Black, Azov and Baltic Seas coasts, where people can eat fruits, sunbathe, enjoy the natural scenery, visit spa centers, fitness centers and aqua parks. Caucasus's mineral waters provide great opportunities for health improvement and mix tradi-

tional kinds of therapy with modern healthcare techniques. In the birch and pine forests of the Moscow region, there are health and spa resorts, where tourists can enjoy fresh forest air and bathe in lake and rivers. Altai Mountains region has many sources of silver clay and healing mud and hosts spa resorts amongst beautiful scenery and fresh mountain air. (Health tourism)

Cruises is one of the most popular type of tourism on water. Most foreign tourists in Russia prefer cruises from Moscow to Saint Petersburg for 3-4 days. Meanwhile, Russians like long cruises on Volga and the Siberian rivers Lena, Yenisei, Ob and Amur. Sea cruises are organized in the Northwest of the country in Kaliningrad, Saint Petersburg, Murmansk and Archangelsk. (Cruise tourism)

3.2.4 Tourism for children

Children and youth tourism exists in Russia in a form of excursions, sight-seeing and wellness tours. School children touristic groups are the most common type of customers of the internal tourism services. They constitute 80% of all the customers of tours inside Russia. Leisure activities for children are provided by sport and recreation camps by seacoasts, lakes shores, and riverbanks, as well as and in the woods. Young people, who are old enough can travel without parents, sometimes prefer unorganized tourism staying at tent camps. (Tourism for children)

3.2.5 Religion tourism

Nowadays, pilgrimage is becoming more and more popular kind of tourism among Russians. In such religious tours people worship holy icons and relics of saints; take part in religious services and monastery meals; bathe in holy springs. Pilgrims listen to stories about the history of the Russian Orthodox Church and spiritual value of visited places. One of the most popular destinations of religious tourism is Solovetsky monastery on the Solovetsky islands in the White Sea. Also, there is Valaam's monastery, the Holy Trinity-Sergius Lavra and other holy places. (Religious tourism)

3.2.6 Business and event tourism

The number of international business contacts in Russia constantly increases. Many big cities host international exhibitions, congresses and forums. Consequently, the field of business tourism is developing. The numbers of hotels, new transportation systems, restaurants are increasing. Furthermore, many Russians nowadays understand the importance of foreign languages and learn them for business and recreational purposes. (Business tourism)

Event tourism has started to develop quite recently in Russia. Among events that attract tourists there are tennis competitions, hockey and foot-

ball matches, festivals, ethnic and religious holidays, weeks of culture and art. (Business tourism)

3.2.7 Ecological and rural tourism

The number of ecological tourism fans is increasing constantly. People, who are tired from life in cities, want to have rest through contact with nature. Additionally, ecological tourism encourages care about natural environment and makes such tours beneficial for local people. The UNESCO World Heritage List includes five natural objects in Russia: Komi forests, Baikal Lake, the volcanoes of Kamchatka, Altai Mountains and Western Caucasus. There are other picturesque places in Russia that are as ecological tourism destinations. (Ecological tourism)

Rural tourism is a quite new type of tourism in Russia and so far it is not as popular as other types of tourism. Rural tourism refers to going to a rural area with recreational purposes or to participate in agricultural works. Rural tourism is popular among people who need calm pastime, fresh air, silence, seclusion, natural food, homely atmosphere, feeling of closeness with nature and new experience. (Rural tourism)

3.2.8 Food tourism

Food tourism is one more type of tourism that has just appeared in Russia. Pure food tours do not exist inside the country, but they are included in other kinds of tours. Tourists learn Russian cuisine when visiting best restaurants of the country. The restaurants follow the rules of Russian traditional ways of cooking, serving and consumption of meals. These restaurants are especially popular with foreign tourists, but many Russian citizens who are used to the modern standards living find them exotic and entertaining. (Food tourism)

3.3 Holidays and leisure activities in Russia

For many centuries, holidays in Russia were based on agricultural events and pagan customs. After the coming of Christianity to Russia, the pagan holidays mixed with the holidays in the Orthodox Christian calendar. In 1917, new holidays came with the communist revolution, some of which were canceled in 1991. (Schultze 2000, 51.)

The most important holiday for Russians is the New Year, which is on January 1. Some people, especially the Orthodox, also celebrate Christmas. Before 1917, Christmas was celebrated on December 25. But in Russia they still use the old calendar, which is thirteen days behind that of the West. Thus, Christmas is celebrated on January 7. Christmas holiday was canceled by the communists and returned in 1991. Nonetheless, three generations leaving in the Soviet Union were used to consider the New Year the main holiday, and this situation has not changed until today. People start preparation for the New Year in December, when they go shopping for gifts and party supplies. This time is exciting for both Russian children

and adults. People also send each other cards to wish Happy New Year. Many people buy a Christmas tree to install it at home and decorate with toys. Furthermore, big well-decorated Christmas trees are usually installed on main squares of every city and town. Instead of Santa Clause, Russians have Ded Moroz, which means Father Frost, and Snegurochka, which means Snow Maiden. They visit children's party together and bring presents. (Schultze 2000, 51-52.)

On February 23, Russians have Defender of the Fatherland Day, or men's day, which was Red Army Day in the Soviet Union. On March 8, there is Women's Day in the Russian calendar of holidays. On this day, women are given flowers, gifts and cards from their husbands, brothers and other relatives and friends. Also, some men take home chores that usually are performing by women, like cleaning the house, cooking and washing the dishes, to free the women from their hard work at least for this day. (Schultze 2000, 53-54.)

In February or early March, the Orthodox celebrate Maslenitsa, which lasts eight days before Lent. For these eight days, Russians traditionally eat bliny, or pancakes. This holiday comes from pagan times, when people organized feasting, games and bonfires. After this day, the Orthodox Christians in Russia have the Great Fast. (Schultze 2000, 54.)

One more spring religious holiday in Russia is Paskha, or Easter. The Orthodox bake a tall round cake for this day and dye eggs with different colors. Traditionally, people used natural dyeing products for this purpose, like onion's skins or beetroot, but now many artificial dyes are available in Russian supermarkets. (Schultze 2000, 54.)

On May 1, Russians celebrate the International Labor Day, like people in many other countries. In the Soviet Union, this holiday was an important communist day. There were demonstrations of big numbers of people, who marched along main streets in every town with red flags in hands. Some carried banners with the communist slogan "Workers of the world, unite!". This holiday is celebrated in Russia even after 1991, but without the communist slogans. On May 9, Russians celebrate the end of World War II, where they fought against Nazi Germany. They call this day the Victory Day and perform a parade of Russian military forces in Red Square. The 12th of June is Day of Russia. It was the day when Boris Yeltsin was elected president. (Schultze 2000, 54-55.)

On November 4, Russians celebrate Day of National Unity, which was established instead of the holiday of November 7, the Day of Great October Socialist Revolution.

Thus, in Russia, there are several holidays during a year when people do not go to work: January 1, January 7, March 8, May 1, May 9, June 12, November 4. Also, the Russian government usually adds to these holidays one or more non-working days, so people could spend more time for their leisure activities. Some people stay at home to perform their chores. Some of them visit friends and relatives. Many Russians prefer to travel during

holidays. Especially, the New Year holidays can be quite long. Lately, they last for eight days, which makes it for some Russians a convenient opportunity to travel abroad.

3.4 Reviews of Russian customers of Waltikka Hotel

Many tourists, who come to Valkeakoski from Russia, find the hotel Waltikka through online booking services. Nowadays it is a very common way of promoting and selling tourism and hospitality services. Also, it is possible to obtain some feedback from customers.

On the online service Booking.com there are some reviews about the hotel Waltikka, that can be used to assess the needs, attitudes, perceptions and experience of Waltikka services' consumers.

Positive reviews of Russian tourists about Waltikka:

- Quiet, cozy hotel; free parking place; friendly staff.
- Conveniently situated between Tampere and the airport in a beautiful quiet place on a lakeshore.
- Beautiful place; good walkways around the lake; the tennis court in good condition; quite good breakfast.
- Well situated on a lakeshore.
- Good hotel for a family, situated in a quiet, calm place; many walkways, tasty breakfasts and dinners; friendly and helpful staff, they even found for us two bicycles to ride around the neighborhood for free; good for either family or romantic vacation.
- Very quiet all around; neat and clean in the hotel and in the surroundings; in the room there is a tea and coffee kit, bathrobe and slippers; cozy restaurant, tasty breakfast.
- Good breakfast; quiet place.
- Nice quiet little clean hotel; a beautiful lake nearby; many walkways in the park; halfway from the hotel to Tampere there is a big shopping center Ideapark.
- It's quiet and calm; there are balconies in the rooms; great winter view of the lake; good parking place; friendly staff; good rooms. (Booking.com: Hotel Waltikka, Valkeakoski, Finland)

Negative reviews of Russian tourists about Waltikka:

- It was cool in the room.
- There were not promised bicycles. There was only one. The receptionist said that there were only two in the hotel and she didn't know where the other one was; swimming in the lake is not very good – there is grass and seaweed; the food in the restaurant is not for gourmet.
- There were mosquitos; no conditioning; the menu is not very varied, the food is not very tasty;
- No children room; the breakfasts are modest;
- We didn't understand how to use the sauna, because we came late and there were not any personnel. But we really wanted to relax after the long road;

- Small beds; no Russian TV channels;
- The view of the plant spoils the scenery a little, but it is quite far away and is visible only during a walk along the lake and it does not affect the quality of the air and water at all; quite small variety of dishes for breakfast; for tourists it is difficult to find the hotel – no road signs on the way. (Booking.com: Hotel Waltikka, Valkeakoski, Finland)

3.5 Survey results

The survey was performed through an online form. The potential respondents were found through the Facebook and Russian social network VKontakte. As a result, 103 people from Saint Petersburg, Moscow and other Russian cities have participated in the survey. The goal of the survey was to find out the tourism preferences of Russians, as well as their impressions of travels to Finland.

The question about source of information that the people use to find information about hotels and travel destination showed that overwhelming majority of the respondents (90%) use the Internet as a source of information. Of course, the result can be connected with the fact that the survey was conducted online. In this connection, other possible sources are interesting. 50% of the respondents learn the information about travel destinations from friends. About 22% find it through travel agents. Only 9% of the survey participants obtain such information on TV. One person chose the newspaper as a source.

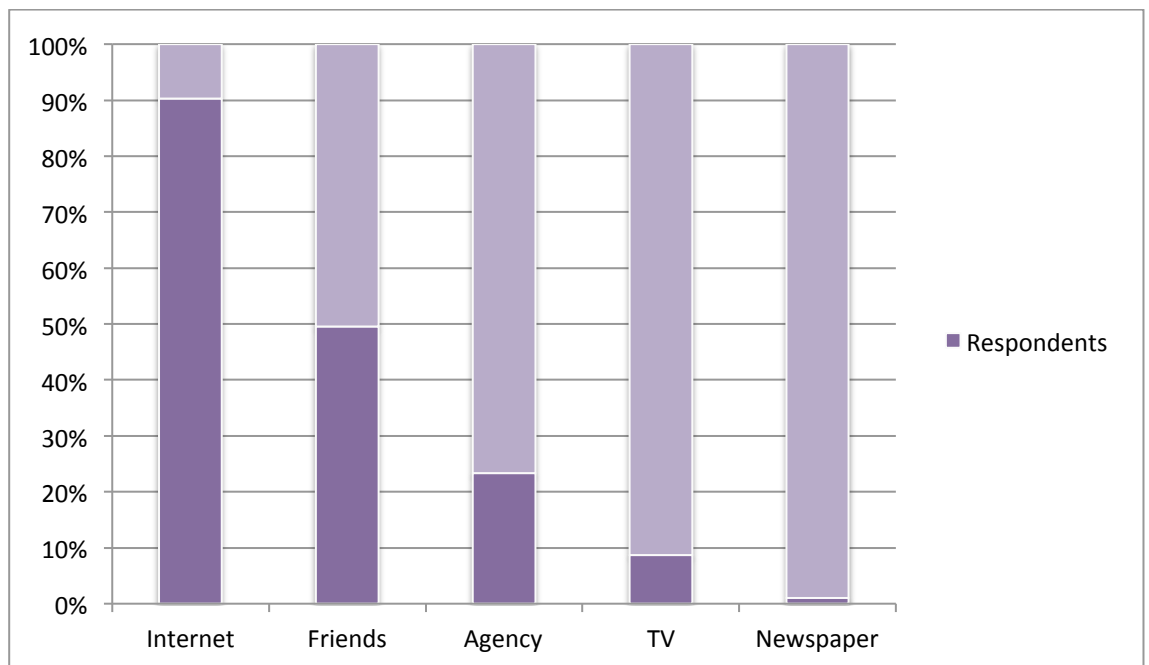


Figure 3 Source of information about travel destinations and hotels.

The most common goal of travel of the respondents is entertainment. About 82% of people want that travels were entertaining. Almost 70% would like to go on sightseeing tours. For 45% for the respondents, travel is a tool of stress relief. 30% go shopping during travels. 15% of people use travels for health improvement and visiting friends. For about 5% of the respondents travels' goals are sport, studying and business.

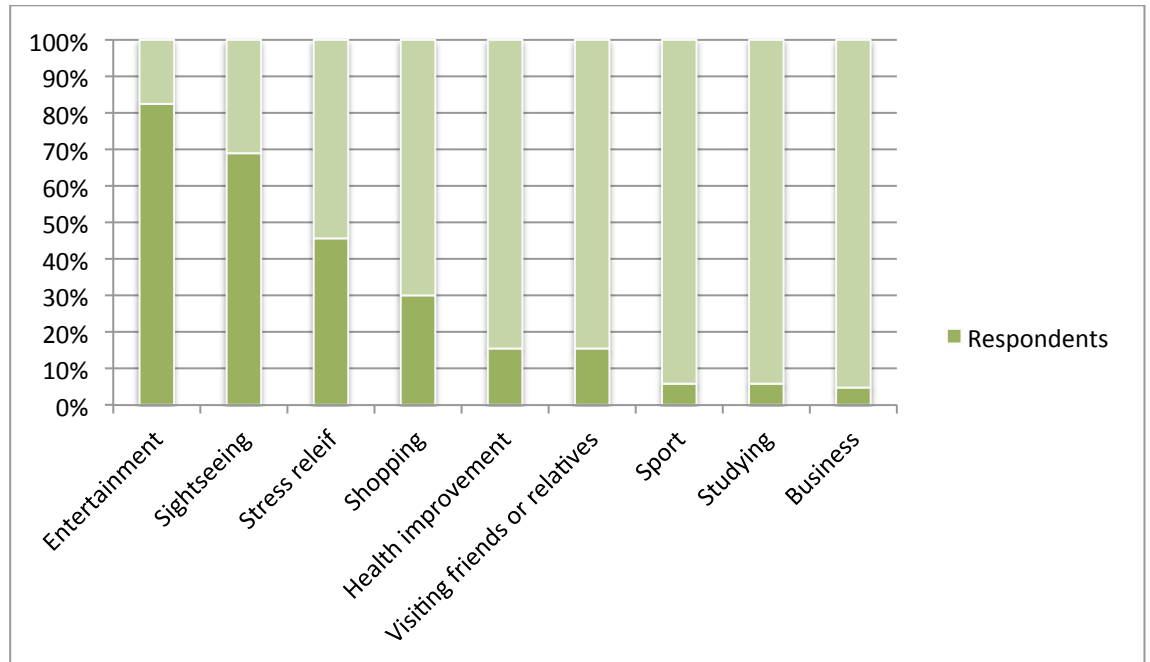


Figure 4 Goals of travel.

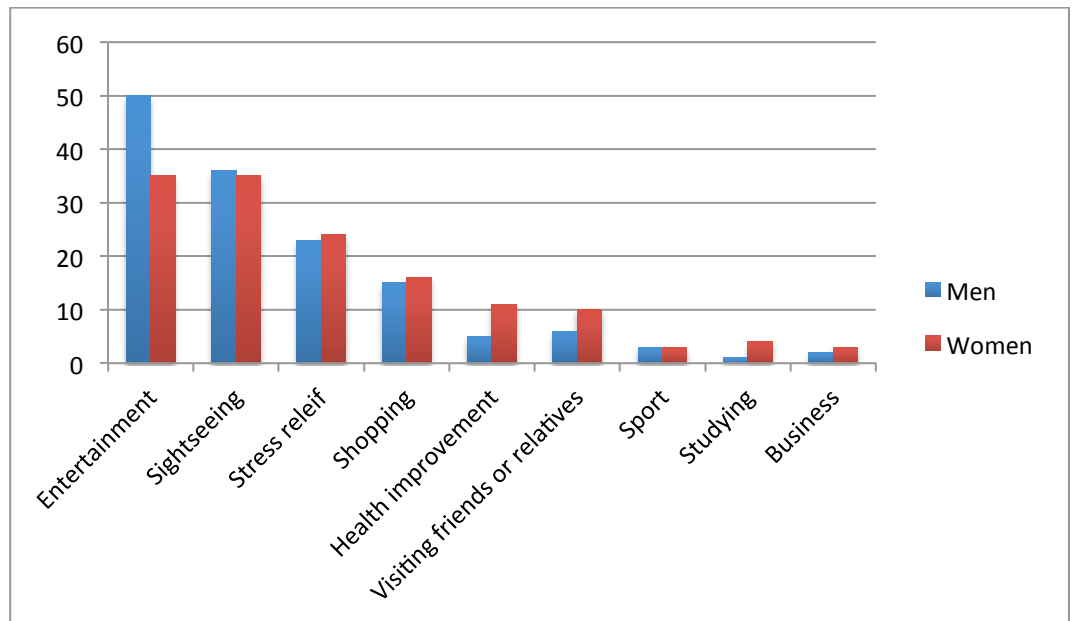


Figure 5 Goals of travel among men and women

The goals of travels are a little different among women and men. Entertainment is valued by men more than women. Also, stress relief and health improvement goals are slightly more interesting to women than men.

The vast majority of the respondents (78%) chose the price as an important characteristic of a hotel. Second important factor is the hotel's cleanliness, 70% of people chose it. Other important features are the quiet of a hotel (58%), friendly personnel (52%), good food (45%) and beautiful scenery (45%). TV (10%) and sauna (5%) are not very important features for the respondents.

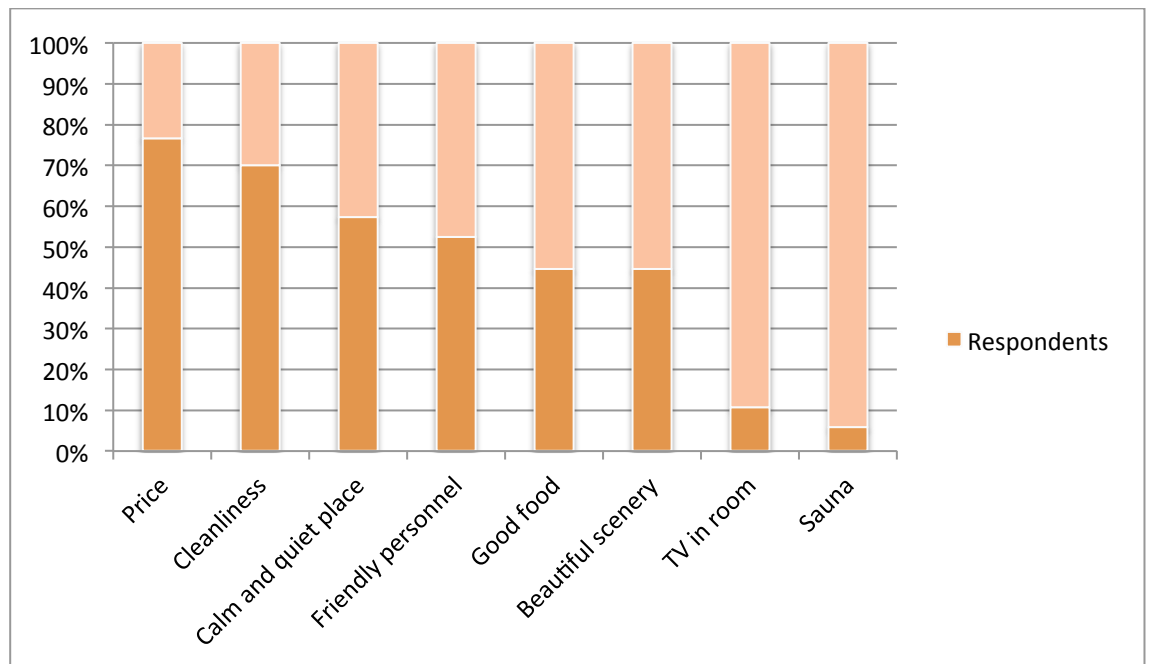


Figure 6 The most important features of a hotel.

One of the most important tourism services for the survey participants is the Internet connection in a hotel room (66%). 65% chose restaurants, cafes and pubs. 59% of the respondents value outdoors recreation and opportunities to be in nature. Museums and exhibitions are interesting to accordingly 40% and 42% of the respondents. Other important tourism services are shopping centers (39%), music concerts (36%), a swimming pool (30%) and river cruises (26%).

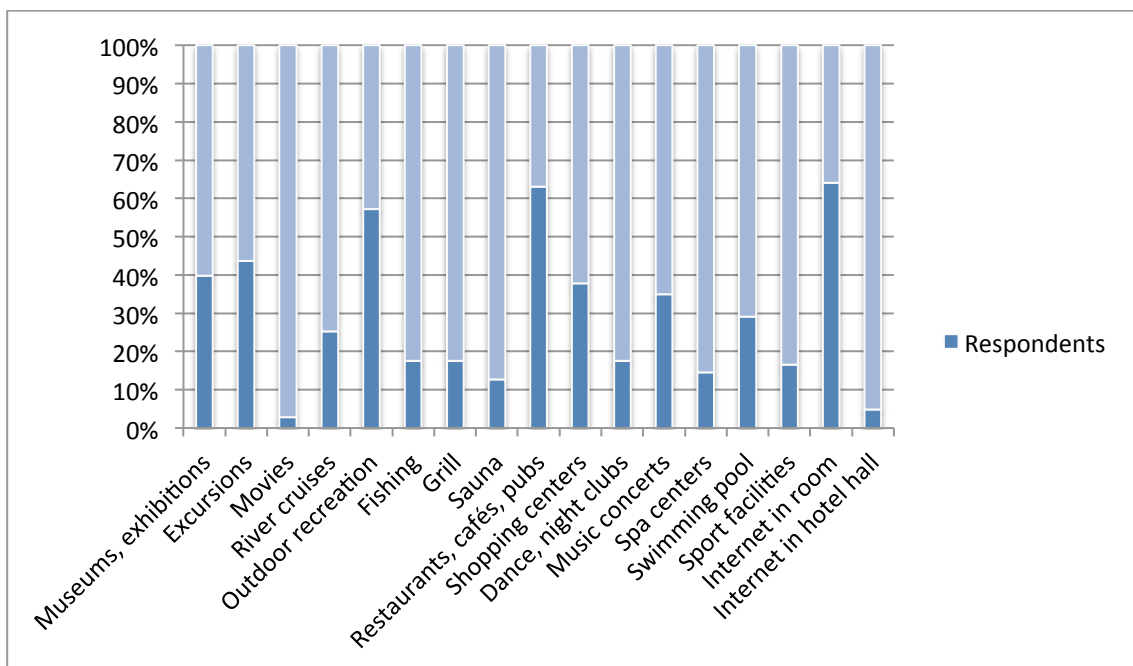


Figure 7 The most important tourism services.

The respondents of the survey have made some comments about their impressions of Finland:

- I like the politeness of people of Finland and the Finnish nature.
- I liked Finland.
- I liked the food, cleanliness of the hostel, unobtrusive service, and the quality of the accommodation relatively to its price.
- Finland is cold. It is uncomfortable to travel there. I did not like the prices in restaurants. But I like the peacefulness in Finland and the fresh air. It is good to travel to Finland on a weekend – it is like a trip to the countryside.
- In Finland, I liked everything, but the impossibility to park a car for a reasonable price.
- I liked the nature, food, people and the Finnish language.
- I like everything in Finland. I'm a fan.
- I would like more direct routes to Lapland.
- I liked the food, but I did not like the food prices.
- It is boring, but beautiful.
- I liked the great nature and comfortable infrastructure. Finland is a very developed country in all aspects. I liked the level of knowledge of English in Finland. But I was only in Helsinki.
- I liked the cleanliness of the streets.
- There is not enough information in English and Russian.
- I liked the chapel in the rock.
- I liked the cleanliness of the streets and the respect of people for each other.
- I liked Finland, but I do not like queues on the border.

3.6 Interviews

One interview was taken from a Russian tourist group leader Lidia. She is from Saint Petersburg. She has been to Valkeakoski several times, because she accompanies Russian tourists that come to spend holidays in Waltikka. According to Lidia, Russian tourists like the scenery outside the windows of Waltikka. It is good to see the lake and trees instead of rural view. She says that Russian tourists like to go shopping in Valkeakoski. They buy a lot of Finnish food and clothes. Also, they like to go fishing and walk along the park paths and the lake. Interestingly, tourists from Lidia's groups are very interested in river cruises. But they do not know if such cruises are available. They are also not very aware of other attractions in Valkeakoski. Lidia asked me a lot about possible places that younger people from her tourist groups could visit. According to her, younger Russian tourists prefer to go to Helsinki or Tampere during daytime and return in the evening. One complaint from the Russian tourists that Lidia told me is that there was no omelet for the breakfast. Most Russian tourists are used to this kind of dish in Finnish and other European hotels.

Other interview was taken from a Russian family from Moscow, which consisted of a husband Ilya, a wife Elena and their little boy Kirill. They came to Helsinki in January in 2013 for the New Year holidays and that was their first visit to Finland.

Ilya said that Finland is more beautiful than Germany, which he visited a lot because of his business trips. He and his son Kirill are fond of snowboarding. So, they visited two snowboarding mountains for two days in the Helsinki region. Their impression was much better than he had expected. Ilya managed to rent quite new snowboarding gears (board, goggles and boots) in good condition for a price that is almost twice lower than in Moscow. Ilya liked the natural mountains with natural snow very much, because in Moscow he has to visit snowboarding mountains with artificial snow. The reason is the ecological situation in Moscow and its polluted air that causes snow to melt during all winter. Moreover, Ilya said that even though the service in Finland was more expensive than in Germany, but it was much better quality.

Elena liked the food very much. She said that most dishes that they had in the hotel she usually cook for the New Year party on the 31st of December, for example spread for sandwiches made of eggs and butter. Also, they liked meatballs that in Russia it is possible to have only in IKEA. Other dishes they liked were omelet, fruit salads and Karelian pies for breakfast in their hotel. Elena and Ilya liked Finnish coffee, the cleanliness of the streets and the politeness of people.

4 PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

4.1 Communication between Finns and Russians

In 2008, Russian and Finnish researchers published a book, which is called “Russian and Finnish communication”. A Finnish researcher B.Savoila writes in this book that almost all Russian traditions that I could not understand are not that strange after all. Very often those strange things are the result of ignorance, stereotypes and prejudice. (Finnish researchers learnt why Russian women prefer husbands from Suomi, 2013)

A Russian researcher S.Sergeeva says that it is difficult to imagine full mutual understanding in a conversation between a Finn and a Russian. The reason of it comes from different features in communicational behavior and communicational culture. Among these features is handshaking that is common in Finland between people of both sexes, whereas in Russia it is a daily ritual between men. In Russia, in most formal situations people use the polite form of the pronoun ‘you’, which in Russian sounds like ‘Vy’. Meanwhile, Finns most often address each other using informal form of you – sinä. A Finn does not try to find out how the interlocutor feels. On the contrary, he or she tries to pretend not to see if the interlocutor is upset or happy about something. A person from Russia often notices that someone is upset, sometimes even a stranger, and asks if something is wrong and tries to help. Russians like to give advice and tell everything that they think about the situation. (Finnish researchers learnt why Russian women prefer husbands from Suomi, 2013)

According to S.Sergeeva, Russians keep the conversation going very actively avoiding awkward silence. The conversation between Russians goes very lively, with many interjections, gestures and sometimes loudly. When a Finn hears such conversation, he or she can think that Russians are arguing and ready to fight. In the meantime, a dialogue of Finns goes in the following way: one person monotonously and unemotionally speaks, while the other unemotionally listens, then the other way round. It is not common in Finland to interrupt an interlocutor and express emotions in a dramatic way. First, a Finn listens everything that the other side say, then keeps a small pause and only after that answers. (Finnish researchers learnt why Russian women prefer husbands from Suomi, 2013)

The researchers also see the difference between the sense of humor of Finns and Russians. For example, Russian can call himself or herself stupid when he or she makes a mistake. Finns, on the contrary, do not like to laugh at themselves and do not allow making fun of them and their country. They are patriotic and respect everything that is Finnish. (Finnish researchers learnt why Russian women prefer husbands from Suomi, 2013)

S.Sergeeva also says that Finns and Russians have different traditions of hospitality. For example, in Finland, before visiting someone people should make a phone call and ask for a permission to come over. As a response they can hear not only a “yes”, but also a categorical “no”. Russians can make an unexpected visit, sometimes even late in the evening or

early in the morning. Moreover, in Russia, when people visit someone's home, it is common to bring small gifts and treats, like candies, cakes or chocolate, or even alcohol. In Finland, people bring bread or a pack of coffee, but it is allowed not to bring anything. In Russia, it is better to be hospitable, even if you are not in a mood, if you are tired or you do not have enough time or money. The host has to serve the table to treat guests. If the host does not have anything at home, he has to quickly go shopping for some treats. Russians usually serve lots of food, even more than guests can eat during one dinner. In Finland, it is acceptable to serve as much food as guests can eat at a time. (Finnish researchers learnt why Russian women prefer husbands from Suomi, 2013)

4.1.1 Image of Finland in the eyes of Russians

The research center of the job agency Superjob has tried to find out what Russians think about Finland and what symbols and ideas are connected with Finland in their minds. The answers are the following:

- 4% of the respondents associate the northern country with snow, lakes and cold climate.
- Another 4% of Russians have good emotions about Finland: they say that the country was nice and beautiful, especially in winter.
- 3% of respondents recall forest, fishing, sauna, vodka and hockey.
- 2% associate Finland with Nokia, deers, untouched nature and Joulupukki.
- Another 2% of respondents say that Finland is “a good country”, “a country with a high standards of living” or “a country having a common border with Russia on the North-West”.
- 16% of Russians think that Finland is ski, dairy products of Valio, slow people, as well as a country that used to be part of Russia. Also, they remember about the Russian-Finnish war of 1939 and “hot Finnish guys”.
- 28% associate Finland with Vikings, unusual language, world's best natural environment, warm sweaters with snowflakes and deer patterns and rock music.
- Finally, 4% of respondents do not have any ideas associated with Finland. (What Russians think about Finland, 2011)

4.2 Knowledge of foreign languages in Russia

In 2008, Levada Centre conducted a research about knowledge of foreign languages among citizen of the Russian Federation. 1600 Russians in 128 towns and cities in 46 regions were asked. The error in such statistics is about 3 per cent. The research showed that about 15 per cent of Russians think that their knowledge of foreign languages is quite high. The answers differed depending on how big the city where they lived is, on education level, age, social status and professional qualification. In Moscow people know foreign languages twice as often as in other big cities, and 5 times as often as in small towns. (The knowledge of foreign languages in Russia 2008)

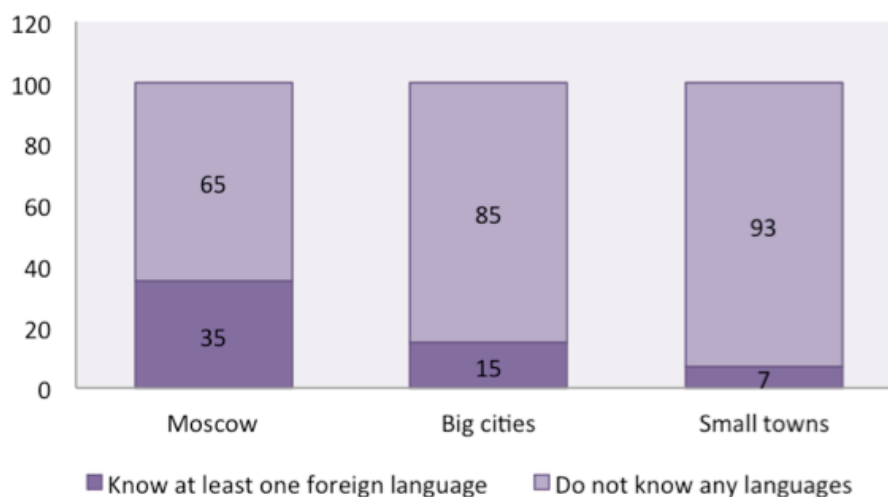


Figure 8 The level of knowledge of foreign languages in Moscow and other regions.

The most popular foreign language in Russia is English (80% of all the foreign languages). The other popular languages are German (16%) and French (4%). 2% of respondents know Turkish and 9% know other languages. The sum exceeds 100% because some people know more than one foreign language. (The knowledge of foreign languages in Russia 2008)

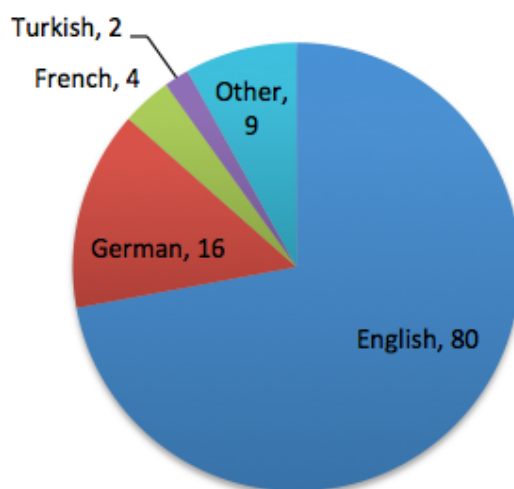


Figure 9 The most popular foreign languages in Russia.

Among people of different ages, more often people of 19-38 years old know foreign languages. The lowest level of knowledge of languages is among people that are older than 55 years old. (The knowledge of foreign languages in Russia 2008)

The knowledge of foreign languages also depends on profession activities. For example, 28% among postgraduates and 31% among managers tell that they know some foreign languages. The level of knowledge of foreign languages is different for different people. Many of the respondents who

know languages only read with a dictionary, but cannot speak fluently. (The knowledge of foreign languages in Russia 2008)

From the numbers above it is obvious then less than 9 per cent of Russians know the Finnish language. It can be assumed that this number is higher for Saint Petersburg, because traditionally there are a lot of trading and cultural exchange activities between Finland and Saint Petersburg. But any official statistics was not found for this research. (The knowledge of foreign languages in Russia 2008)

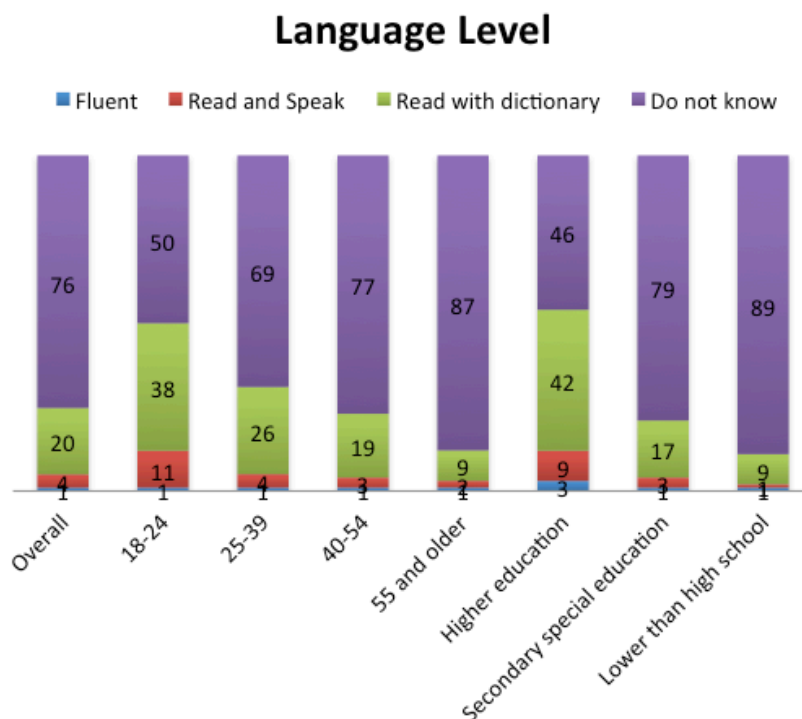


Figure 10 The levels of knowledge of foreign languages among different categories of population in Russia.

4.3 Population and demography in Russia

Maternity capital, which the Russian government started to give for any second child in a family, has led to a baby boom and the population of Russia started to grow. The birth rate increased from 1.3 per woman in 2006 to 1.58 per woman in 2011. At the same time, the death rate dropped. Particularly dramatically it decreased among men, by more than 20 per cent. (Russia expects a big deficit of working age population, 2013)

Nonetheless, demography experts tell that the generation of 1990x enters now into the reproductive age. This generation is the smallest in numbers, due to the economic difficulties, which took place in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Experts think that the birthrate can reduce by half, which means a decrease of population up to 7-8 million by 2020. The situation will depend on the corresponding steps, that the Russian government will take to prevent the decrease of the birth rate. (Russia expects a big deficit of working age population, 2013)

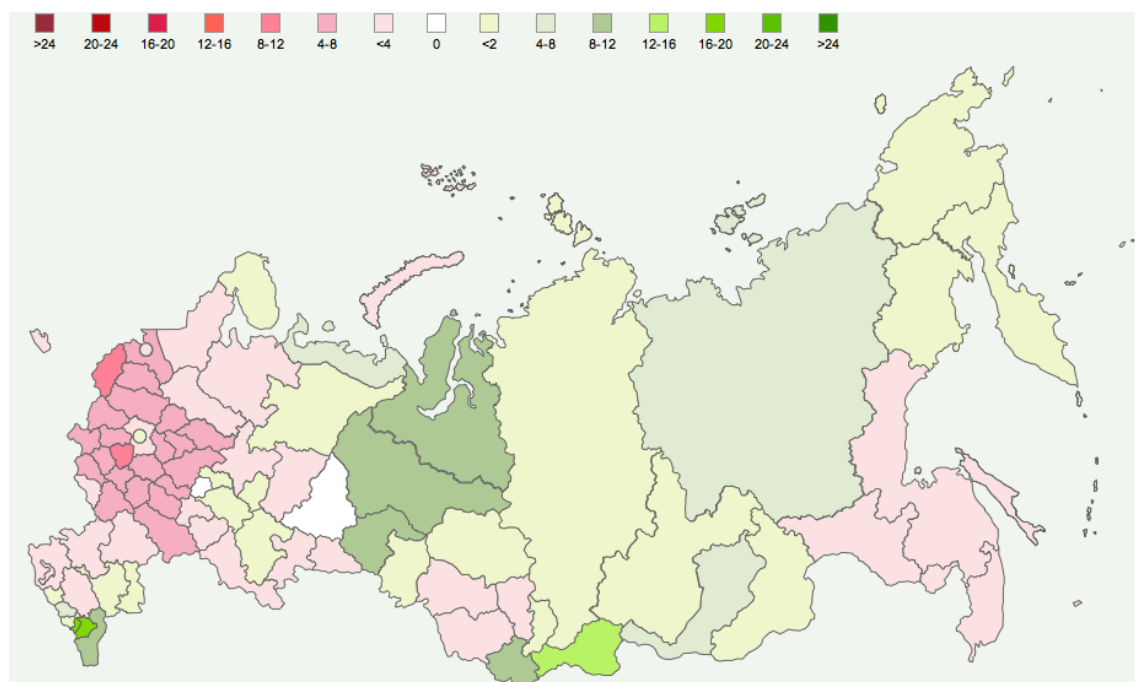


Figure 11 Demographic atlas. (The Ministry of Labor and Social Defense of the Russian Federation 2013)

The demographic situation is different from one Russian region to another. The ministry of labor and social defense of the Russian Federation published a demographic atlas of Russia. The red color shows the regions with decreasing population. The green color is for regions with the positive dynamics. From the atlas we can see that the most intensive drop in the Russian population takes place in the European part of the country. For example, the birthrate drop can take place in the Saint Petersburg region, which is now the most interested in travelling to Finland. (Demographic Atlas of Russia, 2013)

4.4 Russian tourism in Finland

Today, Finnish media informs that the Russian tourism in Finland grows and affects the economy of the country in a positive way. For example, it stimulates opening of new shopping centers in Southeast Finland. The last research of the analytical agency TAK shows that Russian shopping tourism to Finland can increase by more than three times by 2025 year. The Managing director of TAK Pasi Nurkka thinks that the main barriers in this situation will be language problems and capacity of the border crossing points. Mr. Nurkka says that according to the research of TAK a four-hour waiting discourages half the tourists from visiting the country. Also, only one third of Russians coming to Finland know the English language. (Development of Russian tourism in Finland, 2013)

4.4.1 Medical tourism from Russia

Finland attracts more and more Russians who want to get medical treatments. The newspaper Kauppalehti tells that the increase in the medical tourism is connected with the number of Finnish companies that are ready to give medical treatments, surgery and health improvement to Russian patients. The exact number of medical tourists from Russia is not available. The CEO of the Docrates clinique Siv Schalin thinks that Russian patients leave about 5 million Euros in Finland a year. According to the Managing director of Nordic Clinic Tero Silvola, the number of tours connected to health improvement can exceed a thousand. (The number of medical tourists from Russia is increasing in Finland, 2013)

The expectations about the development of the medical tourism are high. According to Schalin, the sales of medical services to Russians can rise up to 20-30 million Euros. Silvola thinks that 100 million Euros is a real goal. The main reason to go to Finland for medical services is the better quality of these services in the fields of oncology, children's cardio surgery, and neurosurgery. On the other hand, Finland is closer to Russia than its competitors in Germany, Israel and Switzerland. Moreover, the prices are often more reasonable in Finland than in those countries. Medical services of Finland are not promoted as well as those of competitor countries. That is why Finnish companies have to find contacts in Russia, make presentations, hire sales force and cooperate with insurance companies. (The number of medical tourists from Russia is increasing in Finland, 2013)

4.4.2 Decrease in number of Russian tourists in 2013

In 2013, the growth in the number of visitors from Russia has slowed. Abilities of Russian tourists to spend money in Finland do not increase as fast as Finnish tourism service companies expect. Since the beginning of 2013, the number of overnight stays increased only by 7 per cent, as opposed to the growth of 17 per cent in the last year. (The interest of Russian tourists falls - what to do?, 2013)

Moreover, the number of overnight stays decreased in the Helsinki region. A tourist from Saint Petersburg Maria Hamraeva thinks that the reason for it is the high prices of the capital city. Tatyana Krivenkaya, a guide from Saint Petersburg, believes that the decline in the number of Russian tourists can be caused by the economic downturn in Russia. Many Russians have lost their jobs and do not have enough money for travels and shopping. According to Jaana Kurjenoja, to attract more Russian visitors to the country, Finns should do something with the queues on the Finnish-Russian border. The more a Russian tourist waits at the border, the greater his or her desire to go Estonia instead of Finland. (The interest of Russian tourists falls - what to do?, 2013)

Nonetheless, according to the Internet search systems Yandex and Google, the interest in Finland among Russians constantly increases. In Yandex, the word "Finland" becomes more popular in May and November, when many Russians plan their summer and winter holidays. At these two

months, the number of queries in the search system rises up to 1,200,000 a month. In other months of the year, for example in August 2013, this number was 810,000 queries. In Google, the number of searches about Finland made by Russians rose two and a half times from December 2009 to August 2013. (The interest of Russian tourists falls - what to do?, 2013)

4.4.3 Finnish companies in serving Russian tourists

Despite this positive trend in Russian tourism in Finland, the Finnish tourism services companies should look for new ways of attracting Russian customers. The manager of Google Finland Niina Sauvolainen gives advice to Finnish entrepreneurs to promote their services to potential tourists from Russia. She thinks that they do not have enough courage to make it actively. According to Niina, first of all, it is important to develop their websites. Most of the small businesses have websites in the Internet, but in a company is willing to serve Russian customers, the company needs to have pages in the Russian languages. (The interest of Russian tourists falls - what to do?, 2013)

In the Northern Finland, the Russian language is becoming popular. A record number of Finnish children wish to study Russian in school. For example, in Sotkamo, Kainuu region, one fourth of the primary school students are starting to attend a course of Russian. Also, this language is becoming popular in Kajaani, Rovaniemi and Kuusamo. This is despite that fact that about two years ago in schools of this region there were not enough students willing to study Russian to form one group for this course. (The popularity of the Russian language is growing in Northern Finland, 2013)

Students of fifth grade say that they want to learn Russian because it is interesting and sounds beautiful. Moreover, they hope to make the knowledge of Russian a competitive advantage when looking for a job in future. Anniina Karinniemi, a teacher of Russian in school, explain the rise of interest to the language with the fact that Finns hear the Russian language very often and occur in situations when they could have spoken Russian. With the growth of Russian courses in school, the popularity of other languages is falling. For example, in Rovaniemi, this autumn there are five groups for learning Russian and only one group for learning Swedish. In Sotkamo, Russian is more popular than German. The teacher Anniina Karinniemi says that her student often tell her about real life situations when the knowledge of Russian was useful to them. (The popularity of the Russian language is growing in Northern Finland, 2013)

4.4.4 Possible Finland-Russia visa-free travel

The governments of Finland and Russia are discussing the possibility of the visa-free travel between the two countries. According to the researchers at the University of Eastern Finland, that could create thousands of jobs in Finland due to the rise in the number of Russian tourists in Finland. Pasi Nurkka from the research and analysis center TAK says that the big-

gest growth in the number of Russian tourists would come from Moscow. The tourism services would be in the most demand in the Helsinki region and areas of high-level tourism and cultural services. (Visa-free Russian border 'would create thousands of jobs', 2013)

Nonetheless, Helsingin Sanomat ordered a research from TNS Gallup that has shown that one fourth of Finns do not approve the Finland-Russia visa-free travel. Half of the respondents think that the visa can be eliminated only after 2018 or never. Two out of five respondents think that the visa could be eliminated during the next five years. One in six Finns agrees that the Finland-Russia free-visa travel can be started right away. Among people of different ages, younger people approve the visa-free travel more often than older generation of Finns. The research also has shown that most Finns think that the free-visa travel would increase not only the number of Russian tourists, but would also raise the crime. (Half of Finns do not approve visa-free Russian border, 2013)

Interior Minister Päivi Räsänen in her interview to Sanoma Group said that eliminating visa requirements would cause the increasing demand in work of police officials. So far, neither of the two countries is ready to provide these arrangements. Additionally, a European-wide system of tracing non-EU citizens should be adopted in advance. Päivi Räsänen also mentioned that one per cent of applicants were denied visas last year and it resulted in 10,000 individuals. (Half of Finns do not approve visa-free Russian border, 2013)

4.5 Finland's competitors on Russian tourist market

The growth rate in the number of Russian tourists slows down in the Murmansk region, because Norway has started to offer better terms. For example, starting from the spring of 2013, Russians can obtain the Norwegian visa for three years without invitation. Nonetheless, Finns are sure that the Finnish Lapland will keep attracting more tourists than Northern Norway, especially because of the lower prices. (Norway competes against Finland for Russian tourism, 2013)

According to the statistics, the number of Russian tourists in Estonia has also been rising during the last years. For example, in 2012, the amount of overnight stays of Russians in Estonia accounted for 593,783, which meant the increase by 25 per cent comparing to 2011. Tallinn is the most popular travel destination among Russians. 23 per cent of Russian tourists prefer Tallinn to other regions of Estonia. Nonetheless, for the last two years the share of Tallinn decreased. Only two years ago 66 per cent of Russians chose the capital city. In 2012, Russian tourists affected by active promotion of other Estonian regions and local entrepreneurs in selling tourism services. (Tourism in Estonia in 2012, 2013)

5 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.1 Marketing mix

5.1.1 Promotion

Since the level of knowledge of foreign languages among Russian tourists is not very high, it is difficult for them to read and fully comprehend information from the websites and promotion brochures in English or other languages that are foreign to them. Many Russian tourists understand English on some basic level and speak a little, but there are also some of them who do not know English at all. Nonetheless, the English language is the most common foreign language that is learnt in Russian schools and people easily accept to the fact that they should know it. Moreover, for the last several years, the trend of learning English by Russians is positive, especially among younger people. They understand the importance of knowledge of foreign languages for their career, business and travels abroad. This younger generation is getting older, starting to earn money and becoming a good target market for selling Finnish tourism services. Thus, promotion materials can be created in English and there is a chance that many Russians will understand it according to their level of English.

On the other hand, promotion materials in Finnish are not effective for Russian customers. Russians learn the Finnish language very rarely and most of them cannot speak it at all. Some Russian tourists, who visit Finland often, memorize some Finnish words that are used often in everyday life, but usually it does not help them to start learning Finnish further. This is due to the fact that Finnish is quite exotic for Russians. In Russia, there are many sources available for studying English, like Hollywood films, TV shows, fiction books, as well as the huge number textbooks, media courses on discs, online courses on the Internet, off-line courses with teachers in groups and individually. Comparing to that, there is a lack of sources for studying Finnish in Russia. First of all, there are few good textbooks of Finnish so far. Besides that, there are no films or TV shows from Finland in Russia. The number of Finnish courses that people can attend in groups is also limited comparing to other languages courses. Thus, the best language for promotion materials for Russian customers is Russian.

Since Russians do not study Finnish, they also do not know the Finnish culture. As was mentioned above, there is a lack of Finnish films and books in Russia. Consequently, Russians do not know what Finns really are in everyday life. Most often, Russians learn about Finns from tourism companies and travel guides. This information is usually quite brief and superficial. Another source of knowledge about Finland is Russians who have visited Finland and tell their friends about it. Thus, the more Russians like spending holidays in Finland, the more they advice this travel destination to their friends. Most Russians, who visit Finland, come from Saint Petersburg. Its inhabitants traditionally know about Finland more than people of other Russians cities. However, the knowledge of Finland

and Finnish culture in other Russian cities is spread much less than in Saint Petersburg. For this reason, Finnish tourism companies have to promote not only their services, but also the benefits that tourists can have choosing Finland as a travel destination.

5.1.2 Place

Finland is a country that has a common border with Russia. It is easy for people from Russia to Finland, especially from Saint Petersburg. There are many bus routes that go from Russian cities to Finnish cities. Moreover, the new high-speed Allegro train goes from Saint Petersburg to Helsinki for only 3.5 hours. Travelling to Finland by bus is cheaper, but it takes at least 8 hours to make the same trip as Allegro does for a much shorter time period.

Valkeakoski is only two hours by bus from Helsinki. It may sound a long journey for Finns, but for Russians, who spend several hours to travel to Finland, two hours is not that many. Bus routes from Helsinki to Tampere pass through Valkeakoski. Consequently, Valkeakoski is a destination tourists can reach easily. Besides, the quality of Finnish roads is high and the trip on the Finnish road by bus or by car is quite comfortable.

The Finnish nature is something that tourists like very much. There are many forests, lakes and rivers in Finland. When travelling within the country, tourists can see many kinds of birds on trees and in bushes. There are ducks, swans and seagulls that leave by water. Tourists can come across squirrels, rabbits and other animals. All these aspects are important for nature lovers. Considering the fact, that 59 respondents out of 103 said that possibilities of outdoors recreation is important to them, the Finnish natural environment gives great opportunities for this kind of pastime.

Moreover, Valkeakoski is a small city, which is surrounded by trees and water. It has better opportunities in providing outdoors recreation tourism services than big cities like Helsinki or Tampere. In this sense, Valkeakoski has a competitive advantage not only over many Finnish cities, but also over tourism services in Russia. In Valkeakoski, tourists can walk along the lake's shore and in park areas, enjoy the natural view and breathe fresh air. It is possible to make a grill outside or go fishing. In summer, tourists can swim, sunbathe etc.

An important factor is that the ecological situation in Russia, especially in big cities, is not very good. For example, it is not recommended to drink tap water in most Russian cities. Also, people in big cities suffer from polluted air coming from transportation. Moreover, the lack of trees in places like Saint Petersburg and Moscow leads to the lack of oxygen, which brings people more fatigue and need for recreation. Thus, clean water and air and lots of trees present one more competitive advantage of Valkeakoski over big cities in Finland and especially in Russia.

5.1.3 Physical evidence

In Finland, hotels and cafes are traditionally kept clean and well maintained, which is valued by tourists coming to the country. In the survey among Russians, 70 respondents out of 103 said that cleanness of a hotel is important to them. Also, many Russians comment that they like the cleanness of the streets in Finnish cities. In Russia, the streets are not always kept free of garbage. First of all, the reason is that some of Russians can easily throw garbage on the street. Second, municipal services in Russian cities, which must clean the streets, do not work as effectively as those in Finland. In consequence, when tourists cross the Russian-Finnish border, they occur in a country with streets that are very clean comparing to what they are used to. This change has a very positive effect on Russians and brings additional customer value in providing tourism services in Finland.

For 46 respondents out of 103, seeing the beautiful scenery outside the hotel window was important when they are on holidays. Valkeakoski has a good advantage in this sense. The scenery around Hotel Waltikka includes the lake and trees. The biggest number of potential Russian tourists comes from Saint Petersburg and Moscow, which are very big cities with a lack of natural scenery. People that live in these cities are tired of urban view outside their windows, crowds of people in the street and traffic jams along the roads. For them, being in nature is a change of their usual environment into a more positive and relaxing one.

Since Russian tourists cannot see Valkeakoski and its tourism services in advance before coming there, it is important to give them opportunities to see some evidence of what those services are like. First of all, it is essential to put more information about Valkeakoski on the Internet in the Russian language. The information should be supported with pictures. The website [booking.com](http://www.booking.com) includes very good information about Hotel Waltikka. There is detailed information about the rooms, prices and facilities in the hotel. The information is written in Russian. It is well-structured, easy to read and contains good pictures of Waltikka. Perhaps, this is the reason that Russian tourists often find Waltikka through this website.

Even though Hotel Waltikka also has pages in Russian, I would advice to put more detailed information there about the benefits that it brings to Russian customers: the natural environment, great view outside the window, opportunities for outdoors recreation, grilling and fishing. Also, the sauna and other spa services can be explained in thoroughly. All these text should be supported with pictures, because for Russians it can be difficult to imagine everything themselves. Moreover, what they imagine can be very different from what the services really are.

Valkeakoski has a website with information about its organizations and companies. The website has pages in Finnish and English. It also includes a downloadable brochure in Russian in the form of PDF-file. It is better to add also pages in the Russian language. Thus, not only would it give more information for potential Russian tourists, but it would also demonstrate that Valkeakoski welcomes Russians to visit the city.

5.1.4 People

Many Russian tourists like the fact that many Finns smile. People that serve customers at Finnish cafes, restaurants and hotel receptions are usually polite and friendly and smile to customers. 54 out of 103 respondents find it important that personnel in a hotel are friendly and polite. The Finnish tourism services are at a quite high level in this sense, which is a big competitive advantage over tourism services in Russia.

In the Soviet Union, during the communist time, employees in Russian hotels and restaurants did not have to be polite, because there was no competition between organizations due to the planned economics. Nowadays, Russian businesses have to compete and many of them have understood the importance of friendly and polite personnel. Nonetheless, the habit to be unfriendly still exists among many employees.

Moreover, in Russia, the level of politeness can be different for people of different social and financial status at the same company for the same service. Russia is a country with a high power distance dimension, which means that people often judge each other according to the social status. If the staff of a hotel or a restaurant see that a customer is wearing expensive clothes or ordering an expensive service, they may tend to serve him or her in a more polite way, than a person who seem poor.

Thus, Russians, who met impolite service people in their own country, value the Finnish polite style of service very much. For them it is an opportunity to feel relaxed on holidays, because they know that they will be treated rudely. This aspect reduces stress for Russian tourists, improves the whole impression from travels to Finland and adds customer value. Friendly personnel are especially important for those Russians, who care about low prices, because tourists that buy expensive services are used to polite services and take them for granted.

One of the biggest problems for Russian tourists is the language. There are few Russians who can speak Finnish. Many Russians can speak English, but the level of knowledge of English is often quite low. Therefore, Finnish tourism companies should not count on the English language very much. Some complicated details of a service can be misunderstood in English. Consequently, to provide services to Russians in an effective way, it is better to hire some employees who can speak Russian. Nowadays, many Finns learn the Russian language because of its importance in the service, tourism and trade areas. Companies of Valkeakoski should also pay attention to this problem. It is good to have Russian-speaking people among employees that deal with customers.

When selling tourism services to Russians, Finns should remember that Russians demonstrate more emotions in a conversation and everyday life. For this reason, the explanation of services' advantages should be impressive and bright. It is important to make accents on the most beneficial aspects of tourism services. Nowadays, Russians have many tourism opportunities and can choose among. Therefore, it is essential to promote tourism services in Valkeakoski through the service personnel.

Furthermore, when Finns sell some services to Russians, they should try not to give up early when Russians refuse to buy it. It is better to try to describe the service better, making accents on most beneficial parts. In many situations, Russians do not buy services, because they do not understand them fully or do not know how to use them or what are the terms of using the services. Sometimes, Russians feel shy and are afraid to ask about all the details. If a Finnish employee sees that Russian tourists hesitate, it is better to give them more information. If Russians really do not want the offered service, they tend to say a firm “No”. In this case, insisting on making a sale can be considered rude and obtrusive.

Russians tend to talk more than Finns. As polychronic people, they like to create personal relationships with people they need to deal with. This means that when they discuss services, they prefer to do it in an informal atmosphere and a casual way. They like to talk a lot, which makes it easier for them to understand all the details. Finns like to speak short and clear and straight to the point. For Russians, it may seem a little official, which makes them seem uncomfortable and awkward.

Russians will feel more relaxed and easy to buy services, if a Finnish employee tries to create more informal and friendly relationships with them. This is possible through a small talk about weather, latest news etc. Smiling is a good tool to make people relax and trust the service employee. Asking customers about their preferences and concerns would also break the ice between the customer and the service employee. Moreover, this would help to provide better service and collect some feedback from customers. One more way to create an informal atmosphere is to give customers some paper promotion materials or souvenirs if they are available. In a relaxing and friendly atmosphere, Russian customers feel less shy and ready to participate more actively in discussing and buying tourism services.

The uncertainty avoidance dimension's value is very high for Russia. That means that they like to receive comprehensive and detailed information about possible future. Since, Finland is an exotic and strange country for many Russians, they need more knowledge about its Finnish services. They are afraid to explore the services in practice, because possible fail could be embracing and frustrating. Thus, they like thorough instructions in using services they buy. Only after they have clearly understood all the steps they need to perform in using a service, they feel comfortable and ready to buy it. Thus, giving instructions is a good form of conversation if a Finnish service seller wants to make a sale.

5.1.5 Price

79 out of 103 respondents chose the price as an important characteristic of a hotel. That means that they can compare hotels by prices when planning their travel. Prices of accommodation in Valkeakoski are lower than in bigger cities in Finland. It creates an additional customer value and a competitive advantage for Valkeakoski.

5.1.6 Production

Considering the language and cross-cultural communication problems between Russians and Finns, the process of selling tourism services of Valkeakoski to Russian customers could be facilitated through cooperation with Russian tour operators and travel agents. Companies that offer services for Russian tourists in Valkeakoski could establish special discounts for groups that includes more than some specified number of people.

Russian travel agents could improve understanding between the Finnish tourism service providers and the Russian customers, because they have more experience in communication with foreigners. Travel agencies' employees usually know English better than others, because people who choose such work are willing to travel, to meet other cultures and to speak foreign languages. Moreover, people who travel for some professional reasons, constantly develop their skills in communicating with foreigners, looking for information, understanding particular details and so on. Travel agents could explain the available tourism services to Russian customers better than Finnish service employees.

In order to use Russian travel agencies for selling and promotion tourism services in Valkeakoski, it is essential to first explain the service details to these agencies. That is also a challenge because of the differences in the Finnish and Russian cultures, ways of communication and the lack of knowledge of Finns about Russian tourism market. Nonetheless, it would be easier to explain the details of services with agents than directly with customers.

If tourism services providers of Valkeakoski have success in convincing Russian travel agents and tour operators that their offers are good, Russian travel companies will do additional work in promoting and selling the services. Additionally, they can collect feedback, complaints and opinions from customers and inform Finnish companies about it. Thus, the process of creating, promoting, selling and consuming the tourism product would run smoother.

Selling services to groups of tourists can be even more successful during long holidays in Russia, like the New Year and May holidays. In those seasons, more Russians are willing to travel. That is why many hotels and travel tickets are booked in advance. So, many Russian tourists are ready to pay more for their holidays. Russian travel agents could form groups of tourists to bring them in Valkeakoski for holidays. Furthermore, Russians prefer to party on the New Year holidays. For that they go shopping for gifts and souvenirs, buy a lot of food and on the whole spend more money than usual. Travel agents could help to organize New Year's parties for Russian tourists groups in Valkeakoski. Besides, Finland is traditionally associated in the Russian mind with winter, Santa Clause and the New Year. This fact also adds customer value to the Finnish tourism services in winter.

5.1.7 Product

The tourism product of Valkeakoski consists of accommodation, transportation, restaurants and cafes, supermarkets, as well as of natural resources like forest, lakes, rivers, animals and birds. Considering the intangible nature of the tourism product, it is reasonable to provide as much evidence of the product to potential customers as possible. First of all, it is better to put picture galleries on the website of Valkeakoski and the tourism services providers that are ready to serve Russian customers in this town.

Videos are also a good way to demonstrate the possible benefits of the product. For example, Ainoklinikka has a video of the peat treatment on its website, which is very effective in demonstrating the service to Russian customers who have never tried it. It is reasonable to put videos of other services that may be interesting to Russians – accommodation, trees and lakes, animals and fish, sport facilities, cafes, restaurants and parties. Good examples of such videos and pictures are available on websites like Visit Finland, Discovering Finland, Visit Helsinki and so on.

One more possible kind of evidence of tourism services in Valkeakoski is comments of customers that have consumed these services. Thus, Russian tourists could promote the services to each other, exchange opinions and give feedback to the services providers.

The tourism product is perishable, because it cannot be stored for future use. During long holidays in Russia, more people are ready to buy tourism services. Therefore, it is worth to make discounts for Russian tourists group to increase sales. Moreover, Russians are ready to spend more money during the New Year, 1st of May, Women's Day and other holidays. It is worth arranging parties for groups. Parties should include good meals, drinks, premises decoration and entertainment, like music bands, dancing or funny contests. Decorations of premises should include some traditional Finnish elements. Especially, it is relevant during the New Year holidays. Thus, deers, snowflakes and Christmas tree are good items for decoration.

Russians value Finnish food, especially fish. Russian visitors to Finland often buy Finnish food to bring home. Also, they like to have Finnish dinner in restaurants. Valkeakoski should have restaurants that serve traditional Finnish food in order to serve Russian tourists.

5.2 SWOT Analysis of tourism services in Valkeakoski

The city of Valkeakoski has both strengths and weaknesses in providing tourism services to Russian customers. There are some good opportunities on the Russian tourism market, as well as threats.

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|--|
| Natural resources Polite personnel Cleanliness High quality of service High quality of food Price of hotel is low Museums Supermarkets River cruisers | Price of food is high Lack of Russian in promotion Lack of Russian in service Lack of promotional efforts to Russians Cross-cultural communication Cold weather |

| Opportunities | Threats |
|--|--|
| Promotion on the Internet Russian travel agents Long holidays in Russia Interest of Russians to Finnish culture Interest of Russians to Finnish food Medical tourism Finland-Russia visa-free travel | Estonia, Norway tourism Turkey, Egypt tourism Helsinki and other big Finnish cities Recession in Russia Demographic downturn in Russia |

Figure 12 SWOT Analysis of tourism services in Valkeakoski

Strengths of Valkeakoski include good natural resources, cleanliness of the streets, hotels and other facilities, polite personnel, high quality of service, high quality of food and accommodation prices that are lower than in big Finnish cities, historical museums, modern big supermarkets and river cruisers.

Among the weaknesses of Valkeakoski on the tourism services market, there are high prices of food, a lack of the Russian language in promotion of tourism services, a lack of the Russian language in providing tourism services, a lack of promotional efforts to Russians, cross-cultural communication difficulties and cold weather.

In the future, there are some good opportunities that Valkeakoski can use to develop its tourism services for Russians, including promotion of services on the Internet, cooperating with Russian travel agents, attracting more customers during long Russian holidays, using the interest of Russians to Finnish culture and the love of Russians to Finnish food, as well as medical tourism that is becoming popular nowadays. Also, possible

Finland-Russia visa-free travel can raise the number of Russian tourists to Finland and give opportunities to increase tourism services sales.

Nonetheless, there are some future threats on the Russian tourism market. First of all, there are strong competitors of Finland, like Estonia and Norway, which constantly develop their tourism services for Russian visitors. Also, warm countries like Turkey and Egypt are very popular among Russian tourists, who like to change the Russian cold weather to sun and sea. Other strong competitors of Valkeakoski are big Finnish cities, which have good experience in providing services to Russians. Other threat on the Russian tourism market is the current recession in Russia, which can cause some of Russians to refuse to travel abroad. Also, a possible demographic downturn can decrease the number of tourists from the central regions of Russia.

6 CONCLUSION

The current thesis was aimed at researching the city of Valkeakoski and its potential at providing tourism services to Russian customers. The first objectives of this thesis were:

- To learn tourism services of Valkeakoski.
- To study Russian tourists as customers.
- To collect feedback from Russians about Valkeakoski and Finland.
- To find potential ways of developing tourism services in Valkeakoski for Russian customers.

6.1 Tourism in Finland

The largest number of foreign visitors comes to Finland from Russia. In 2012, 3.6 million Russians travellers came to Finland constituted 47 per cent of all visitors. Moreover, the number of Russian travellers increased by 10 per cent comparing to the previous year.

Finland attracts tourists for many reasons:

- It is not as overcrowded as other countries. Thus, people who are tired of communicating to many people in everyday life can enjoy the atmosphere of peace and quiet.
- The rich nature of Finland is also good for relaxation. The plenty of trees and water create picturesque scenery, which soothe the human mind.
- There are very good roads, which connect cities all over the country. Thus, tourists who prefer to travel on their own cars, have good opportunities to visit all the cities they want and see many places.
- Finland has very good natural resources, which are available for tourism activities like skiing, skating, swimming, sailing and so on.
- Finland is a country with a very good ecological situation, where people can improve their health through fresh air, clean water and a lot of oxygen from the forests.
- Finnish culture involves old sauna traditions. Sauna is good for warming after winter sports, for improving health and detoxifying the body.
- There are many spa hotels and water pools in Finland, where people can take massage, aromatherapy, stone therapy, mud wrapping and other spa services.
- Lapland, which is a part of Finland, is the homeland of Santa Clause, or Joulupukki.
- In Finland, tourists can try many types of exotic, but still very quality food.
- Most Finns are polite people and respects others.
- Finns know how to create a cozy and comfort atmosphere. They keep restaurants and hotels clean and well maintained, which creates an additional value for customers of the tourism services.

6.2 Tourism in Valkeakoski

Valkeakoski is situated in the south west of Finland. It has good resources for tourism attraction: lakes, forests, supermarkets, restaurants, living facilities and transportation. It is a peaceful and beautiful place, especially in summer. As in most Finland's territory, Valkeakoski has quite a mild climate. The average temperatures over the period 1961-1990 were the following: -7.5C in January and 15.8C in July.

In Valkeakoski, there are many attractions that tourists can be interested in:

- Historical museums;
- Art museums;
- Lakes and canals;
- Beautiful bridges;
- Forests and parks;
- Hotels;
- Sport facilities for golf, horse riding, bowling, tennis, swimming etc;
- A football stadium;
- Ski trails and slopes;
- Medical and health services;
- Good transportation system.

6.3 Tourism marketing theory

- Product: Tourism services like any other kind of services have the following characteristics: intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, perishability and a lack of ownership.
- Price: In case of a service the pricing is complicated because of the service intangibility.
- Promotion: when promoting a service it is important to remember that a customer has a subjective opinion about the service's quality because of the service's intangible nature. Also, the quality of the service is affected by the performance.
- Place: It is reasonable to distribute the service at the location where it is possible to attract as many customers as possible. The service is inseparable from the customer and from the performer, and the customer usually needs to go to the location where he or she can consume the service.
- People: In providing a service both consumers and performers of the service are important. Customers comprehend the service through people that create and perform it and through other consumers of the service.
- Physical evidence: The physical elements of a service are important because it brings tangibility to the service and affects the comprehension of the quality.
- Production: to produce a tourism product, several sub-industries consolidate their activities.

6.4 Popular types of tourism among Russians

- Sport and extreme tourism in Russia includes hiking, skiing, water sports, cycling, mountaineering, horse sport, car sport and caving.
- Russians are fond of fishing and hunting.
- Cultural tourism in Russia is mostly developed in the central part of the country where main Russian historical and architectural attractions are situated.
- Beach tourism and health tourism have been popular in Russia for many years. This kind of tourism is developed on the coasts of the Black, Azov, Baltic and Caspian Seas.
- Cruises is one of the most popular type of tourism on water.
- Children and youth tourism exists in Russia in a form of excursions, sightseeing and wellness tours.
- Nowadays, pilgrimage is becoming more and more popular kind of tourism among Russians. In such religious tours people worship holy icons and relics of saints.
- The number of international business contacts in Russia constantly increases. Consequently, the field of business tourism is developing.
- Recently, Russians have started to explore the ecological tourism and rural tourism.
- Food tourism is one of the new kinds of tourism that is becoming popular in Russia.

Most Russians have better opportunities to go on vacation during the official holidays:

- The most important holiday for Russians is the New Year, which is on January 1.
- On February 23, Russians have Defender of the Fatherland Day, or men's day, which was Red Army Day in the Soviet Union.
- On March 8, there is Women's Day in the Russian calendar of holidays.
- On May 1, Russians celebrate the International Labor Day.
- On November 4, Russians celebrate Day of National Unity.

6.5 Recommendations

6.5.1 Product

The tourism product of Valkeakoski consists of accommodation, transportation, restaurants and cafes, supermarkets, as well as of natural resources like forest, lakes, rivers, animals and birds. The tourism product is perishable, because it cannot be stored for future use. During long holidays in Russia, more people are ready to buy tourism services. Therefore, it is worth to make discounts for Russian tourists group to increase sales.

6.5.2 Promotion

Since the level of knowledge of foreign languages among Russian tourists is not very high, it is difficult for them to read and fully comprehend information from the websites and promotion brochures in English or other languages that are foreign to them. It is better to create promotional materials, like websites and brochures, in the Russian language. Most Russians look for information about hotels and travel destinations on the Internet. Thus, the Internet is an important tool of promoting tourism services in Valkeakoski.

6.5.3 Place

Valkeakoski is a small city, which is surrounded by trees and water. It has good opportunities in providing outdoors recreation tourism services to Russians. In Valkeakoski, tourists can walk along the lake's shore and in park areas, enjoy the natural view and breathe fresh air. It is possible to make a grill outside or go fishing. In summer, tourists can swim, sunbathe etc.

6.5.4 Physical evidence

Since Russian tourists cannot see Valkeakoski and its tourism services in advance before coming there, it is important to give them opportunities to see some evidence of what those services are like. First of all, it is essential to put more information about Valkeakoski on the Internet in the Russian language. The information should be supported with pictures, videos and customer comments.

6.5.5 People

Many Russians tourists like the fact that many Finns smile. People that serve customers in Finnish cafes, restaurants and hotel receptions are usually polite and friendly and smile to customers. Russians tend to talk more than Finns. As polychronic people, they like to create personal relationships with people they need to deal with. Russians will feel more relaxed and easy to buy services, if a Finnish employee tries to create more informal and friendly relationships with them.

6.5.6 Production

Considering the language and cross-cultural communication problems between Russians and Finns, the process of selling tourism services of Valkeakoski to Russian customers could be facilitated through cooperation with Russian tour operators and travel agents. Companies that offer services for Russian tourists in Valkeakoski could establish special discounts for groups.

SOURCES

Kotler, Ph. Armstrong, G. Wong, V. Saunders, J. 2008. Principles of Marketing. Italy: Rotolito Lombarda.

Raju, G.P. 2009. Tourism Marketing and Management. Delhi, IND: Global Media.

Pearce, P.L. 2005. Tourist Behaviour: Themes and Conceptual Schemes. Channel View Publications.

Crouch, G.I. Perdue, R.R. Timmermans, H.J.P. 2004. Consumer Psychology of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure. Cambridge, MA, USA: CABI Publishing.

Ahonen, P. Kuivalainen, T. Valkeakoski 2012, 51. Finland, Valkeakoski: Libris Oy.

Schultze, Sidney. 2000. Culture and Customs of Russia. Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood press.

Singh, S.P. 2010. International Tourism Development. Jaipur, IND: Global media.

Durovich, A.P. 2001. Tourism marketing. Minsk, Belarus: Novoe Znanie.

Sadoin, A. 2004. Cross-cultural communication. Moscow, Russia: Alpha-M.

Finland remains popular destination for Russian tourists 2013. Yle. Accessed 30th April 2013.
http://yle.fi/uutiset/finland_remains_popular_destination_for_russian_tourists/6460863

The knowledge of foreign languages in Russia 2008. Levada Center. Accessed 15th August 2013. <http://www.levada.ru/16-09-2008/znanie-inostrannykh-yazykov-v-rossii>

Tourism from abroad to Finland increased in 2012 2013. Statistics Finland. Accessed 1st September 2013.
http://www.stat.fi/til/rajat/2012/rajat_2012_2013-05-30_tie_001_en.html

Why come to Finland. The Official Travel Site of Finland. Accessed 1st October 2013.
<http://www.visitfinland.com/about-finland/why-come-to-finland/>

Finnish Facts & Figures. Discovering Finland. Accessed 1st October 2013.
<http://www.discoveringfinland.com/travel/about-finland/quick-guide/facts-figures/>

Nature experiences. Discovering Finland. Accessed 15th October 2013.

<http://www.discoveringfinland.com/travel/about-finland/nature-experiences/>

Climate in Finland. Finnish Meteorological Institute. Accessed 15th October 2013. <http://en.ilmatieteenlaitos.fi/climate>

Finnish cuisine – east meets west in Scandinavian style 2008. This is Finland. Accessed 15th October 2013.

<http://finland.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=160135>

How to survive winter in Finland and enjoy it 2012. This is Finland. Accessed 15th October 2013.

<http://finland.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=160110>

Travel Information. The Official Travel Site of Finland. Accessed 15th October 2013. <http://www.visitfinland.com/about-finland/travel-information/>

Valkeakosken Waltikka. Accessed 15th October 2013.

<http://www.valkeakosken-waltikka.fi/en/index.html>

Ainoklinikka. Accessed 15th October 2013. <http://www.ainoklinikat.fi/ru/>

The most popular destinations of travels of Russian citizens from Russia to other countries in 2012. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140229/>

The main types of tourism in Russia. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013.

<http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140243/>

Sport and extreme tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140251/>

Ski tours. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140401/>

Fishing and hunting tours. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140400/>

Cultural tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140247/>

Beach tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140248/>

Health tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140249/>

Cruise tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140252/>

Tourism for children. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140256/>

Religious tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140254/>

Business tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140253/>

Ecological tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140250/>

Rural tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140272/>

Food tourism. Federal State Statistics Service of Russia 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.russiatourism.ru/rubriki/-1124140255/>

Bookiing.com: Hotel Waltikka, Valkeakoski, Finland. Booking. Accessed in 15th April 2013. <http://www.booking.com/hotel/fi/waltikka.ru.html#hash-blockdisplay4>

Finnish researchers learnt why Russian women prefer husbands from Suomi, 2013. Fontanka. Accessed in 15th October 2013. <http://fontanka.fi/articles/9597/>

What Russians think about Finland. Fontanka. Accessed in 15th October 2013. <http://fontanka.fi/articles/988/>

Demographic atlas of Russia 2013. The Ministry of Labor and Social Defense of the Russian Federation 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. <http://www.rosmintrud.ru/2025/atlas>

http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/demography/

Russia expects a big deficit of working age population. Russian newspaper 2013. Accessed in 30th August. <http://www.rg.ru/2013/06/20/demografia.html>

The number of medical tourists from Russia is increasing in Finland 2013. Finnish-Russian Chamber of Commerce 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013.

http://www.svkk.ru/ru/novosti/razdely_novostej/ekonomika/meditsinskij_turizm_rossiyan_na_podeme_v_finlyandii.18675.news

Development of Russian tourism in Finland 2013. Finnish-Russian Chamber of Commerce 2013. Accessed in 15th August 2013. http://www.svkk.ru/ru/novosti/razdely_novostej/ekonomika/vyzovy_razvitiya_rossijskogo_turizma_v_finlyandii.18671.news

The interest of Russian tourists falls - what to do? 2013. Yle. Accessed 25th October. http://yle.fi/uutiset/interes_rossiiskikh_turistov_k_finlyandii_padaet_-_chto_delat/6884542

The popularity of the Russian language is growing in Northern Finland 2013. Yle. Accessed 25th October. http://yle.fi/uutiset/v_severnoi_finlyandii_rastet_populyarnost_russkogo_yazyka/6792403

Visa-free Russian border 'would create thousands of jobs' 2013. Yle. Accessed 25th October. http://yle.fi/uutiset/visa-free_russian_border_would_create_thousands_of_jobs/6827377

Half of Finns do not approve visa-free Russian border 2013. Yle. Accessed 28th October. http://yle.fi/uutiset/hs_polovina_zhitelyei_finlyandii_nastorozhenno_otnosyatsya_k_otmene_viz_dlya_rossiyan/6903214

Norway competes against Finland for Russian tourism 2013. Yle. Accessed 28th October. http://yle.fi/uutiset/norvegiya_konkuriruet_s_finlyandiyei_za_rossiiskikh_turistov/6869866

Tourism in Estonia in 2012 2013. Visit Estonia. Accessed 28th October. http://static2.visitestonia.com/docs/771192_tourism-in-estonia2012.pdf

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. You are:

- Man
- Woman

–

2. Your age:

- 21 and Under
- 22 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 64 and Over

3. You are travelling:

- Alone
- As a couple
- With children
- With friends

4. What city are you from? _____

5. Where do you find information about hotels and travel destination?

- From the Internet
- From friends
- From travel agency
- From newspaper
- On TV
- Other: _____

6. What are the goals of your travel?

- Leisure, entertainment
- Relaxation, stress-relief
- Health improvement
- Sport
- Business
- Studying
- Visiting relatives, friends
- Shopping
- Culture, sightseeing, museums
- Other: _____



7. What features of a hotel are important to you?

- Quiet and calm place
- Beautiful scenery
- Friendly personnel
- Cleanness
- Good food
- Sauna
- TV in rooms
- Price
- Other: _____

8. What activities and tourism services are important for you?

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Museums, exhibitions | <input type="checkbox"/> Sightseeing, excursions | <input type="checkbox"/> Cinema - | <input type="checkbox"/> Boat cruises |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoors and nature | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing - | <input type="checkbox"/> Grill place - | <input type="checkbox"/> Sauna |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants, cafes, pub | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping centres | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance, night clubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Music concerts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spa centres | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming-pool | <input type="checkbox"/> Sport facilities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet connection in rooms | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer with Internet in hotel hall | - | |

10. If you have ever been to Finland, what did you like and did you not like?

