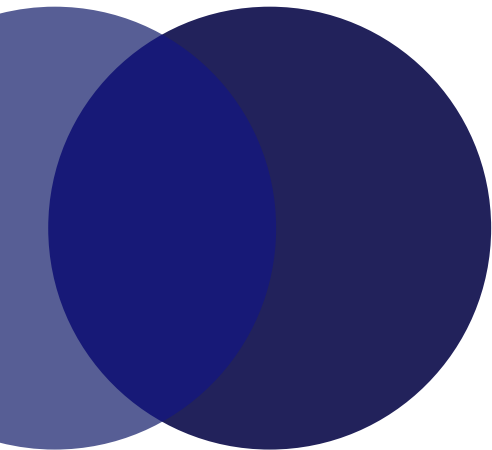


2019



LOCALISATION OF PASSENGER EXPERIENCE THROUGH DIGITAL CHANNELS

—A Case of Finnair in South Korean market



Jiyoung Son

Master's Thesis



Collaborative and Industrial Design

Department of Design

School of Arts, Design and Architecture

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Lastly, I would like to express a sincere thank you to my family, for their mental support and for cheering me up despite the distance.

Abstract

International air transport is growing rapidly, with 2 million international passengers flying every day. Airlines must provide innovative and differentiated services, which are based on local culture and behaviours, and tailored to passengers' needs and desires. However, behavioural studies in the airline industry are still absent from both academia and the field. Hence, this case study investigates the following research question: What are the opportunity areas to localise airline services in the Korean market, while maintaining the cultural identity of the airline as a crucial part of the travel experience?

The main focus of this master's thesis is a case study of a Finnish airline company targeting the Korean market. The study derives insights through the application of service design methods and tools based on a passenger-centric approach. In total, 21 insights were obtained from Korean travellers and the diverse internal stakeholders of the company in South Korea and Finland. The research reveals that understanding local behaviours should play a role in the design of international airline services, since travellers experience contrasts between Finnish and Korean culture. While the airline exhibits Finnish cultural elements, the targeted passengers have different mindsets and behaviours. The research findings suggest three potential themes: Nordic experience, communication and learning, and accessibility and visibility. Under those themes, the study creates 16 job stories highlighting strategic areas for Korean passengers as customers and 15 job stories for the cabin crew as the 'enablers'.

These strategic areas are prioritised and evaluated by managerial employees in the company through the jobs-to-be-done prioritisation matrix. As the outcome of the project, this study proposes strategic areas for localising passenger experiences in addition to business goals. The conclusion recommends that

behavioural studies of various regional markets should be conducted individually because behaviours of passengers from different markets appear to be distinctive. However, the approach to crew training should be scaled and implemented nationally or regionally, depending on the market size. By further investigating the suggested strategic areas, the passenger experience of the target country could be improved, and consequently, more international customers onboarding could be acquired.

Keywords: air travel, service design, passenger-centric design, passenger experience, cultural behaviour, localised service, case study, strategic suggestion, jobs-to-be-done

List of Abbreviations

CCM	Cabin crew members
CJM	Customer journey map
FAA	Federal Aviation Association
FI	Finland, Finnish
FC	Finnish crew
FSC	Full-service carrier
FSNC	Full-service network carrier
GDS	Global distribution system
GS	Outsourced ground staff in ICN airport
HEL	Helsinki
HQ	Headquarters
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICN	Incheon
IFE	In-flight entertainment system
IFEC	Product team name of in-flight entertainment and connectivity
IS	In-flight supervisor
JTBD	Jobs to be done
KC	Korean regional crew members
KE	Korean employees
KR	Korea, Korean
KT	Korean travellers
LCC	Low-cost carrier
NB	Narrow body fleet
OTA	Online Travel Agency
POV	Point of view
PUS	Busan International Airport
QDA	Qualitative data analysis
RFID	Radio-frequency identification
SCC	Senior cabin crew
SD	Service design
USP	Unique selling points defined by Finnair
UXD	User experience design
WB	Wide body fleet



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KORAIL AIRPORT



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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Designing Passenger Experiences for International Customers

As international air transport has rapidly expanded, the products and services from airports and aeroplanes have become increasingly complicated and interdependent. Two million air travel passengers fly every day with thousands of airlines that operate both domestically and intercontinentally on a daily basis.

In the aviation industry, aircraft have advanced in size, speed and reliability in the past 60 years. Thus, more people have started flying with airlines. In addition, the identity, design and culture of each airline has progressed through adaptation, development and mutation over time (Lovegrove, 2000).

Many new airline companies have emerged and often compete with established carriers. Consequently, transporting passengers from point A to point B by relying on advanced technology is no longer competitive, as it is the core service of every airline. The importance of providing innovative and differentiated services through a passenger-centric approach cannot be emphasised enough.

In addition, many airline companies have increasingly gained international customers. These companies must consider how to satisfy such diverse international passengers all over the world. In this regard, this thesis investigates a case study that could suggest an opportunity for them.

Before introducing my personal motivation and project objectives, I must mention the following points:

- This case study focuses on the commercial purpose of the airline industry. Henceforth, mentions of the airline industry encompass only commercial airlines. Accordingly, they exclude cases of national defence needs and military uses.
- This thesis aims to accomplish a practice-oriented project by assuming a human-centric perspective, and the deliverable is intended to provide a practical and useable outcome that could be implemented in the future.
- Since this thesis mainly regards the Korean market, long-haul trips are the focus of the project, which is especially interested in routes between European destinations and Korea. Short-haul trips by Korean travellers are not taken into account, as Korean travellers have unique purposes, budgets and holiday durations with respect to short-haul trips compared to travellers from, for example, Japan and other nearby Asian countries.



1.2 Personal Motivation

My internship experience at Finnair, a Finnish domestic airline company, motivated me to carry out this project. While working as a design intern for the In-Flight Entertainment & Connectivity (IFEC) team, I gained new knowledge about the aviation industry as well as the customer-centric services of Finnair. Above all, becoming familiar with Finnish culture in a multicultural company environment and developing services for international passengers aroused my curiosity about this topic. I continued to work as a Finnair employee after the internship period. During this time, I became interested in designing digital experiences for the cabin crew to provide a smooth passenger experience as well as for passengers to find more value and pleasant engagement with Finnair.

Since Finnair originated in Finland, and many of its services are based on Finnish (and hence European) regulatory and social environments, some international customers who encounter a language barrier are likely to struggle to receive satisfactory services from the company. However, while working on an in-flight entertainment system to provide in-flight entertainment content for long-haul journeys, I developed the perspective that simply offering translation services is neither the only solution nor the optimal way to serve international customers.

Among the diverse destinations of Finnair, South Korea is one of the challenging countries with a different language system as well as distinct cultural behaviours. As both a South Korean native and a Finnair employee, I was given the opportunity to conduct a case study project of the Korean market. I gained some useful insight that contributed to a broad understanding of Koreans. On the other hand, as a design researcher, I expended immense effort to achieve some degree of critical distance from the object of my research in order to view aspects of Finnish and Korean cultures as well as conduct research on the airline industry, which was an entirely new field for me.

During this project, I aimed to achieve a balance between my roles as a researcher and a native speaker. During the research period, I explored how both different cultural interactions are delivered between Finnair and Korean customers by observing Korean travellers in the airport as well as interviewing Korean regional crew, Finnish cabin crew and other stakeholders. I also conducted desk research to acquire knowledge about the Korean market from Korean research databases.



1.3. Project Objectives

1.3.1. Research Question and Objectives

This thesis conducts a case study of the Finnish domestic airline Finnair to meet specific objectives. Finnair has offered flights to South Korea from Helsinki Airport (HEL) to Incheon International Airport (ICN) since 2008. Finnair plans to expand its Asian routes to Busan, the second-largest city in South Korea, beginning in the summer of 2020 (Finavia, 2019).

This thesis aims to answer the following main research question:

What are the opportunity areas to localise airline services in the Korean market, while maintaining the cultural identity of the airline as a crucial part of the travel experience?

The objectives of the project are as follows:

1. To understand the needs and expectations of long-haul travel to Finland or European countries and examine the feelings and frustrations that Korean travellers experience when using foreign airlines, including Finnair;
2. To explore how Finnair wants to communicate and deliver their DNA (so-called 'Finnairness') to Korean passengers through their products and services as well as the perceptions that those passengers have of 'Finnairness';
3. To comprehend the different purchase patterns of South Koreans who use digital services, especially for flight tickets;
4. To investigate design opportunities and create service principles that are based on the end-to-end experience of the company for both physical and digital service products.

1.3.2. Thesis Structure

The thesis is structured in six chapters. Chapter 1 has described the passenger experience throughout the evolution of the global industry and the expansion of internationalism around the world. It has also introduced the research question and four objectives. Next, Chapter 2 contextualises the aviation industry and the chosen target market, South Korea. Chapter 3 then presents the applied methods for analysing and interpreting the collected data. To this end, it explains how the case study answers the research question. Furthermore, it describes the premise of the case and elaborates on the means of data collection. Chapter 4 introduces the case study project in collaboration with Finnair, the Finnish flag carrier. Subsequently, Chapter 5 presents the insights of the research and proposes strategic recommendations. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the outcome of the project by answering the research questions, noting the limitations of the project and providing suggestions for further development.

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND

This chapter engages with the literature to derive insights regarding this project before introducing the case study. A summary is provided at the end of each part of the background section.

This chapter first reviews how the air travel industry is systemised by dividing it into three parts (Section 2.1): the development of aeroplanes, airports and the aviation market. The discussion then extends to services in the airline industry (Section 2.2). This section focuses on how academia has defined airline transportation services and considers airline-specific service characteristics. Furthermore, it describes the shift in the mindset of airline companies from a transport to a customer experience orientation. The chapter then addresses the target market of this project, South Korea (Section 2.3), by examining demographics, digital environmental and cultural aspects of the nation as part of Asia. Lastly, the reflection of the literature shows what I learnt and achieved (Section 2.4).

2.1 Systemised Air Travel Industry

While international air transport has expanded rapidly by about 9% annually since 1960 (OECD,1997), products and services at airports and in aeroplanes have become complicated and distinct from those of other forms of transport. Consequently, air travel has come to be viewed as a system or world of its own (Popovic et al., 2009).

While aeroplanes were initially used for mail services, they were later capitalised on by passenger services (Garfor 2014). When commercial aircraft were first introduced in the mid-1930s, only wealthy individuals travelled by plane. Therefore, there was no necessity to separate class tiers at that time (Lovegrove,2000). As people increasingly utilised air travel, the infrastructure was developed for passenger services. In addition, various airline business models were established and still undergo continuous evolution today. At present, over 10,000 flights depart every day.

This systemisation is clarified by three focuses which are explored in the following three sections.

2.1.1 The Development of Aeroplanes

Technological developments have contributed significantly to the aviation industry. For instance, they have enabled the transport of many people with jet propulsion. Today, the industry services over 3 billion passengers per annum (ATAG, 2014).

Early aircraft were driven by propellers. The Douglas DC-3, which was developed in 1935 and featured two propellers, was capable of transporting as many people as a 'flying train'. However, planes with propellers were gradually replaced by aeroplanes with jet propulsion. Since the introduction of the Boeing 707 in the late 1950s, the global aircraft market has reorganised around jet aircraft. Jet engines allowed planes to fly substantially higher than conventional propeller planes. Moreover, because of their significantly expanded fuselages, they could carry more passengers.

As the safety of aircraft has increased dramatically, air traffic has become a mainstream mode of transportation to connect the continents (Lee, 2018).

Alongside the steady development of aviation technology, the scale of the civil air transport industry has become more prominent, and the numbers of routes and flights have risen globally.

2.1.2 The Development of Airports

The next factor that contributes to the systemisation of air transport is the development of airports. Like aeroplanes, airports are significantly linked to the air travel industry, as they are used as airfields for mostly commercial air transport.

The first airport derived from a military airfield. It fulfilled only a few simple and necessary functions on the runway during the early days of the aviation industry. San Francisco Airport, which opened in 1927, had only unpaved runways, parking, wooden offices and restaurants (San Francisco International Airport, n.d).

In contrast, modern airports offer travellers extended facilities, including airport security, premium and VIP services, cargo and freight services, access and onward travel, and internal transport (Wragg, 2008). For this reason, airports are often considered the largest and most sophisticated type of facility among all transportation systems.

2.1.3 The Development of the Aviation Market

After the liberalisation of air travel in the 1980s, both regional and intercontinental traffic flows for air travel gained importance (Penner et al.,1999). The past prediction responded to the need for long-haul travel (Oppermann & Cooper, 1999; Schafer & Victor, 2000). While low-cost carriers (LCC) first emerged in the United States, such companies have grown rapidly worldwide, which has had a significant impact on the airline industry as a whole.

Today, the business models of the aviation industry form two broad categories: major models and minor models. The major models include full-service network carriers (FSNCs) and LCCs. Meanwhile, the minor models encompass holiday, regional and cargo airlines. Because of the development of such business models, the aviation market has appeared to continuously transform its business models to produce, for example, hybrid airlines (German Aerospace Centre, 2008), which have recently entered the market.

Among major models, FSNCs, which are also known as legacy airlines, are the most traditional model. They focus on a broad scope of services whose classification depends on passenger class. Furthermore, they operate long-haul flights with a large fleet and offer various fares according to distinct services and seats, such as business class and first-class. Meanwhile, LCCs aim to provide the lowest price possible. To this end, they simplify their services, which in turn minimises costs. For instance, they offer in-flight meals and seat reservations, and they often limit baggage.

In terms of minor models, holiday airlines, which are also called charter airlines, are operated by several companies during holiday seasons. Based on an agreement between airlines and travel agencies, the former transport a certain number of passengers on specific routes under the responsibility of the travel company. Regional airlines transport passengers from regional airports to more comprehensive hubs, which heightens mobility within a country. Frequent travellers, such as commuters, are target customers for this type of carrier.

Meanwhile, the cargo airline model is based on transporting goods. It relies heavily on contracts with forwarding and shipping companies. Cargo airlines are not concerned with transporting people.

Finally, the hybrid carrier airline business model is still in development. Examples are cases of an FSNC including cargo to the same destination, an LCC transforming into an FSNC, a holiday carrier becoming an LCC, or vice versa. Companies with such a business model may provide their own LCCs or franchise their regional routes to other airlines (German Aerospace Centre, 2008).

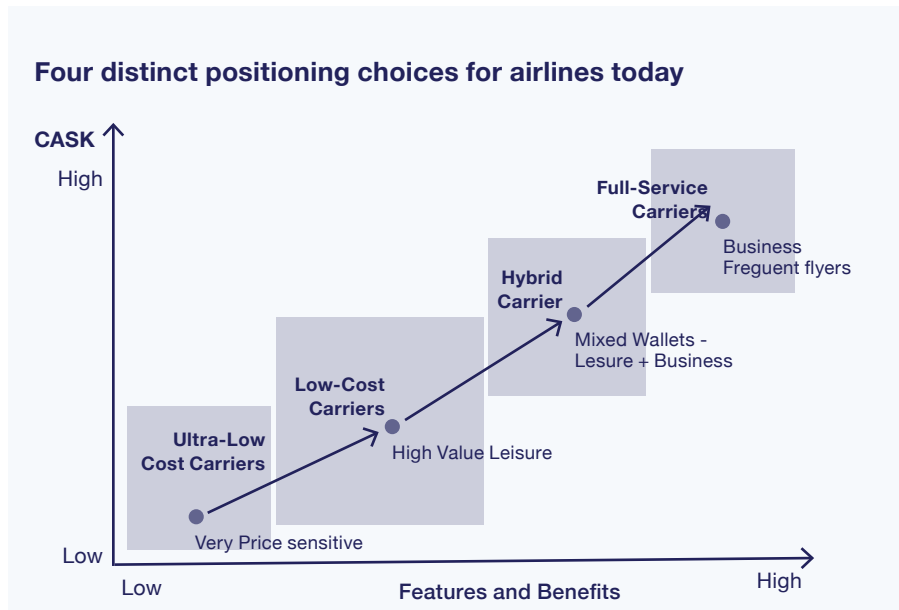


Figure 1
Four distinct positioning choices for airlines today

Note. Adapted from "Can Airlines Find their Sweet Spot?", by Akbar, Y., 2014, September 30. Retrieved from <https://airlineanalysts.com/2014/09/30/can-airlines-find-their-sweet-spot/>

Summary

This section has illustrated that the advent of new aeroplanes with advanced technology and the establishment of complex airport systems have facilitated globalisation. Millions of people traverse continents overnight on a daily basis, which contributes to a mature economy as well as advanced service industries, especially for tourism. The business models of the aviation industry have changed and evolved to meet the demands of both short- and long-haul travel. In combination, these developments have had a major impact on the complex modern aviation industry. Thus, the design for air travel or in the airfield appears to be as intensive as design for urban cities. The next section introduces the services in the airline industry to define the concept of air transportation services.

2.2 Services in the Airline Industry

Airline services are not only in-flight services, but also cover various services throughout the passenger journey. Airline services are unique and differentiated by airline within the particular standard regulations of air travel regulators, such as the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). In addition, some services follow the same regulations under an airline alliance that an airline joins as a member. One of the most exciting aspects of traveller viewpoint is the in-flight service through analogue and digital means. Thus, managing the quality of services is vital for airlines to increase customer satisfaction in the context of fierce competition among airlines (As cited in Ahn & Lee, 2011).

This section examines the significance of service in the airline sector. Thereby, it clarifies the meaning of 'airline service' as it is used in this thesis. It also explores service characteristics that are specific to airlines and the influence of these characteristics on the management of services by airlines. Apart from the review that has been mentioned above, the change in mentality among airline companies is evident from consideration of the holistic experiences of travellers in the transport sector. The resulting insights can help readers understand the passenger-centric approach in the airline industry.

2.2.1 The Definition of Air Transportation Service

There are several definitions about air transportation services in academia and industry. The foundation of air transport consists of travelling passengers and the movement of freight (as cited in Anitha, p.48). However, in this review of the passenger experience, only air transport services for passengers is addressed in relation to the thesis topic.

Many advanced studies have produced definitions of air transportation service. Park (1996, as cited in Ha, 2010, p.13) has explained that air transport service entails the provision of intangible transport services to customers during the operation of tangible goods (i.e. the aircraft) . Furthermore, according to Jung (2000, as cited in Ha, 2010, p.13), when passengers purchase a transport service, they do not receive any tangible good in return for their purchase. Instead, they receive a sense of comfort from arriving at their destination without any accidents, and they experience the delivery of careful services by flight attendants (as cited in Ha, 2010, p.13). Shostak (1977) has defined air transportation services as service packages, as indicated below Figure 2.

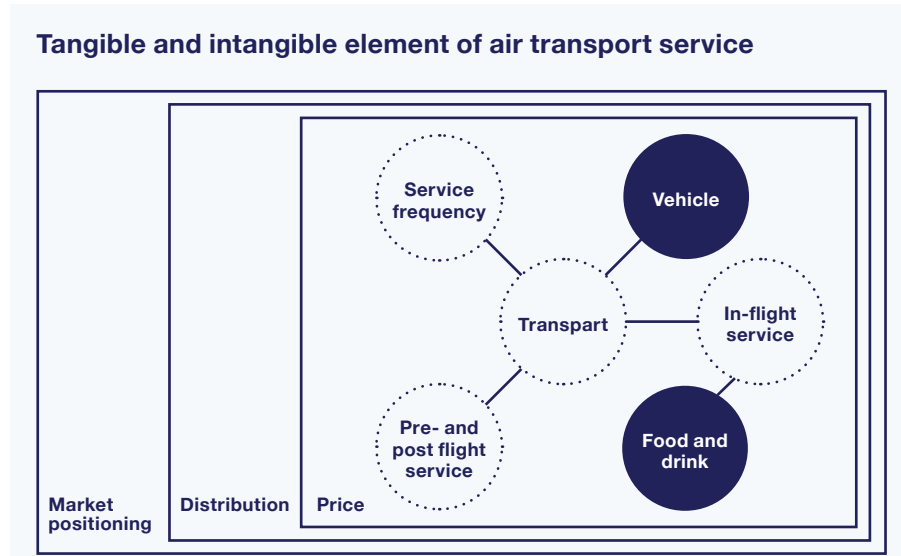


Figure 2
Tangible and intangible element of air transport service

Note. Adapted from "Breaking free from product marketing", by Shostack, G.L., 1977 Journal of Marketing, Vol. 41, No. 2. April, p.76

The components of air transport services vary according to the type of service, and airline companies and academics have analysed them in diverse ways. For example, Teodorović and Janić (2017) have stated that the air transport system

consists of airports, air traffic control (ATC) and airlines. Meanwhile, Kim (2004) has distinguished between airline services and airport services and further deconstructed airline services into aeroplane services, passenger services, passenger facility services, and freight and mail services. Based on the five components of service that have been suggested by Lovelock (1983), Song (2004) has identified the following components of air transport services: reservation and ticketing service; airline user transport service; cabin service; and flight and other services (as cited in Ha, 2010, p.16). The air transportation service creates economic value by physically moving goods by aircraft, which has both fixed and fluid aspects. Fixed features include seats and cargo compartments, which are determined by aircraft type, whereas booking, ticketing, check-in, in-flight services and baggage handling are considered fluid aspects (Heo, 2009).

In this project, I define air transportation service as the services that passengers experience before, during and after travelling with an airline as a paid customer. Moreover, service interaction assumes both analogue and digital forms. The analogue mode of interaction refers to the physical interaction with, for example, the ground crew or cabin crew. Meanwhile, the digital mode occurs through interactions that use digital touchpoints, such as a website or application of an airline or the in-flight entertainment (IFE) system.

2.2.2 Service Characteristics of the Airline Industry

The emergence of the service economy has prompted many studies to examine characteristics of services. Zeithaml et al. (1985) have outlined four main characteristics of service: intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and perishability (IHIP). Kotler (2005) has supported this perspective by mentioning the 'nature and characteristics of a service', and Grönroos (2007) has similarly specified intangibility, perishability and lack of ownership as three factors of service characteristics. In terms of air transport services, three traits have been especially emphasised: intangibility, perishability and heterogeneity.

Intangibility

Grönroos (2007) has mentioned intangibility of service as the most important factor. Compared to products, services are intangible in nature. Because of

this major characteristic, it is difficult to provide a precise standardisation method for services and the inventory system. Furthermore, it is only possible to evaluate services. A service output cannot be displayed or implemented in advance. For instance, even if a traveller pays for a flight ticket online, service experiences cannot be guaranteed; thus, there is uncertainty about the service apart from the promises that the airline specifies on its website. To overcome this difficulty, airlines provide a variety of tangible clues, such as food and beverages, newspapers and movies (Mittal, 1999).

Perishability

The production and consumption of a service take place simultaneously; thus, it cannot be saved for future sale. In the case of airlines, seats are only available for purchase prior to the scheduled flight departure (Michael, 2001; Lovelock & Gummesson, 2004). Furthermore, after it is delivered, the specific service disappears, as it has been consumed by the consumer. Airlines contend with the challenge of balancing supply and demand since the airline industry is heavily influenced by time, season and business situations. This challenge explains why airline companies offer lower prices for 'standby' tickets to fill unbooked seats (Kotler, 2005).

Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity of services is achieved by either a service provider or a service receiver. For example, service content or quality can be differentiated depending on the service-delivering employee or the service content despite originating from the same service provider. Customers who cannot understand the service concept or content cannot experience the same services as customers who have such awareness. The literature on heterogeneity has particularly criticised the difficulty of standardising services (Edgett and Parkinson, 1993). Additionally, Benoit (2010) has stressed the need for varying participation of customers by using customer resources as reference objects of heterogeneity rather than the consequences or transformation itself. From a company perspective, when an airline acts as a service provider to deliver services to their customers, several factors, such as the capabilities of the cabin crew, can present obstacles to the delivery of

standardised services. On the other hand, customers who experience a language barrier or who cannot understand the contents of the company booking website or in-flight entertainment system contend with challenges that might impact service quality (Lovelock & Gummesson, 2004).

Because of these characteristics, airline companies have attempted to supplement by communicating clear physical evidence (see Table 1) to their customers. Such evidence (see Table 2) is especially important for airline services because customers rely on visual cues. Balaji (2002) has argued that providing clear physical evidence is vital to the servicescape and other tangibles, such as tickets, food and uniforms.

Servicescape		Other tangibles
Facility exterior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exterior Design • Signage • Parking • Landscape • Surrounding environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business cards • Stationery • Billing statements • Reports • Employee dress • Uniform, Brochures
Facility interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interior design • Equipment • Signage • Layout • Air quality/temperature 	

Table 1
Elements of physical evidence

Note. Adapted from “*Services Marketing and Management*”, by Balaji B., 2002 (1st ed), p.145, New Delhi, S. Chand and Company. Copyright 2002, by Dr. B. Balaji)

Service	Physical Evidence	
	Servicescape	Other tangibles
Airline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airline gate area • Airplane exterior • Airplane interior • (decors, seats, air quality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ticket • Food • Uniforms

Table 2
Physical evidence from the customer point of view

Note. Adapted from “*Services Marketing and Management*”, by Balaji B., 2002 (1st ed), p.145-146, New Delhi, S. Chand and Company. Copyright 2002, by Dr. B. Balaji)

2.2.3. Mentality Change in the Aviation Sector

Today, airline services are perceived as a representative service industry. However, the aviation industry had low involvement in customer-oriented services not too long ago. The low involvement was due to the monopoly and oligopoly services, which were based on the characteristics of the aforementioned services (see Section 2.2.2) (Yi, Kim and Seo, 2010).

While transporting passengers from a point of origin to a destination is considered the main business of airlines, ancillary and other services are considered auxiliary or extra services. However, in view of the fierce market, it is difficult for airlines to survive without offering competitive services. The importance of enhancing services has been highlighted by Grönroos (2007) (cited in Rautanen, 2012, p.9-12). Developing a service is highly intensive and requires substantial investments from various stakeholders at the airline company. Meanwhile, consumers take auxiliary services for granted as part of service provision. Thus, it is imperative for airlines to focus on developing auxiliary services, which can generate a profit as well as deliver value to their customers.

In this regard, one challenge for airlines is the inability to improve their core service – transporting passengers from point A to point B – because all airlines already satisfy the main business. Furthermore, unexpected situations, such as an aeroplane crash, are unlikely to occur. Thus, airlines have to compete by attracting customers predominantly with auxiliary services, which reflects that such services have become a more distinguished and essential part of the service offering. Therefore, according to Grönroos (2007), reducing extra services to cut costs could result in a grave loss.

For airline companies, integrating hardware and software and offering aeroplanes with core and auxiliary services can enhance their competence. In this way, numerous airline companies have sought to provide innovative and differentiated services via a customer-centric approach.

2.2.4 Passenger-centric Approach

Customers have become the focal point of many service-oriented businesses. For instance, the importance of passengers has been emphasised in the transportation sector. This section further examines the passenger-centric approach, which derives from a customer-centric approach.

Before examining the passenger-centric approach, it is necessary to clarify the terms 'passenger' and 'customer'. A customer is a person who buys goods or services from an offline or online shop, whereas the term 'passenger' is commonly used in the context of transportation to identify a person who uses a vehicle, such as a car, a ship or an aeroplane. In the case of airlines, the customers are not always the passengers themselves but may be, for example, travel agencies. Nevertheless, in reality, airlines appear to occasionally view the terms as interchangeable. The term 'passenger' is often invoked in discussions of in-flight services.

It is also necessary to differentiate between passenger-centric and customer-centric approaches. The former concentrates more on passengers as users of transportation and is common within the transport industry. Meanwhile, the latter is widely applied to customers in general in the same context that is mentioned above. In this regard, a passenger-centric approach is relevant to not only the aviation industry but also the transport industry at large. Hence, from the end-user perspective, a passenger-centric perspective is likely to be interpreted as an approach to improve airline services for those who actually use the flight and experience the services that the airline provides.

The value of the passenger-centric approach is apparent in the academic world. For example, Camacho, Foth, Rakotonirainy, Rittenbruch and Bunker (2016) have examined the value of passenger-centric innovation for public transportation. They have noted three cases from different industries, namely the commercial aviation, car and public transportation industries. Another example of a passenger-centric approach can be found in the rail industry of the future (Maknoon & Bierlaire, 2016; Priestman, 2018). The authors have highlighted the need to always situate the passenger at the core of present and future development.

Beyond academia, passenger-centric innovation is also evident in the aviation industry. Its occurrence is not limited to airline companies but extends to airports as well. As one instance of passenger-centric innovation, Virgin Atlantic has adopted a social design approach that allows people to buy a drink on the plane

for someone with whom they wish to socialise. This example is only one of many; another is the passenger experience with radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology at the airport (Camacho et al., 2016).

To clarify, in this thesis, I use 'passenger' to describe travellers who experience the whole journey that airlines provide. Meanwhile, I use 'customer' to include both passengers, as service receivers, as well as airline partners, such as travel agencies. In addition, the term 'passenger-centric' is applied to refer to an approach that creates holistic experiences by focusing on travellers as the end-users of airlines.

Summary

To sum up, the previous discussion in this chapter shows the meaning of services in the airline industry. Firstly, by examining several definitions of air transportation service in academia, I give my own definition, merging my knowledge as a practitioner in this field; Air transportation services are the services that passengers experience—including both analogue and digital interactions—before, during and after their travel using an airline they paid. Also, the review shows that airlines should communicate their customers with physical evidence, because of the three main features in this industry: intangibility, perishability and heterogeneity. Next, the mindset of the aviation sector has changed to focus on developing customer-oriented services. This continued to the examination on the passenger-centric approach, focusing on comparing the term between customer and passenger, and between customer-centric and passenger-centric. Reviewing the value of passenger-centric innovation in the aviation industry represents the importance of enhancing the passenger-centric approach.

The following section explains the target country of the case study, South Korea. This is to help readers have sufficient understanding of the country and people for this thesis project.

2.3 Target Country: South Korea

The Asian market, which is rapidly growing as a whole, has the power and influence to achieve a competitive advantage. Hence, numerous diverse business fields, including the airline industry, have expanded their focal market areas to include the Asian market. One promising market in the Asian region is South Korea. While the country is small, the population density is high. Moreover, dynamic changes occur every day. According to the Innovation Index 2018 by Bloomberg (as cited in World Economic Forum, 2018), South Korea tied for first place as the most innovative country worldwide in 2017.

This chapter first discusses the burgeoning Asian market. Then, it narrows the research scope to South Korea and the rise of its service economy. In addition, it identifies features of Korean people as consumers who are surrounded by digital technology. By exploring the cultural differences between Korea and Finland, the chapter ultimately imparts background knowledge to support the case study of Finnair, a Finnish company, and the target consumer population of Korean travellers.

2.3.1 The Growing Market in Asia

The Asian market is a focal area of many industries, including the airline industry. According to an OECD report (2018) that analyses the ‘megatrends’ that are shaping the future of tourism, Asian populations are likely to have a significant impact on the travel and tourism industries, which would accelerate the remarkable growth of the middle class. The aviation industry is especially interested in Asian-Pacific countries as potential areas for future market growth (IATA, 2017).

2.3.2 Service Economy in Korea

South Korea is a small but dynamically changing country. Its population of 50.2 million people resides within an area of 99,000 square kilometres. South Korea has the world’s 11th most powerful economy and presents as a highly developed country. According to International Monetary Fund (IMF), Korea’s gross domestic product (GDP) was 1.6 trillion USD in 2019. At present, Korea is a leader of innovation and technology, as exemplified by traditional corporations and emerging start-ups.

South Korea entered the service economy era in 1974. The service industry sectors contribute to economic development and form the basis of domestic industrial advancements. Such sectors include finance, information, telecommunications, logistics, transportation and distribution (Cho, 2007).

Development of the service economy is still underway in Korea; however, it is lagging behind that in other developed countries (see Figure 3). This disparity is due to Korea’s shift from an industry-based economy to a service-based one (see Figure 4). The future economy is expected to move towards an increasingly service-oriented environment.

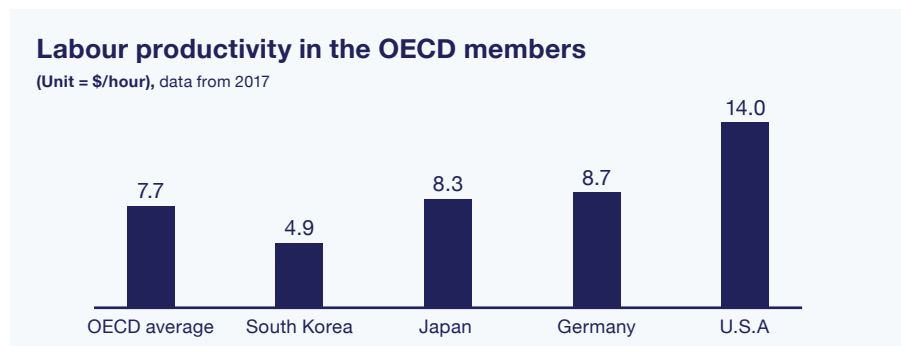


Figure 3
Labour productivity in the OECD members

Note. Adapted from “GDP per hour worked (Indicator)”, by OECD, (2019). Retrieved from: <https://data.oecd.org/lprdy/gdp-per-hour-worked.htm>. Copyright 2018 by OECD

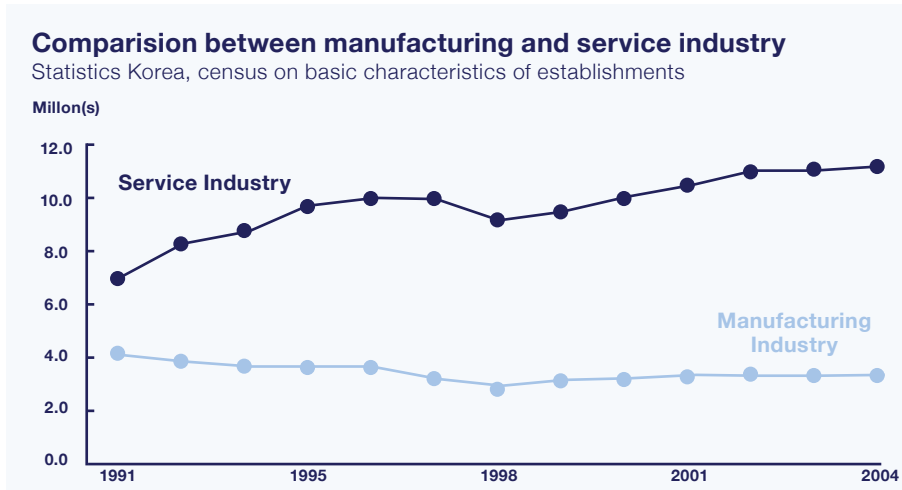


Figure 4
 Comparison between manufacturing and service industry

Note. Adapted from "National Business Survey, 1993-2005", by Statistics Korea, (2005), Retrieved from: http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1K51002&conn_path=l2 . Copyright since 1996 by Statistics Korea)

2.3.3 Digital Nomad: Korean travellers

In South Korea, the majority of travellers use smart digital gadgets to gain useful information throughout their journey. The travel and tourism industries have benefitted immensely from the development of overseas trip liberalisation.

South Koreans have become a significant portion of travellers from Asian countries. South Korean citizens could not freely travel abroad until 1989, when the government liberalised overseas trips. The number of entry and exit travellers has rapidly increased nearly every year (see Figure 5). In 2014, 30 years after the liberalisation, there were over 20 times as many exit passengers (Son, M. & Choi, S., 2014). One reason for this increase is visa-free access. A record from Henley Passport Index (2019) indicates that South Korean citizens can enter 189 countries and territories without a visa or with visa-on-arrival access, which ranks the South Korean passport as the second most powerful in the world.

The increase in local travellers to overseas countries has significantly benefitted the travel and tourism industries. For instance, many online and offline travel agencies have emerged to promote tour packages for foreign countries. In 2015, the Korea Tourism Association stated that over 14,000 travel agencies had been registered.

The increasing number of tourist exit passengers in South Korea

Korea Tourism Organisation, 2018

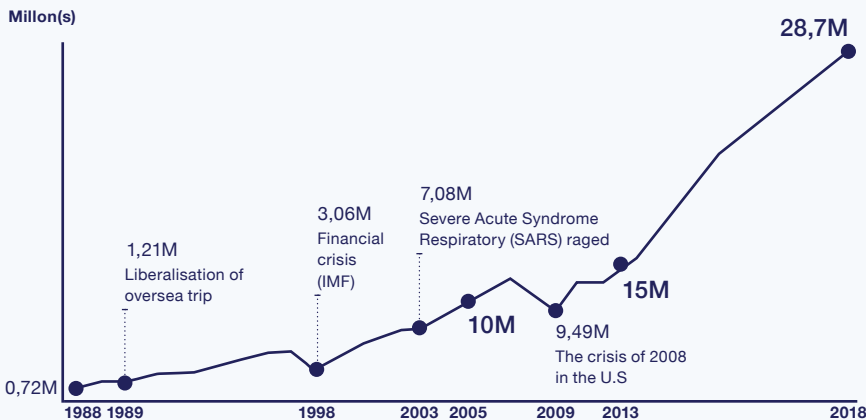


Figure 5
The increasing number of tourist exit passengers in South Korea

Note. Adapted from Korea Tourism Organisation (Database), 2018a, Retrieved from <https://kto.visitkorea.or.kr/kor/notice/data/statis/tstat/profit/notice/inout/popup.kto>. Copyright 2007-2012 by KTO.

Regarding travel trends, the Korea Tourism Organisation (2018) has defined it as Staycation, Travelgram, Alone, Regeneration and Tourist (START) after collecting and analysing a massive amount of data between 2017 and 2018 (see Figure 6). This result reveals that local travellers are affected by mass media and external factors.

In recent years, the use of smartphones has had an enormous impact on the travel sector in South Korea. With 47.4 million registered smartphones, the country hosts one of the largest markets for mobile penetration. According to a study by Google, an average of 2.3 travel-related applications were installed on consumers' devices, of which 58% were used per mensem. Thus, numerous airlines have endeavoured to expose customers to their multiple channels (e.g. mobile applications, websites, boarding passes) to present as a trustworthy company (Tan, 2018).

From the consumer perspective of digital purchases, Koreans use their mobile phones considerably often for shopping. The aggregate turnover is more than 24 trillion won, which is equivalent to almost €19 billion. Travel-related services ranked in second place behind the fashion and clothing category. The mobile sales rates of travel agencies and airlines have generally exhibited steady increases.

The purchase pattern of flight tickets among Korean travellers indicates that the majority purchased flight tickets through online travel agencies (OTAs). Hana Tour, which is the largest travel service company in South Korea, has achieved a top ranking

in international travel and air ticket sales for 20 consecutive years. Modu Tour and Interpark Tours are further examples. Meanwhile, global distribution systems (GDS) that are popular in South Korea include Skyscanner, Expedia and Kayak.

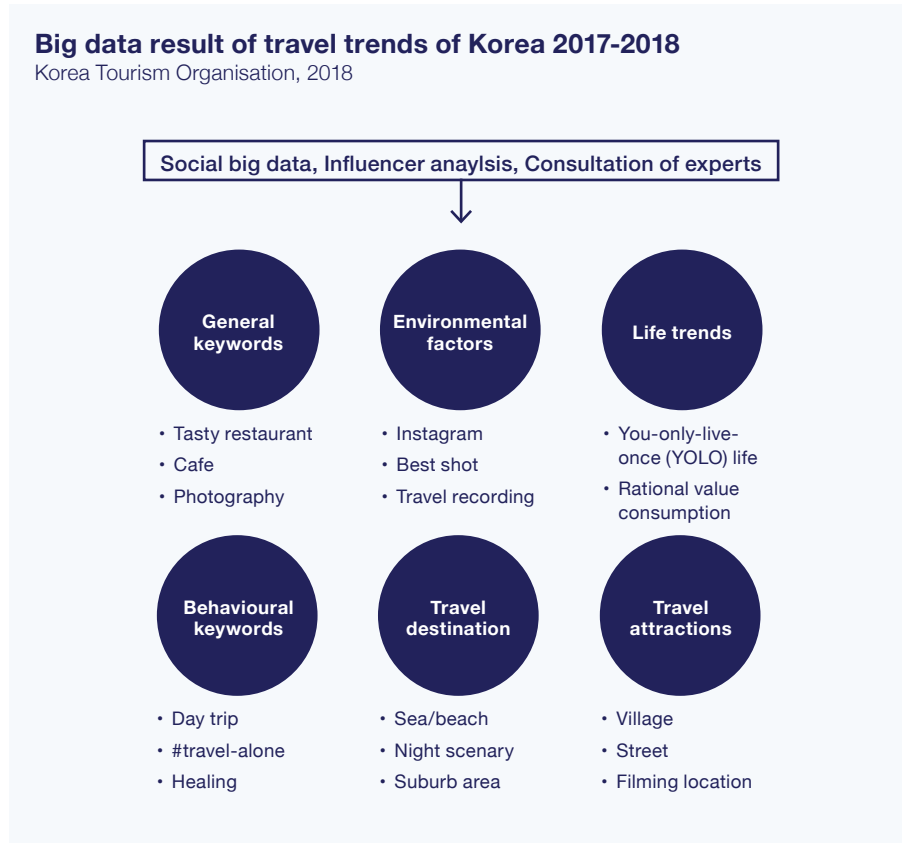


Figure 6
Big data result of travel trends of Korea 2017–2018

Note. Adapted from “*Social Media Big Data Travel Trend Analysis Report*” by Korea Tourism Organisation, 2018b, Retrieved from <https://kto.visitkorea.or.kr/kor/notice/data/report/org/board/view.kto?id=429022&rnum=4>, Copyright 2007-2012 by KTO.

2.3.4 Cultural Differences between Korea and Finland

Each airline has established its own identity while maintaining or advancing a unique culture. Since this element can enhance the brand value of an airline, attention to such culture is considered vital for some airlines. Lovegrove (2000) has illustrated how various airlines have gradually developed flight attendant uniforms, in-flight meals, cabin interiors and corporate identities on the basis of their local cultures and customers' needs.

At the same time, adapting to the local culture of its international customers is a challenge in providing localised services. Today, many airlines fly to diverse destinations worldwide; thus, the localisation of services appears to be crucial to attract international passengers and continue engaging with their flights. Shaw (1990) has claimed that passenger markets in the airline industry can be segmented by three variables: the journey purpose, the length of the journey and the culture or country of origin of the traveller. He has further argued that the length of the journey and the culture or country of origin of the traveller are the most critical. For instance, cultural differences can be significant in business markets, whereas national carriers can attain more respect and loyalty from their local passengers.

As demonstrated in Figure 7, Finland and South Korea generally contrast in every single dimension. First, with regard to communication, Finland prefers simple and clear communication with minimal context, whereas sophisticated, nuanced and implicit messages are more common in Korea. Second, straightforward, direct and honest feedback is given in Finland, while feedback in Korea is indirect, subtle and smooth in its tone. Third, equality is highly valued in Finnish society; in contrast, a strong hierarchy is evident in Korea and in its working culture in particular. Fourth, Finnish tend to make collective decisions in groups, while Korean employers make decisions individually. Fifth, trust in Finland is based on the practicality of circumstances, but it derives from personal relationships in Korea. Sixth, objection is perceived as positive and appropriate in Finnish culture, but confrontation is avoided in Korean culture because it is regarded negatively. Finally, in the scheduling dimension, Finnish culture focuses linearly on a single task, whereas multiple tasks can be addressed flexibly in Korean culture.

This result implies two internal and external aspects for consideration. On the one hand, understanding the cultural behaviours is necessary for the company

to demonstrate internal consideration of the Finnish company culture and Korean employees, including the cabin crew and branch based in Korea. On the other hand, the company should develop localisation services by learning about and respecting behaviours of Korean travellers, which could support the retention and attraction of customers.

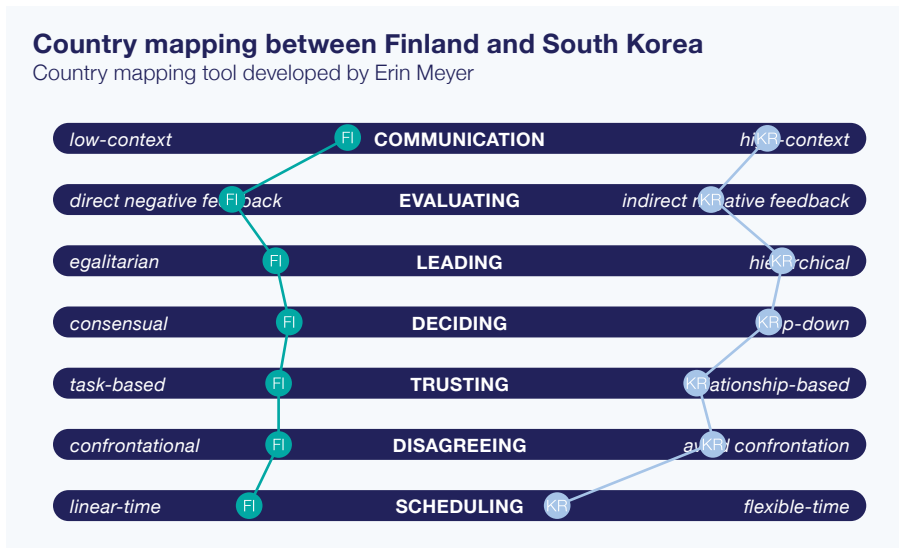


Figure 7
Country mapping between Finland and South Korea

Note. Adapted from "The country Mapping Tool" by Meyer, E. n.d. , Retrieved from <https://www.erinmeyer.com/tools/culture-map-premium/>, Copyright 2014-2019 by Erin Meyer.

Summary

This section has described South Korea and its people to contextualise the target country of the case study. As a part of the promising Asian market, South Korea has been driven by the service economy since the 1970s, although the manufacturing of goods constitutes the economic foundation of the nation. This chapter has also historically reviewed the substantial and active growth of the travel and tourism industries. Moreover, it has addressed the digital environment that surrounds Korean consumers and travellers. Finally, since an understanding of the two distinctive cultural behaviours is vital to the project, I have presented a comparison of Korean and Finnish cultures that I performed with the country mapping tool.

2.4 Reflection of Literature

In this section, I have reflected on the literature and established a conclusion before proceeding to the case study chapter. The literature review has explored the aviation industry as well as the target market of South Korea. There are three main findings from the literature.

First, the first section reveals the complexity of the airline industry. Accordingly, I have broadened my understanding of the systemised air travel industry and the diversity of stakeholders in that industry. In addition, an airline company may encounter limitations to developing an idea, as there are numerous strict international and domestic regulations. This aspect should be considered for the project in the next chapter.

I have also achieved one of the four research objectives: 3. to understand the different purchase patterns of South Koreans when using digital services, especially for flight tickets. The corresponding findings are especially prevalent in Section 2.3.3, 'Digital Nomad: Korean Travellers'. I discovered how and why Korean travellers gained the freedom to travel globally. Moreover, I assessed the extent to which the purchases of Korean consumers are influenced by the digital environment.

Third, through the review, I have noticed an area of insufficient study. Many case studies in Korean academic research have demonstrated how and what to do from the perspective of Korean domestic airlines and LCCs. However, no research has assumed the perspective of foreign airlines to investigate how foreign airlines can engage with Korean customers or how various aspects should be examined. Furthermore, there is still a lack of understanding of cultural aspects for local customers in different markets.

As a designer who works for a foreign airline company and has a Korean point of view, my perspective can clarify Korean cultural behaviours for foreign airlines which target the Korean market. On this basis, the airlines can develop new products for that market. From a broader perspective, the findings may enhance understandings of the Korean market among Finnish businesses that seek to appeal to that market.



Chapter 3

METHODS AND DATA

During the months of June, July, August and September, I employed several approaches and methods to conduct this case study project. In this chapter, I first explain which methods I adopted to answer the research question and fulfil the objectives. As practice-oriented research, this chapter briefly reviews the practices, their discussion in academia and among practitioners, and the integration of methods to approach the project. I briefly introduce the case study framework (Section 3.1). The discussion continues how to collect data (Section 3.2), methods for analysis and synthesising (Section 3.3), and tools for ideation (Section 3.4) according to the project process. Finally, Section 3.5 describes the research process of the project.

3.1 Case Study

With a qualitative research framework (Muratovski, 2016), researchers can use a variety of data to study a complex phenomenon. Thereby, the researcher can attain a deeper understanding of an underexplored issue or situation, particularly for the history of change (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). According to Baxter and Jack (2008), it is vital for researchers to set specific parameters for their case studies and maintain the focus of the research. Depending on the research goals, the case for consideration can be single, multiple or collective.

The case study was performed to obtain insight into South Korean passengers who have or have not used Finnair previously. In addition, the study of other Korean domestic airlines is referenced to identify the services that they provide.



3.2 Data Collection Methods

Data were collected by both primary and secondary data collection methods. Primary data were acquired from surveys and interviews, whereas secondary data were obtained by searching trend, company and industry reports as well as the relevant literature.

Understanding cultural behaviours is a complicated but necessary point of awareness for the airline. It requires comprehension of not only the company situation but also assorted ways of approaching and defining a problem beyond the use of a linear process that is based on a solution-oriented approach.

To attain a holistic understanding of both the passenger experiences of Korean travellers and the context of the company, I conducted a survey of 25 Korean travellers and performed 16 interviews with experts and stakeholders.

Through these methods, I pursued the following two objectives:

- From the survey and expert interviews, the observations clarify the needs and expectations regarding long-haul travel to Finland or European countries. In addition, they reveal feelings and frustrations that arise when using foreign airlines, including Finnair, from the perspectives of Koreans.
- From the desk research during the background research and survey, the observations enhance my understanding of the different purchase patterns of South Koreans in using digital services, especially to purchase flight tickets.

3.2.1 Observations

Observation is a method of collecting data by conducting a form of visual research (Muratovski, 2016). It involves two main points for consideration. The first includes structures and settings, while the second concerns behaviours and interactions. Observing a target place and its surroundings is vital since the behaviours of people are affected by their environment. Madden (2010) has argued that the focal observation should be followed by human activity within the settings (as cited in Muratovski, 2016, p.64)

In this context, I derived insights by observing passers-by in the context of the ICN airport and the cabin.

3.2.2 Interviews

Interviews are a well-known method that has diverse applications for a variety of studies. By conducting an interview, researchers can learn about the thoughts, opinions and attitudes of people (Muratovski, 2016). The interviews are performed for two main reasons: first, for use as a primary research method; second, to collect additional data beyond those resulting from the other research methods. Notably, interviews could be performed only with experts. Many interviewers must ensure that the ideas of interviewees are valid and representable (Muratovski, 2016).

For this project, I primarily conducted expert and stakeholder interviews. Although it would have been acceptable to conduct fewer interviews with the experts, some of the expert interviews involved more than one person. For example, I held seven expert interviews with Korean crew members to explore their diverse personal flight experiences with service delivery and to identify patterns in comparison to the Finnish crew. Stakeholder interviews were also carried out to examine their thoughts and attitudes towards customers.

Most of the interviews were semi-structured except the one with ground staff working in ICN airport having a contextual interview (see Table 3). The interviewees were four Finnish crew members in different positions, seven Korean crew members with varying work experience, two Finnish in-flight supervisors, three Korean managers in various positions in the Korean office and a group of the outsourced ground staff who work at the ICN airport. With the exception of the

contextual interview with the staff group at the airport, which was limited to 10 minutes because of their busy schedules, the duration of each in-depth interview was between 60 and 80 minutes.

Interviewee	Position	Method	Location
FI crew 1	Purser	Semi-structured Interview	In-flight from ICN to HEL
FI crew 2	Purser	Semi-structured Interview	TOKE Finnair Crew Centre
FI crew 3	Cabin Crew	Semi-structured Interview	TOKE Finnair Crew Centre
FI crew 4	Cabin Crew	Semi-structured Interview	TOKE Finnair Crew Centre
KR crew 1	Regional Crew gen.1	Semi-structured Interview	In-flight from ICN to HEL
KR crew 2	Regional Crew gen.1	Semi-structured Interview	In-flight from ICN to HEL
KR crew 3	Regional Crew gen.1	Semi-structured Interview	At the crew's hotel
KR crew 4	Regional Crew gen.2	Semi-structured Interview	At the crew's hotel
KR crew 5	Regional Crew gen.2	Semi-structured Interview	At the crew's hotel
KR crew 6	Regional Crew gen.3	Semi-structured Interview	Remote (Skype)
KR crew 7	Regional Crew gen.3	Semi-structured Interview	Remote (Skype)
Inflight Supervisor 1	Current manager of KR crew	Semi-structured Interview	TOKE Finnair Crew Centre
Inflight Supervisor 2	Future manager of KR crew, Inflight service Exeperience	Semi-structured Interview	TOKE Finnair Crew Centre
KR Office Manager 1	General Manager	Semi-structured Interview	Finnair Korea office
KR Office Manager 2	Marketing	Semi-structured Interview	Finnair Korea office
KR Office Manager 3	Digital	Semi-structured Interview	Finnair Korea office
ICN airport ground staff	Staff	Contextual interview	ICN airport

Table 3
Sample detail of the participating interviewees
(Source: author)

3.2.3 Survey as Mixed Methods

A survey is a widely used quantitative research method and a common form of statistical research (Muratovski, 2016). Surveys collect data from target participants, and the results can reveal characteristics, opinions, attitudes and past experiences (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). This can be done by inquiring questions to a targeted people and organising corresponding results in systemic order (Muratovski, 2016).

The survey for this thesis involves mixed methods. Thus, it integrates both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Since mixed methods complement lacking aspects, they benefit the research approach by allowing for an investigation of a new mentality of the approach (Muratovski, 2016).

In this project, the survey was administered face-to-face and online. The survey contains a few open-ended questions that request their opinions based on their experiences. While carrying out the survey, contextual interviews were conducted with participants. A total of 25 participants answered the survey. Since only a small sample of Korean travellers participated in the study, the resource cannot be generalised or scalable. Nevertheless, it was valuable for gaining insight into individual travel experiences.

3.2.4 Mystery Shopping

Mystery shoppers become participants by interacting with the service as customers. Mystery shopping can be conducted to clarify the service experience across channels. It is especially useful for researchers to generate engagement and identify pain points (Solsona, 2018).

In this project, this method was employed to understand how Korean travellers actually purchase flight tickets through both the Finnair Korean website and Korean search engines. Among the latter, Naver and Kakao are the most commonly used portals. Furthermore, given that majority of travellers book their trips through travel agencies rather than the direct channels of Finnair, it was worth attempting to follow the online booking flow of a major travel agency to determine which airline information was provided.

3.3 Analysis and Synthesis Methods

Two methods were applied during the analysis and synthesis to achieve the objective of understanding how Finnair wants to communicate and deliver its DNA (i.e. so-called 'Finnairness') to Korean passengers through its products and services as well as how those customers perceive 'Finnairness'. I applied the methods of affinity diagramming and a customer journey map (CJM) to analyse and synthesise the data.

3.3.1 Affinity Diagram

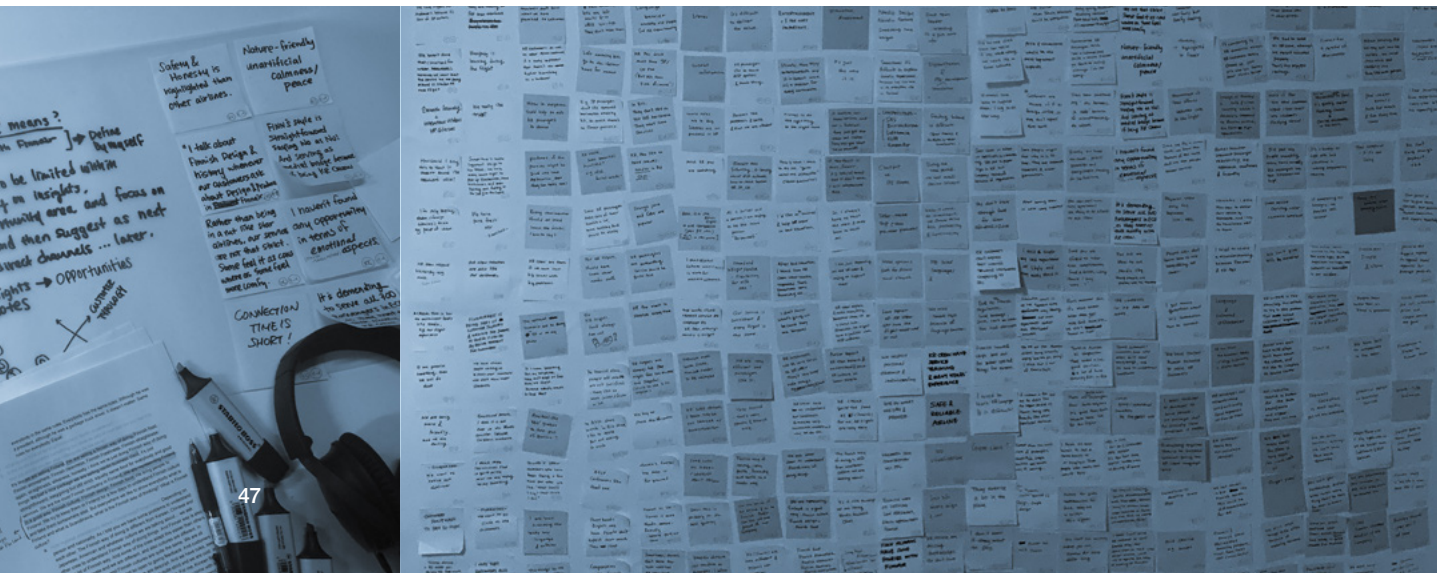
Affinity diagram is a method of qualitative data analysis (QDA). One affinity diagram, which is referred to as the KJ method, derives from the work of Jiro Kawakita in the 1960s. The primary purposes of this method are to analyse contextual inquiry data, cluster user attributes into profiles or requirements, frame problems and generate ideas, and prioritise issues in usability tests (Lucero, 2015). For this project, I used this method as the main technique for collaboratively sorting and categorising the collected data.



3.3.2 Customer Journey Map

A CJM determines pain points in the current service experience (Solsona, 2018). Stickdorn and Schenider (2010) have described a CJM as a visualisation tool for building the typical journey of a service user in a structured way. Gibbons has similarly defined CJM as a visualisation of the process through which a person proceeds in order to accomplish a goal (Nielsen Norman Group, 2018). Key elements of CJM include an engaging story, a timeline, steps of the service user, pain points, highlights and emotions.

I applied the mapping tool to create a passenger journey map that documents initial insights and quotations from interviewees to illustrate a holistic viewpoint of the passenger journey. This mapping supported my understanding of several cross-channels and touchpoints that the two types of Korean travellers – group and individual – could uniquely encounter.



3.4 Ideation Methods

Three methods were utilised during the ideation process. The methods were chosen to realise the last objective of investigating design opportunities and creating service principles on the basis of the end-to-end experience of the company for both physical and digital service products. Strategic areas were ultimately proposed by employing Jobs-to-be-done (JTBD) and workshops with decision-makers and stakeholders.

3.4.1 Jobs to be done Theory

The JTBD theory, which was first proposed by the Harvard professor Dr Christensen (2007), dictates that people can think from the perspective of customers. According to Christensen (as cited by Christensen, Anthony, Berstell and Nitterhouse),

“Most companies segment their markets by customer demographics or product characteristics and differentiate their offerings by adding features and functions. However, the consumer has a different view of the marketplace. He has a job to be done and is seeking to ‘hire’ the best product or service to do it.”

In addition, Klement (2016) has further highlighted the emotional aspects of JTBD and provided the following definition: ‘A Job to be Done is the process a consumer goes through whenever she aims to transform her existing life-situation into a preferred one, but cannot because there are constraints that stop her’. In this regard, JTBD is an approach based on understanding the specific goal of the customers toward innovation.

Regarding the components of JTBD (see Figure 8), the ‘main job’ and ‘related jobs’ are the main types.

The former represents the task that customers want to achieve, whereas the latter refers to those that they want to realise in line with the main JTBD. Under each of the two types of JTBD, functional and emotional job aspects are considered.

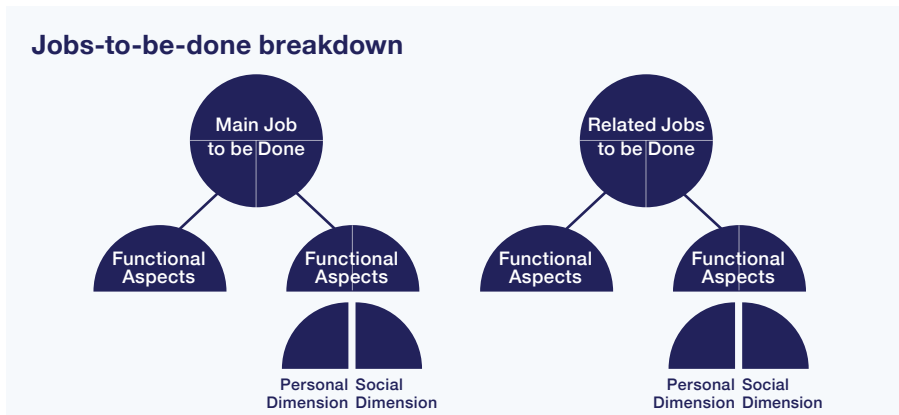


Figure 8
Jobs to be done breakdown

Note. Adapted from "Technique-Jobs to be done" by Innovatorstoolkit.com, n.d. Retrieved from <http://innovatorstoolkit.com/content/technique-1-jobs-be-done> Copyright by BMGI

There are several techniques and tools to transform opportunities that are framed as JTBD into practical approaches. Among them, I used the two methods that are described in the following two subsections. These sections also indicate how I applied the methods for the case study to formulate and subsequently prioritise the strategic opportunities.

Job Stories

Klement (2013) and Intercom (2016) have introduced the concept of a 'job story'. Job stories contextualise high-level jobs and consist of three parts (see Figure 9): the situation in which a problem occurs, the motivation to change the situation and

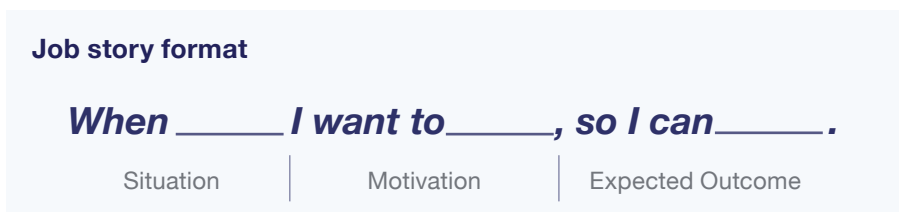


Figure 9
Job story format

Note. Adapted from "Replacing the User Story with the Job Story", by Klement. A, 2013, Retrieved from <https://jtbd.info/replacing-the-user-story-with-the-job-story-af7cdee10c27>

the expected outcome when a situation improves.

A job story is viewed as a qualitative approach (Keuken, 2017) to examine high-level jobs among both customers and crew. In this study, the specific job stories were created from insights which initially derived from the user research from the interviews.

I utilised this structure at the beginning of the case study to support an ideation process. For example, from an insight or several insights under a theme, I created sentences in the format of job stories. Rather than only customer job stories, I considered two types of job stories – those of customers and those of the crew – to explore different actions.

This format is beneficial because it establishes concrete contexts to imagine the given ‘situation’ and, thus, supports the reasoning of what the customer wants to achieve. Furthermore, the format specifies a particular situation rather than a type of user whose persona is subject to many assumptions (Klement, 2013). Hence, job stories remove this factor by the actions based on a situation. Moreover, the format guided stakeholders and decision-makers in imagining the situations by speaking out loud during the workshop and meeting.

Jobs to be Done Prioritisation

When using JTBD, job statements are prioritised on the basis of the outcome-driven innovation (ODI) method of Ulwick (2005).

The dimensions are as follows:

- Their degree of importance
- The level of customer satisfaction with existing solutions
- The general potential for developing new (or ideal) solutions
- The specific potential of the provider to create novel solutions that more fully meet outcome expectations

In the matrix (see Figure 10), the x-axis represents the importance of each strategic area, while the y-axis signifies the extent of satisfaction with an existing solution or service. There are three desired outcomes: over-served, under-served and served right. Over-served areas are ready for a disruptive innovation strategy, whereas under-served areas come to a head for a core growth innovation. When the cards are located between over-served and under-served areas and served right, then related JTBD should be the focus.

This project utilised the JTBD prioritisation matrix to prioritise the job stories in a quantitative approach (Keuken, 2017). The matrix was helpful for determining which job stories to examine as tactic opportunities. Therefore, the process of narrowing down the focal areas to create roadmaps was straightforward.

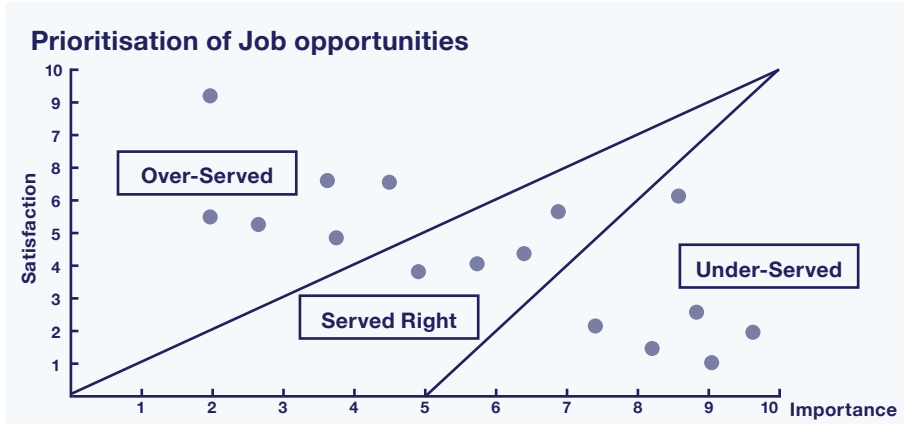


Figure 10
Prioritisation of
Job opportunities

Note. Adapted from "Technique-Jobs to be done" by Innovatorstoolkit.com, n.d. Retrieved from <http://innovatorstoolkit.com/content/technique-1-jobs-be-done> Copyright by BMGI

3.4.2 Workshop

As mentioned above, to discuss and prioritise the strategic areas, a workshop was held at the Korean Office and then at HQ. These events enabled me to seek collective opinions and feedback from the workshop participants.

The map in Table 4 summarises my overall approach to prioritising the strategic areas and generating the proposed roadmap. The original plan was that three workshops were arranged for the customer phase and crew phase. For the customer phase, I aimed to include managerial employees who are in charge of Korean customers as well as employees who manage and develop digital solutions and future strategies. For the crew phase, decision-makers or managers who are responsible for service delivery and strategy would join the workshop to achieve the objectives.

Phase	Purpose	How	Note
Customer	Represent the Korean market	Workshop	
	Represent HQ and digital solution	Workshop	
Crew	Represent strategy of crew services and implementation	Workshop	Changed to a meeting

Table 4
Workshop plan
(Source: author)

However, because of schedule limitations, the process followed an alternative approach. While the workshops at the Korean office and at HQ was performed as planned, the workshop for the crew phase was replaced by a meeting with an in-flight supervisor.

3.5 Research Process

3.5.1 Process Outline

The previous chapters (see e.g. Section 2.1) have illustrated that designing the passenger experience is complex, and its implementation is intensive. In this regard, various methods can be used depending on the subjects and corresponding objectives. Based on these methods mentioned previously, Figure 11 overviews the process below. The desk research was carried out as needed throughout the research period to understand the focused market and the background of the aviation industry while reading the literature and searching through statistical data.

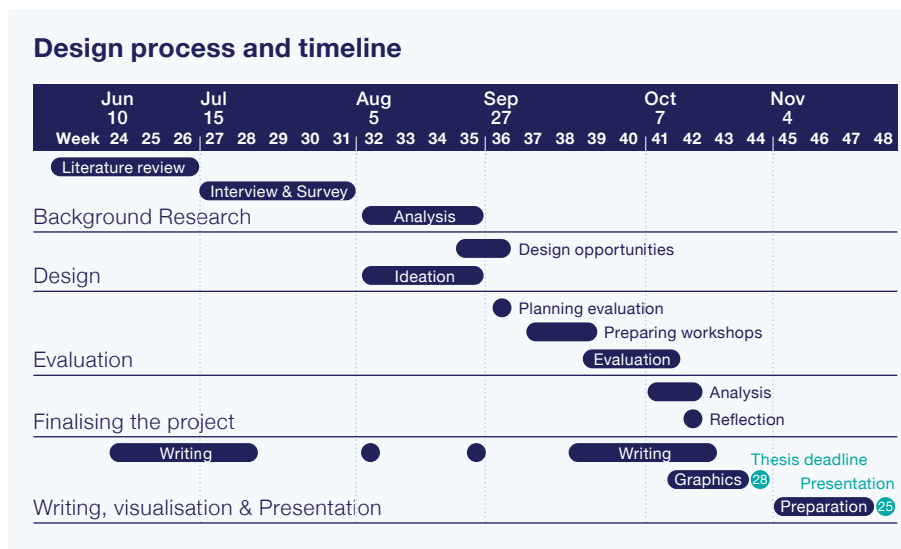


Figure 11
Design process and timeline
(Source: author)

User research was subsequently conducted through other methods. During this period, I visited Korea to observe Korean travellers and interview Korean employees who are the experts in the market. On the journeys to and from Korea, I performed in-flight observation to examine how the in-flight services were

delivered by the crew to the Korean passengers and from digital products that Finnair provides for Korean passengers. In addition, a few interviews with cabin crew were conducted, and further interviews were held over the course of one month.

The collected data were analysed and synthesised in several ways over the course of four weeks while conducting the last interviews. This step entailed identifying patterns to form sense-making insights. It included affinity diagramming, passenger journey mapping, and generating insights with chosen quotes under three major themes.

Finally, strategic areas were ideated according to the insights which were prioritised by the decision-makers and stakeholders. The original and ideal plan was to involve all relevant decision-makers; however, it was challenging to invite them all. Instead, certain aspects had to be adjusted to be feasible within the given timeframe.

In summary, by clarifying the culture of Finnair and behaviours of Korean travellers as part of the culture of Korean consumers, I highlight strategic suggestions for localisation services that Finnair can consider for implementation in the Korean market (see Figure 12). The strategic suggestions focus mainly on consideration of digital solutions and eventually improve the on-boarding passenger experience of Korean travellers.

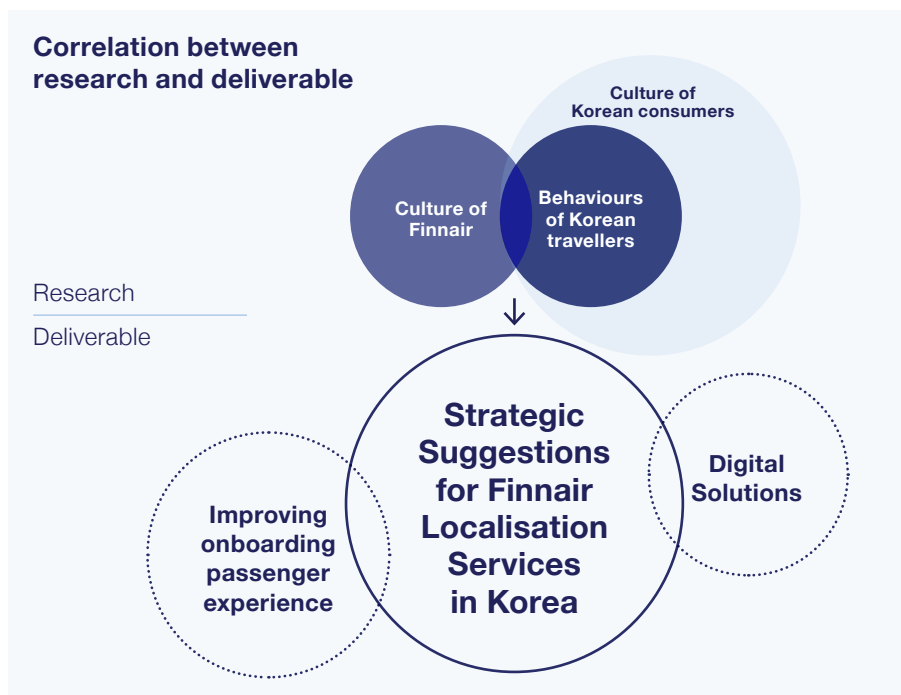


Figure 12
Diagram illustrating the correlation between the research and deliverable (Source: author)

3.5.2 Data Collection

Observations

I conducted observations for three days at ICN airport and in the flights to and from Korea. I aimed to identify general behaviours of Korean travellers in four contexts: when arriving at the airport, when checking in and dropping baggage at the desk, when boarding a Finnair flight and during the flight. The observation data were documented by drawing and describing notable actions and behaviours of the travellers.



Photos
Observation in the ICN airport (Source: author)

Expert Interviews

For this project, I defined two groups as experts who are most knowledgeable about the Korean passengers. The first is the Korean employees at the Korean office, who are in charge of booking, sales and customer service in the Korean market. The other group is the Korean regional cabin crew, who only fly between ICN and HEL based on Korea because they are local people who are specialised for the Korean market as well as Korean customers.

The purposes of the interviews were as follows:

- To understand the Korean crew point of view (POV) when delivering Nordic Experience to Korean passengers (for comparison to the Finnish crew POV)
- To clarify how Korean cabin crew perceive Korean customers differently from other foreign customers
- To explore how the Korean crew perceive 'Finnairness' (for comparison to the perceptions of the Finnish crew)
- To determine if they receive any frequently asked questions from KR passengers about Finnair digital channels during the flight

A. Korean Employees in Seoul

The interviews at the Korean office were semi-structured (see Appendix B). Three employees participated. To enhance my understanding of the current Korean market conditions, some additional internal data were shared. However, for confidentiality reasons, these data are not discussed in this thesis.

B. Korean Regional Cabin Crew

The interviews with Korean regional cabin crew were structured with follow-up questions. The participants were seven crew members with balanced levels of work experience. For the regional cabin crew, the participants were selected according to their year of entry into the company. Because recruitments have occurred only three times in Korea, very novice employees do not exist. Three participants were from the first generation, while two participants were from the second and third generations, respectively. Two interviews were conducted during the flight from ICN to HEL, three took place in person, and the other two were held via Skype. The average interview duration was one hour.



Photos

(Left) Interviewing Korean cabin crew members during the flight from ICN to HEL (Source: author)

(Right) Interviewing Korean employees in the Korea office (Source: author)

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were determined to analyse the viewpoints of other relevant people who could have an influence on passenger experiences. Interview participants consisted of ground staff at ICN airport, who are from an outsourcing company, four Finnish crew, one international crew member based in Finland and two Finnish in-flight supervisors who receive reports of flights between ICN and HEL as managers of the Korean regional crew.

A. The ICN Airport Ground Staff

The interview with the ground staff was brief and contextual, as their busy schedules limited them to 10 minutes. The objectives of the interview were to understand how the outsourced ground staff work for Finnair and to identify frequent complaints from customers.

B. Finnish Crew

To allow for a comparison with the perspective of the Korean regional crew, the Finnish crew were interviewed with questions that are similar to those that were used for the Korean crew members. Among the four interviews in total, two participants were cabin crew members (CCMs), and the other two were senior cabin crew (SCC) members.

C. Finnish In-flight Supervisors

The Finnish in-flight supervisors are in charge of the Korean cabin crew as well as the in-flight experience. The question list for their interviews was similar to the list that was used for the Finnish crew, though some additional questions were posed to address supervisory issues and their opinions about the current status and improvements.

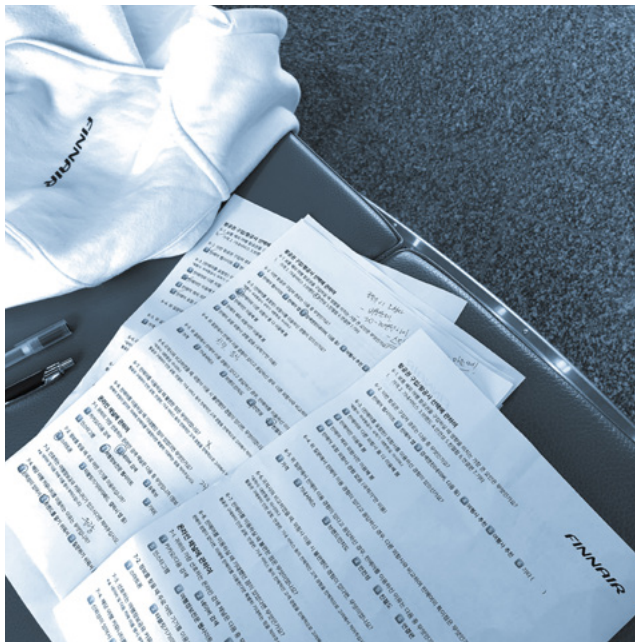
Traveller Survey

From July 11–16, 2019, the survey on Korean travellers was initially conducted at HEL airport in an online survey form on an iPad or in paper form for those who were not familiar with the digital device. The survey took an average of 10 to 15 minutes to complete. During the in-person airport survey, some travellers who had time available participated in contextual interviews that posed a few questions beyond those in the survey itself. Later, the online survey was distributed via an online link to Korean consumers who live in Korea.

Photos

(Left) Paper survey (Source: author)

(Right) Survey conducting at HEL airport to a group traveller (Source: author)



Survey questions were formulated according to the research objectives as follows:

1. Target and purchase behaviour

- What are the digital channels that Korean travellers prefer to use and why?
- Through what channel do they purchase air travel tickets for European countries, especially Nordic countries and Finland?

2. Choosing an airline

- What are the pain points when they use foreign airlines?
- What are the most important factors when it comes to booking flights?
- What do you think about connecting flights?

3. Experiences and expectations

- How do they think about travel in general, travel to Europe and Finland?
- What would they like to feel when they fly?

Additionally, one item was added only for Finnair customers:

- If they have flown with Finnair, what was challenging? How did you feel from booking to the end of using services from the company?

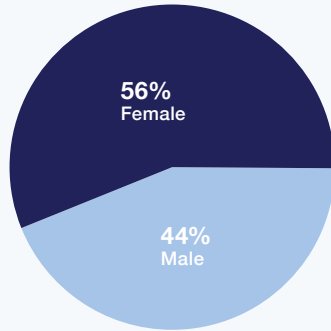
Summary of the Survey Participants (Figure 13)

- Most of the participants had never been to Finland before the trip (at the time of the survey).
- Participants who had visited more than twice lived in Finland or had family in Finland to visit.
- Approximately one-third of the travellers visited Finland as well as other Nordic or Baltic areas. Six of them were utilising a travel agency.

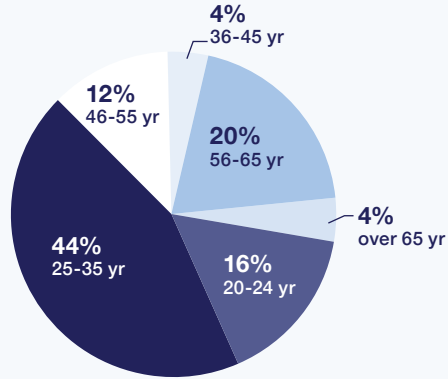
Sample of the survey participants detail

25 responses from Korean travellers

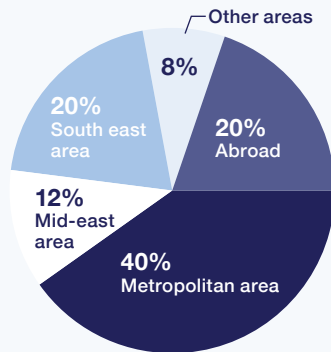
Gender rate of travellers



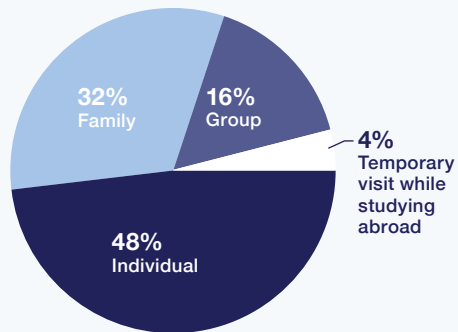
Age range of travellers



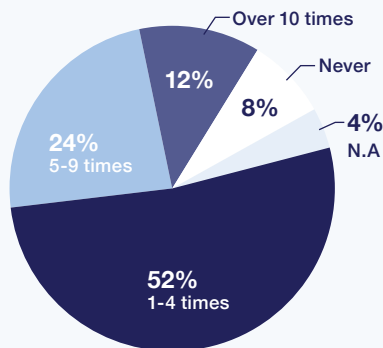
Residential area



Type of travellers



Frequency of Travels abroad between 2016-19



Frequency of visit to/layover in Finland

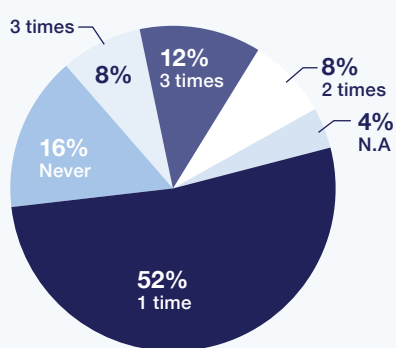


Figure 13
Sample of the survey participants detail
(Source: author)

Mystery Shopping

While searching for airline tickets through the main search engines and exploring travel agencies (Figure 14), I found that the information for group tourists was not sent sufficiently to promote Finnair as an airline. Furthermore, since the services are in charge of the agencies, the ancillary sales were mostly not visible until the group travellers would start their travel.



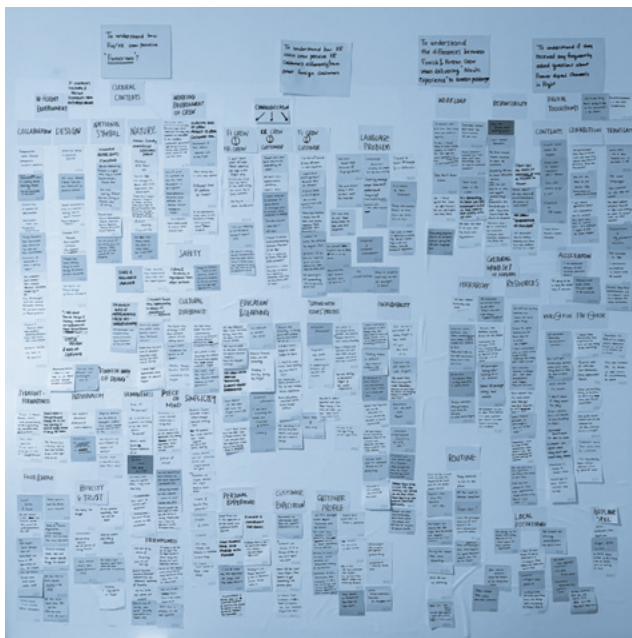
Figure 14 Screenshots of mystery shopping (Source: author)

3.5.3 Analysis and Synthesis

Affinity Diagramming

Since I conducted many interviews, the collected data were unstructured and chaotic. Therefore, I differentiated the data with different coloured post-its and by adding codes to my notes. The four colours were red, yellow, green and blue, which corresponded to pain points, quotes, findings and opportunities, respectively. In addition to this colour code, each type of interviewee was marked at the bottom-right side of each post-it to reference insightful sentences. The types were recorded as IS (in-flight supervisor), KE (Korean employees), KC (Korean crew), FC (Finnish crew) GS (ground staff at ICN airport) and KT (Korean travellers).

I first coded the data and then iterated the process of analysis by identifying a framework to use for descriptive analysis to define categories. I recorded vital or interesting notes from the interview scripts that were in line with interview objectives. In the case of groups that produced more data and quotes than the others, I subcategorised under the large groups. Some notes did not fit into any clustering; thus, I moved them for future reference as 'lone wolves' (Lucero, 2015).



Customer Journey Map

I developed this passenger journey map specifically to understand the journey of Korean travellers. The map illustrates steps according to the Korean travellers. Moreover, it presents the touchpoints that are provided by Finnair as well as those that some customers encountered through travel agencies. In addition, the traveller types are typically divided into two groups.

To contribute to a holistic understanding of the journey of Korean travellers, I attempted initial clustering on the passenger journey map (Figure 15). The quotes and findings from the user research are described in each card which aligns with the corresponding steps.

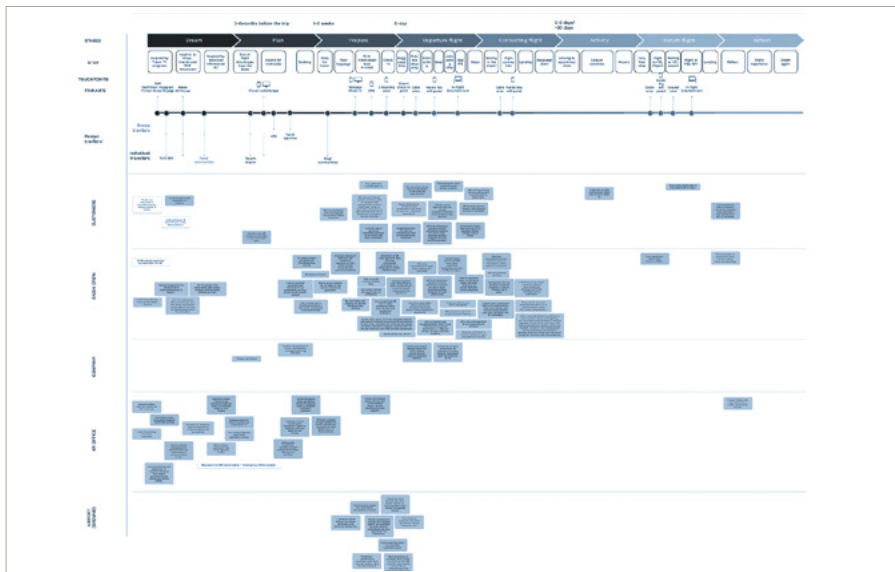


Figure 15
Passenger journey map of Korean travellers flying with Finnair (Source: author)

Documentation

After carrying out the clustering activity on the wall, I digitalised the clusters on a Trello board (Figure 16) to connect them and generate findings. While moving to the Trello board, I removed unnecessarily repetitive quotes and polished sentences to increase work efficiency and data clarity. Then, I compiled lists of the findings and insights, respectively, and I created sentences and tagged relevant cards under the categories into the sentences. Lastly, I used a label system in two ways: first, to identify cards that could support my research objectives; and second, to use the same colours of post-it labels to recognise the card types.

After the analysis activity, I formulated 21 insights (see Section 5.1) under three themes: Nordic identity, communication and learning, and accessibility and visibility (see Section 5.3).

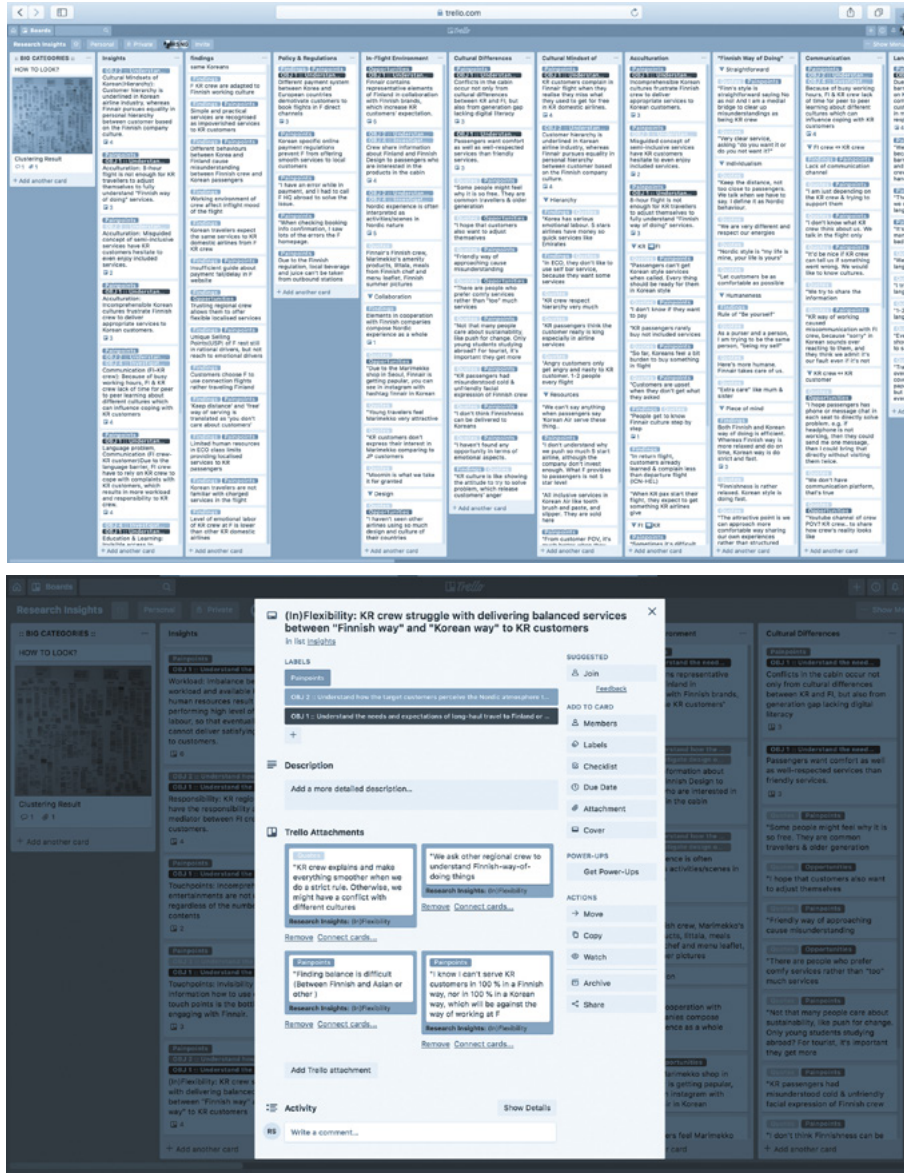


Figure 16
Using Trello as an analysis tool
(Source: author)

3.5.4 Ideation

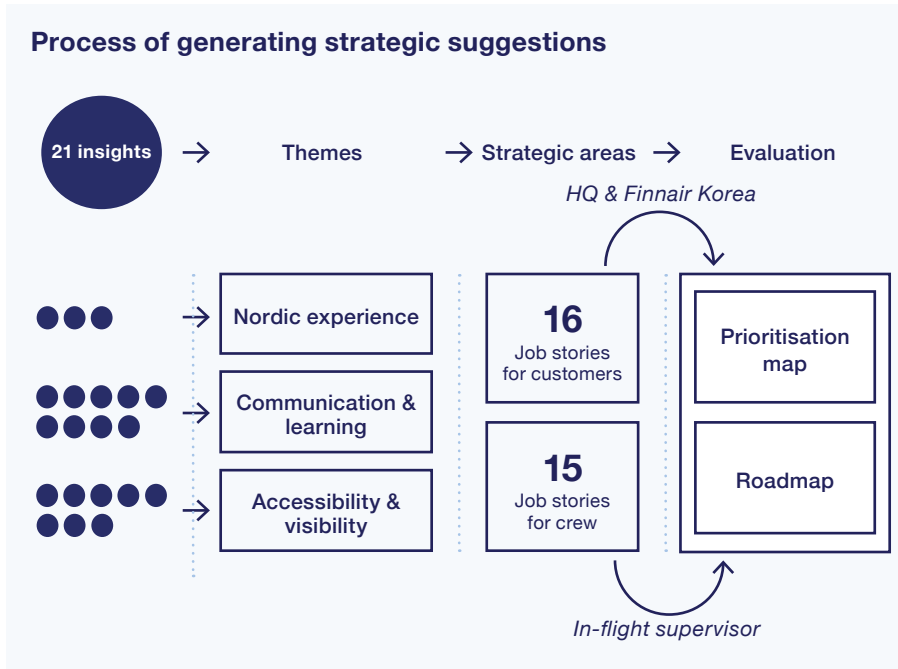


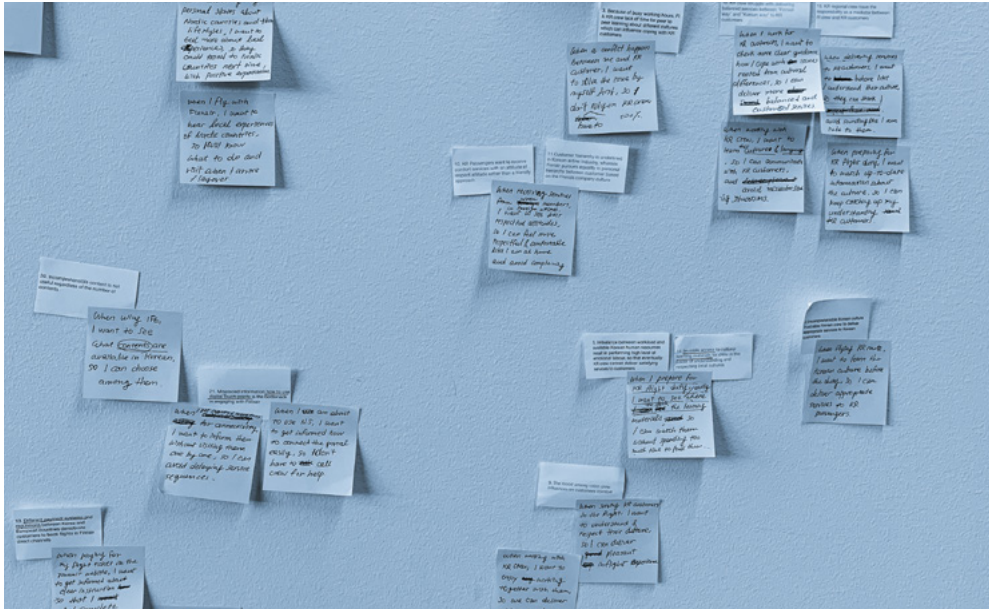
Figure 17
Process of generating the strategic suggestions (Source: author)

Creating Strategic Areas

Notably, the job stories were mainly divided into two types: those about the job of the customer as the passenger and those about crew jobs (see table 5). I explored crew jobs in addition to the customer side because the crew, through close interaction, fulfils a main role in enabling passengers to experience their travel journey. The findings under the theme of communication and learning reveal opportunities mainly for internal development. Hence, crew jobs are those of enablers.

Job stories	Purpose
For customers as passengers	To help KR customers directly improve the Finnair passenger experience
For crew as enablers	To enable them to help KR customers to improve the on-boarding passenger experience

Table 5
Two different types of Job stories (Source: author)



Photos
Job statement creation related to the insights
(Source: author)

I created the job stories on the basis of one insight, several insights or a whole theme, depending on relations and contexts. The job stories represent strategic areas which enable decision-makers to consider relevant tasks, potential stakeholders and business goals. In strategic areas, it is crucial for the company to include or consider the local culture as part of their services in order to reach their business goals.

Prioritising Strategic Areas

According to the method of Ulwick (2000), I modified the factors and utilised them to prioritise the strategic areas with Finnair employees:

- Degree of importance for the company to consider development
- Degree of satisfaction of the company with existing solutions
- Consideration of solutions that I created as examples

I created job story cards (see Appendix C) for customers and crew. These cards contain job stories, the corresponding theme, the type of the group and the relevant insights. The strategic areas were prioritised internally by the managerial level of employees. Furthermore, the participants were able to envision the customer or crew perspective.



To evaluate the tactical areas of customer jobs, I held two workshops in the Korean office and in HQ. The Korean employees were specialised in sales, customer service, marketing and digital development, and general management of the Korean market. The participants at HQ were the supervisory manager in Digital Solution department and Head of digital platform. The insights (see Section 5.1) facilitated communication among the employees. After sharing the insights, the participants prioritised and generated a roadmap before commenting on the business goals of each card and possible stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the in-flight supervisor evaluated the strategic areas of crew jobs. She was responsible for the Korean crew as well as the in-flight service experience. The insights were shared before prioritising the areas in the same way as in the workshop at the Korean office.



Photos

(Top) Meeting managerial employees to share insights and evaluate activity
(Source: author)

(Bottom) Workshop in the Korean office
(Source: author)

Chapter 4

CASE STUDY OF FINNAIR: LOCALISING THE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE INTO THE KOREAN MARKET

This thesis conducts a case study of the Finnish domestic airline company Finnair. The research on this case was conducted in collaboration with the company to contribute insights and corresponding strategic suggestions. Information about the background of the company and its current position in the Korean market is offered to readers to clarify the initial project context.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, Section 4.1 provides background information about Finnair, including the vision and strategy of the company and its aims for the future. Section 4.2 then elaborates on how the airline company has shifted its approach towards a passenger-centric approach by way of the digital solution and customer research. Next, Section 4.3 details the position of South Korea at Finnair by introducing its economic growth, the implemented localisation services and differences in viewpoints between Finnair and the Korean market.

4.1 Company Vision and Strategies

Finnair is the flag carrier of Finland, and its headquarters is located in the capital area on the grounds of Helsinki-Vantaa (HEL) Airport. The company is known as one of the oldest and safest airlines that operate in the world since 1923 (Finnair, n.d). In addition, it has been a member of IATA since 1949.

The vision of the company is to deliver a unique experience of the Nordic atmosphere to its passengers by offering smooth and fast connections (Finnair, 2019). The company has been rated as a four-star carrier by Skytrax (n.d), which is an in-flight

“The cornerstone of Finnair’s growth strategy is Finnair’s competitive geographical advantage, which enables the fastest connections in the growing market of air traffic between Asia and Europe (Finnair, 2019) ”

research service provider. Finnair aims to almost double its 2016 revenues by 2020 in the short term and service 20 million passengers in 2030 in the long term.

The airline provides a value creation canvas to clarify its value for differently engaged people, such as shareholders and stakeholders, customers and employees. Moreover, an environmental aspect is concerned. Thus,

this canvas contains the main factors of process effectiveness and management capability, which equip the company to develop further and manage possible risks.

Today, Asia is the strategic focal area of the company (Finnair, 2019). The company is valuable from a geographical perspective, as it can provide the fastest connection between Asia and Europe. In addition, the company has defined ‘the shift in economic and political power to Asia’ as one of its megatrends (Table 6). Specifically, this megatrend highlights that Asian markets have an impact on the industry. The significance of the Asian market is also evident from its revenue (Table 7). Most of the revenue derives from the sale of airline tickets to consumers. According to a ticker and

Table 6 Operating environment - megatrend

Megatrend	Impact on the industry and Finnair	Our response
The shift in economic and political power to Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic between Asia and Europe grows Intense competition continues Increased importance of understanding Asian market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewal of the new generation long-haul fleet from 2015 onwards New Asian destinations, additional flights Increasing Finnair's understanding of Asian markets Good stakeholder relations Fastest route between Asia and Europe
Urbanisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New markets are created Intensifying competition 	
Technological development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing significance of online services and network connections New opportunities for serving customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing online services Developing inflight entertainment systems Developing the service experience Unique Nordic customer experience
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in regulation and reporting requirements Increasing significance of open communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability is an integral part of the company's strategy More environmentally friendly and efficient fleet and operations Monitoring the supply chain and collaboration in sustainability issues Ensuring equality, accessibility and human rights in processes and product development Participating in joint sustainability projects in the industry Developing our reporting and stakeholder communications related to responsibility,

Note. Adapted from "Finnair Operating Environment", by Finnair, 2018, Retrieved from <https://investors.finnair.com/en/finnair-as-an-investment/operating-environment>, Copyright 2019 Finnair

Table 7 Ticket revenue and traffic data by area in 2018

Traffic area	Ticket revenue		ASK		RPK		PLF	
	EUR mill	Change %	Mill. km	Change %	Mill.km	Change %	Mill.km	Change %
Asia	999.3	13.3	21,052.1	14.7	17,999.6	13.1	85.5	-1.2
North Atlantic	137.5	15.7	3,135.6	13.0	2,626.3	13.6	83.8	0.5
Europe	898.1	7.0	16,297.8	15.2	12,804.9	12.1	78.6	-2.1
Domestic	178.0	2.3	1,900.2	15.0	1,229.5	11.2	64.7	-2.7
Unallocated	31.4	>200						
Total	2,244.3	11.1	42,385.8	14.8	34,660.4	12.7	81.8	-1.5

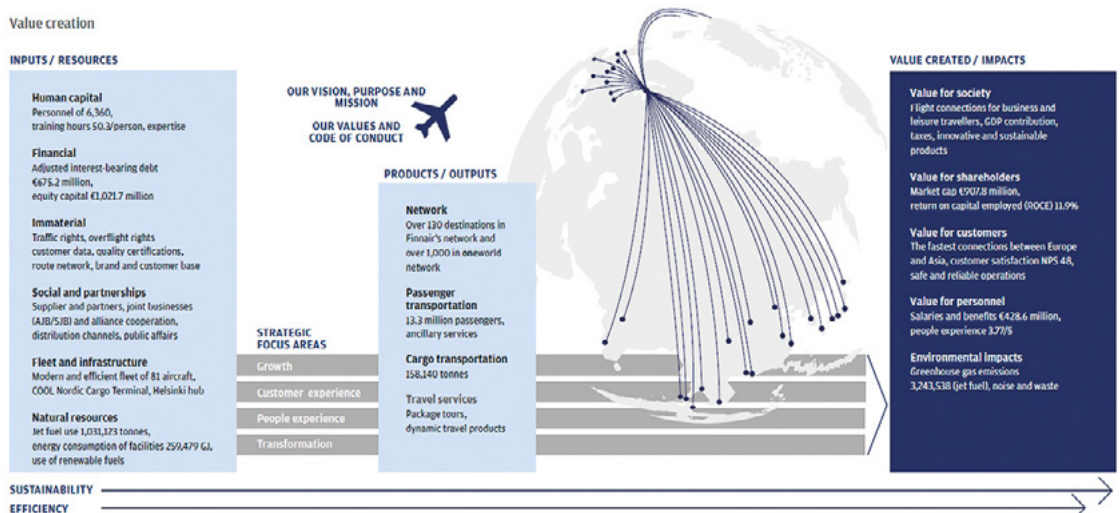
Note. Adapted from "Finnair Business Model", by Finnair, 2019, Retrieved from <https://investors.finnair.com/en/finnair-as-an-investment/business-model>, Copyright 2019 Finnair

traffic data by area on the Finnair website (2019), revenue from Asian traffic ranked at the top and accounted for 45% of the gross passenger revenue of the company.

Given the growth in the number of Asian travellers in 2018, the interest in Asian markets is likely to intensify. For example, the Visit Finland Survey from 2017 indicated an increasing number of Asian travellers to Finland. A total of 432,000 trips were made by Chinese, while Japanese and South Koreans registered 187,000 and 139,000 trips, respectively. In addition, 209,000 trips were reported from other Asian countries. In sum, 8.3 million trips were made to Finland. These figures reflect a significant increase compared to the figures from 2016 (Business Finland & Visit Finland, 2018).

In view of the steady increase in Asian tourists, Finnair has started to focus more heavily on Asian countries. In general, the tourists are interested in Northern European countries, or they visit HEL on a stopover for brief sightseeing while travelling to other European regions. The industry is seasonally affected by weather and holidays; nevertheless, in any case, the sales gap is significant between promotional periods that offer bargain prices and standard prices. This aspect seems to be investigated to attract regular customers.

Figure 18 Value creation canvas of Finnair (Finnair, 2019)



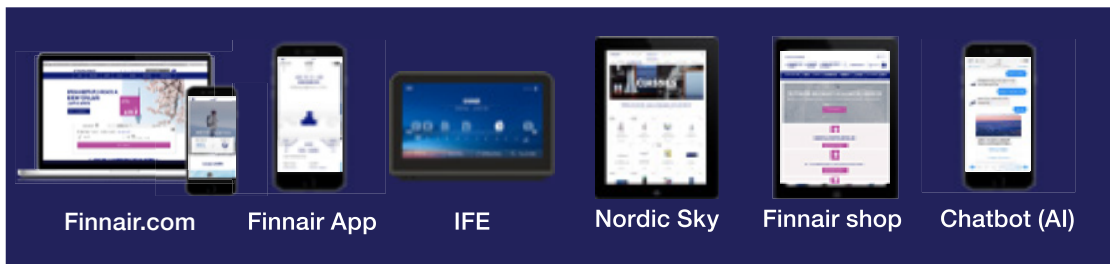
Note. Adapted from "Finnair Business Model", by Finnair, 2019, Retrieved from <https://investors.finnair.com/en/finair-as-an-investment/business-model>, Copyright 2019 Finnair

4.2 Transition to a Passenger-centric Approach

4.2.1 Digital Solutions and Touchpoints

Finnair expends great effort to integrate digital solutions to satisfy dynamic changes in customer expectations and to launch them into the market (Pöyhönen, n.d.). The company focuses on creating a seamless customer journey by mapping out the user experience and developing various customer services at the airport, in the flight, and through mobile and social media channels (Finnair, 2018). To provide digital solutions, digital touchpoints have been set up (see Figure 19).

Figure 19
Digital touchpoints provided by Finnair



Of the six touchpoints, four concern the on-boarding passenger experience through digital channels: the Finnair website, the mobile app, the IFE system and the Nordic Sky wi-fi portal (see Figure 20).

Two channels of the digital touchpoints are relevant before the travel: the Finnair website and the application. The objective of the Finnair website is to help customers book, manage and check into their flights. Furthermore, it contains useful details about their trips, such as baggage, seating, and food and beverage information. With the Finnair app, customers can manage their bookings along with additional ancillaries to pre-order meals, upgrade their seat, add extra baggage and check their journey with Finnair.

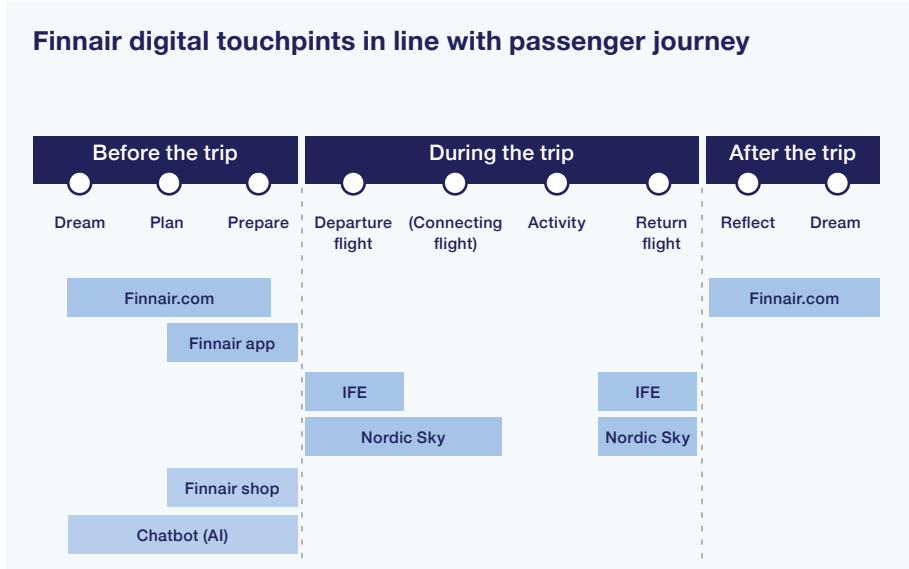


Figure 20
 Finnair digital touchpoints in line with the passenger journey (Source: author)

Meanwhile, the IFE system and the Nordic Sky wi-fi portal are the in-flight touchpoints that passengers can use in the cabins. The IFE system is located in the seatback in the wide body (WB) fleet for long-haul travel. With this system, passengers can not only enjoy diverse entertainment, movies, music, shopping catalogues, a route map and a flight camera view but also order food and beverages and interact with cabin crew through the IFE interface. The customers have free access to the Nordic Sky wi-fi portal, which is installed on both WB and NB fleets. In the portal, complimentary services include reading, destination information and a Finnair duty-free pre-order catalogue. In addition to the portal, two Internet packages are available for streaming and browsing, respectively, as pay-to-go purchases depending on speed and price.

In short, the profits of the products of Finnair are related to the digital touchpoint channels. Further developments of Finnair, which should be in line with the customer-centric approach and focus on new technology, appear to enhance customer satisfaction as well as relationships with customers. In addition, according to Katri, the Chief Digital Officer at Finnair, the company pursues competitive digital services through the digital journey to derive future digital solutions.

4.2.2 Customer Satisfaction Measurement

Finnair regularly conducts customer research in several ways as well as by direct demand of customers. The airline uses investigation agencies and industry-specific organisations to understand the current status from various perspectives. By internally and externally carrying out both quantitative and qualitative research, the company measures customer satisfaction, the digital experience and brand image, investigates benchmarking cases and engages in co-creation with customers.

4.3 Challenges of Finnair in Targeting the Korean Market

4.3.1 Expanding Finnair in Korea

As one of the Asian destinations of Finnair, South Korea has had a steadily growing market since 2008. Over 11 years of flights between ICN and HEL, there has been notable progress in the market, as evident from the 450% increase in overall sales, the heightened capability of available seats, the daily basis of operations and the rising number of regional crew. Meanwhile, the fleet has changed to the newest model A350XWB in 2016. Fleet upgrades increase the passenger capacity and the ability to provide a modern IFE system. Six years after appointing a Korean manager in 2012, Finnair opened their office in Seoul and have increased in size.

By promoting unique selling points (USPs) that are created by the company, Finnair Korea has attempted to publicise its benefits, which include the shortest route distance between Asia and Europe, the convenience and efficiency of the HEL airport, the stability and reliability of the best level, the latest fleet of A350XWB and customised services for domestic passengers.

Recent turmoil during that time, which included the global financial crisis in 2008, the avian influenza outbreak in 2009 and the terror attacks in Paris in 2015, is considered to have impacted the global airline industry as a whole. Specifically, such events triggered fear of flying and avoidance of travel to specific geographical areas (Tolpa, 2012). In addition, certain domestic epidemics and disasters that affected the mood of the country have contributed to the diminishing travel abroad. Examples include MERS in 2012 and the sinking of the Sewol ferry in 2014.

In the near future, Finnair plans to launch another route in Busan (PUS), the second-largest city in South Korea. This flight will be the only direct flight to a European country, which represents a significant opportunity for regional passengers to travel more easily to Finland and other European destinations.

4.3.2. Localisation for Customers

Because of the increasing number of tourists in Finland and Europe in general, Finnair and their HEL airport hub have tried to provide localisation services to Asian customers, including Korean travellers. For example, the airport provides information signs in the Korean language alongside Chinese, Japanese and Russian translations. Furthermore, Korean passports qualify for smart entry service (SES) at the passport control of HEL airport.

Finnair has developed their services as well. For example, regarding in-flight services, the company has collaborated with a renowned Korean chef to prepare local food for Korean customers. In addition, the IFE system offers a Korean language option and content with Korean subtitles. When passengers transfer to destinations outside of Finland, the airline ensures fast connections for Korean travellers. Additionally, as part of the Oneworld alliance, which contains none of the major Korean airlines, the company was challenged by the lack of Finnair memberships among Korean customers. However, it overcame this difficulty by exchanging Finnair plus points for a gift card which could be freely used at a department store in Korea.

Departure	City	Major Operation Airlines
The Neterland	Amsterdam	KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Korean Air
Germany	Frankfurt	Asiana Airlines, Korean Air, Lufthansa
	Munich	Lufthansa
Turkey	Istanbul	Turkish Airlines, Asiana Airlines, Korean Air
The United Kingdom	London/Heathrow	British Airways, Korean Air, Asiana Airlines
Spain	Madrid	Korean Air, UX
	Barcelona	Korean Air, Asiana Airlines
France	Paris	AF, Korean Air, Asiana Airlines
The Czech Republic	Prague	Korean Air, Czech Airlines
Italy	Rome	Asiana Airlines, Alitalia, Korean Air
	Milano	Korean Air, Alitalia
Austria	Vienna	Korean Air
Switzerland	Zurich	Korean Air
Finland	Helsinki	Finnair

Table 8
Air service between Korea and European countries
(Source: author)

Information based on 12.2018

4.3.3 Position of Finnair in the Korean market

Korean travellers prefer to fly with Korean domestic airlines because they are more familiar with Korean services and the hospitality of the Korean FSCs, namely Korean Air (KE) and Asiana Airlines (OZ) (Ha, 2010). In this regard, many foreign airlines are perceived as less competitive than Korean airlines. The following two figures demonstrate the different viewpoints between Finnair HQ and Korean travellers.

First, Figure 21 indicates the Finnair HQ perspective of the market considering other European FSCs. In the Korean market, Finnair appears to compete with the foreign airlines that fly between Europe and Korea, which are mostly European FSCs or Asian FSCs that offer connecting flights to European destinations. Variables can be destinations of travellers and holiday seasons. Finnair is the only foreign airline among their competitors that flies directly from Korea to Finland (see Table 8). Thus, it seems beneficial for some Korean travellers to travel to nearby regions.

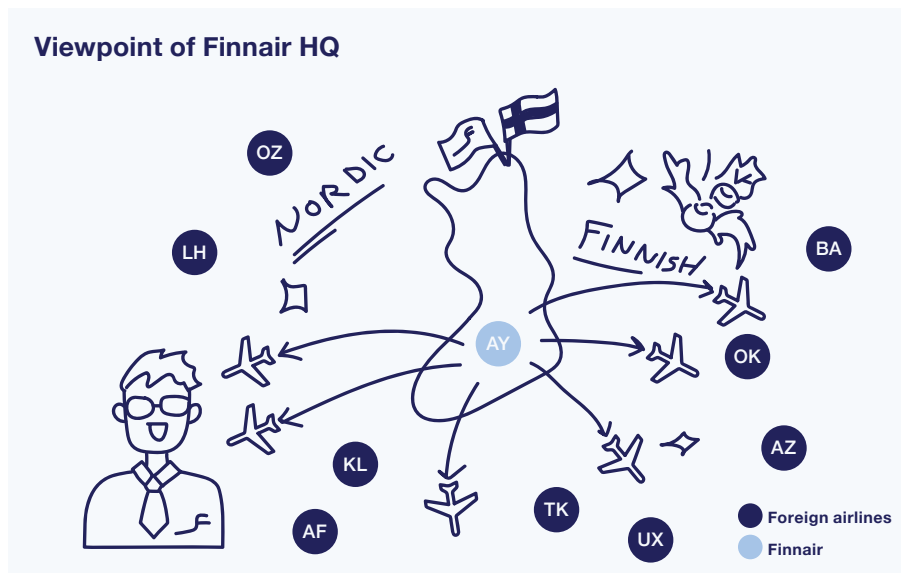


Figure 21
Viewpoint of Finnair HQ
(Source: author)

Second, Figure 22 represents the Korean traveller point of view, which takes into account the Korean domestic FSCs in addition to the aforementioned airlines. Evidently, Korean airlines dominate the Korean travel market because both airlines fly to several European destinations, and they spend their budgets on advertisements in diverse media. Moreover, most Korean travellers visit other European areas more often than Northern European areas, which suggests that they feel more familiar with their domestic airlines. The domestic airlines do operate holiday carriers to Finland during the summertime, so competition is likely to become fierce during that season.

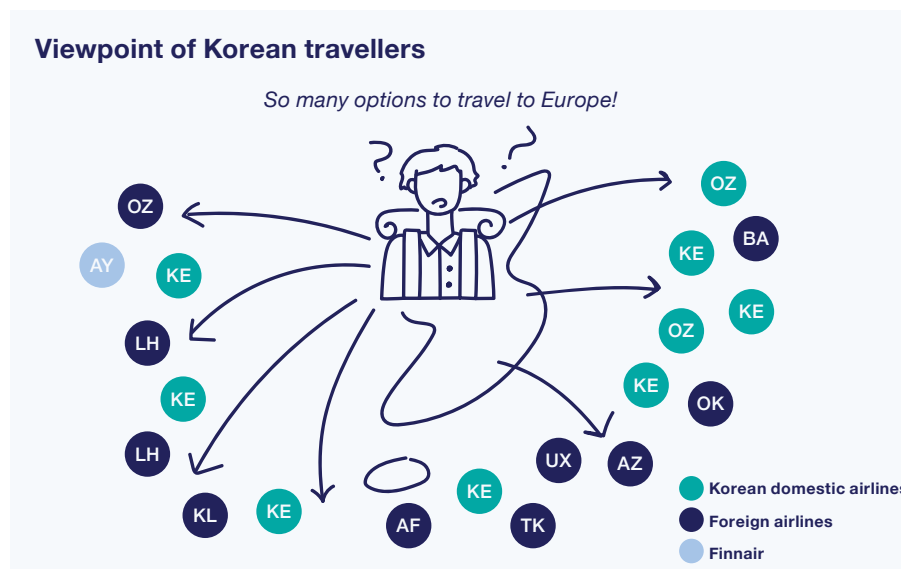


Figure 22
Viewpoint of Korean Travellers
(Source: author)

In conclusion, as an airline brand, Finnair is veiled by Korean domestic airlines and certain European airlines with which travellers commonly transfer or travel to, for example, Frankfurt or London. Thus, Korean travellers are not aware of Finnair.

Chapter 5

INSIGHTS & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

From this chapter, I propose the insights and strategic recommendations for Finnair to consider the localising customer experience aiming at the Korean Market. In the beginning of chapter, the first section (Section 5.1) introduces 21 insights from the research. Customer typology is shown dividing into two groups of Korean passengers (Section 5.2). Considering these two factors, created opportunity areas and strategic areas are shared with the form of Job stories which are formed based on JTBD techniques (Section 5.3). The results of the prioritised areas are shown, which were done by stakeholders and decision-makers (Section 5.4). Furthermore, some of prioritised areas which are moved from the strategic opportunity prioritisation. The results are also discussed (Section 5.5). Based on the results, I propose six strategic areas for localised passenger experience and business goals based on the passenger journey as a deliverable (Section 5.6).

5.1 Insights

There are in total 21 insight that are gained from the conducted research. These contain the insights sentences with descriptions and relevant quotes that brought me to come up each insight. Note that every quote contains abbreviations standing for the interviewees who mentioned so:



Figure 23
Interviewees
(Source: author)

#INSIGHT 1. FINNAIR CONTAINS REPRESENTATIVE ELEMENTS OF FINLAND IN COLLABORATION WITH FINNISH BRANDS, WHICH INCREASE KR CUSTOMERS' EXPECTATION

Both the Finnish crew and Korean regional crew argue that Finnair represents Finland. Thus, collaboration with Finnish brands is essential because Korean travellers show their interests. Meanwhile, they concerned that if Korean travellers like the newly branded amenity kit since the majority of bisness travellers (average eight among 12 seats) nowadays leave the kit, comparing to the old kit. For example, Japanese travellers prefer especially Unikko pattern.



#INSIGHT 2. NORDIC EXPERIENCE IS OFTEN INTERPRETED AS ACTIVITIES/ SCENES IN FINNISH NATURE

When asked what would be like Nordic experience, which is highlighted in Finnair, especially Finnish crew tended to say Finnish experiences based on their daily lives surrounding nature, whereas Korean crew illustrated more about Finnish Design and working environment of Finland compared to that of Korea. However, Nordic experiences by crew do not include the whole experiences of Nordic regions rather represent only Finnish experiences. Nordic experiences in Finnair seem not defined coherently but come from personal experiences.


KC

"I would say 'Aurora' feeling"

"We have pure fresh air"

"Finnish crew, Marimekko's amenity products, Iittala, meals from Finnish chef and menu leaflet, Finnish summer pictures"


IS

"Nordic Design, Nordic nature, something very unique"

"Summertime is really important. We go to the forest, we have every man's right to pick up blueberries, some mushrooms and even fishing in the sea and in the lakes"


FC

#INSIGHT 3. CABIN CREW SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT FINLAND AND FINNISH DESIGN TO PASSENGERS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE PRODUCTS IN THE CABIN

Travellers like to experience Finland itself as they are significantly influenced by social media, TV programs and advertising, and nowadays many of Finnish culture and people are introduced in Korean society. When they get on board, since the inflight atmosphere is unique and has Finnish elements, people are curious about the items as well as Finland.

Some travellers have a short stopover in Finland, and they sometimes ask Korean crew for tourist spots or local spots. Then, the Korean crew share their personal experiences and knowledge about Finland.

Also, Korean consumers value brand names. Since Finland itself generally gives positive images to them, their expectation toward Finnair is naturally increasing.



KC

“Passengers ask Finland very much and like to experience sauna, design and so on”

“I told a couple my last experience at Löyly and they really liked it”

“I talk about Finnish Design and history whenever our customers ask about design and products in the flight”


“Small conversations with our customers telling stories about Finland. e.g. Finnish Designers and brands...”



FC

#INSIGHT 4. THE MOOD AMONG CABIN CREW INFLUENCES CUSTOMERS COMFORT

Comparing to working cultures of crew in Asian airlines, Finnair working cultures have a flat hierarchy. Rather than a strict and unified atmosphere, the comfortable and friendly mood among crew can contribute to a positive cabin experience. Korean crew mostly have working experiences in Korean Air or other Asian airlines such as Emirates and Qatar Airways, and they said Finnair has an unconstrained and comfortable atmosphere. In this way, Korean travellers can sometimes feel Nordic through equal working environment among cabin crew members and purser.




KC

“Comfortable environment without having hierarchy among crew members in which customers also feel comfortable”


“Presence of Finnish crew in the cabin shows Finnishness as well”

“Atmosphere in the plane and our attitude can deliver Finnair atmosphere”

“Different kinds of Finnair uniforms also show freedom”



FC



KT

“Their uniform looks very clean comparing other airlines”

#INSIGHT 5. KR PASSENGERS WANT TO RECEIVE COMFORT SERVICES WITH AN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT RATHER THAN A FRIENDLY APPROACH

When it comes to friendliness, Finnair educates crew members to approach to customers in a friendly manner; However, KR customers still complain about unfriendliness.

This shows a standard level of friendliness is differently translated between two countries. KR passengers like to have comfort, which is different from friendly services, whereas the Finnish crew tend to combine comfort and friendliness as a whole service mindset. However, what Korean passengers like is to have comfort services with a respectful attitude. For Korean, friendliness is sometimes translated into ignoring hierarchy.



“KR passengers had misunderstood cold and unfriendly facial expression of Finnish crew”

“Friendly way of approaching cause misunderstanding”

“There are people who prefer comfy services rather than ‘too’ much services”


#INSIGHT 6. CUSTOMER HIERARCHY IS UNDERLINED IN KOREAN AIRLINE INDUSTRY, WHEREAS FINNAIR PURSUES EQUALITY IN PERSONAL HIERARCHY BETWEEN CUSTOMER BASED ON THE FINNISH COMPANY CULTURE

The concept of service provision is more highlighted than safety in the Korean airline industry; thus, Korean passengers are likely to see flight attendants only as service providers like a waiter in a restaurant.

On the other hand, for Finnair, safety is the top aspect that crew must prioritise. Especially, many Korean crews pointed out that Finnair has given priority to passengers and crew themselves safety than other airlines, such as Korean Air, Emirates and Qantas. For example, when any turbulence happens, Finnair crew immediately stop services and fasten their seat belt, while other airlines keep serving until the situation get worse. Besides, equality in Finnish working environment is very much highlighted.

The conflicts from different cultures and mindset cause problems between Korean crew and Korean customers as well as Finnish crew and Korean customers. Since the Korean crew should behave the Finnish way as part of the Finnish airline

company, but they also know what Korean customers expect them to do. Finnish crew frequently flying to Korea understand what to do but still struggle with issues when conflicts happen.




IS

“Finnish way of serving means low hierarchy, easily approachable and honest”

“KR passengers think the customer really is king especially in airline services”

“In ECO, they don’t like to use self-bar service, because they want some services from human”


“Korea is notorious for severe emotional labour, which is similar to the way in five-stars airlines, I mean quick and luxurious services like Emirates.”



KC

#INSIGHT 7. BECAUSE OF BUSY WORKING HOURS, FI & KR CREW LACK OF TIME FOR PEER TO PEER LEARNING ABOUT DIFFERENT CULTURES WHICH CAN INFLUENCE COPING WITH KR CUSTOMERS

Inflight supervisors expect crew members to learn about different cultures one another while flying. In reality, it is not likely happened because all crew members are busy in the flight doing their duty and only talking about work but about cultures, or even do not have time to get closer. While the Finnish crew have a day of layover in Korea, Korean crew have to go home because most of them have a family to take care and they are tired because of jet-leg after the trip. Also, they do not have a platform to share their cultures that other crew members could learn about. Finnish crew are willing to learn about cultures to be better in the next flights.




FC

“I want to solve the problem by myself first”

“It’d be nice if KR crew can tell us if something went wrong. We would like to know cultures.”

“We email for work related things. I don’t think they use yammer that much.”

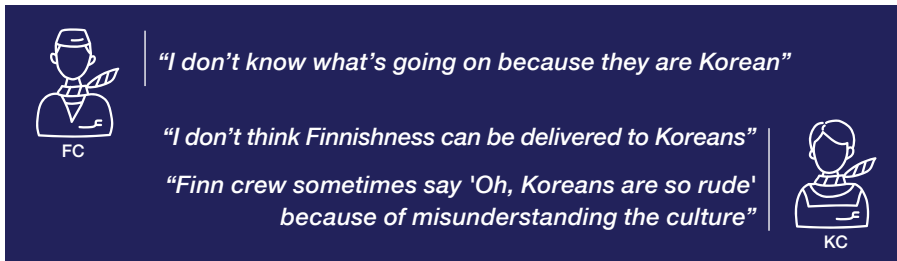


IS

#INSIGHT 8. INCOMPREHENSIBLE KOREAN CULTURE FRUSTRATES FINNISH CREW TO DELIVER APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO KOREAN CUSTOMERS

Finnish crew do not understand Korean culture. From my observation, the services that provide to Korean customers are less competent than to English speakers. Also, due to the language barrier, the Finnish crew do not cope with complicated issues and complaints that happened between them and Korean customers. They always deliver the issues to the Korean crew. For example, if some misunderstanding happens because of cold expression, Korean crew go and make an excuse because of the behaviours of the Finnish crew, explaining what the misunderstanding was and different cultures were.

From the interviews, some older generations of Finnish crew are not willing to change their mindset, while young ages learn fast and approach easily but lack of experience since they only fly the same route 2-3 times per year.



"I don't know what's going on because they are Korean"

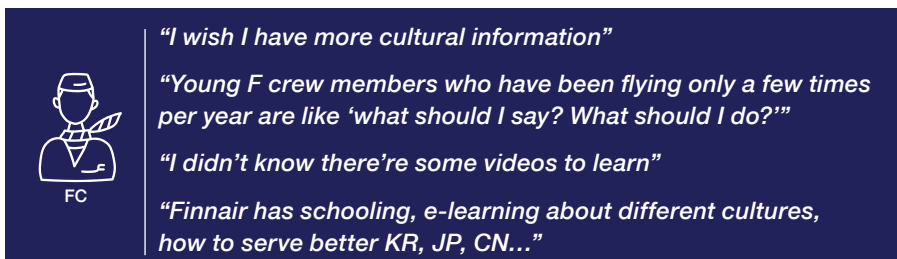
"I don't think Finnishness can be delivered to Koreans"

"Finn crew sometimes say 'Oh, Koreans are so rude' because of misunderstanding the culture"

#INSIGHT 9: INVISIBLE ACCESS TO CULTURAL LEARNING MATERIALS FOR CREW IS THE CAUSE OF UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECTING LOCAL CULTURES

Even though there are some introduction videos and materials about different Asian cultures, some Finnish crew members are not aware of them. Also, the videos have only one episode per country from an experienced cabin crew; it seems not to arouse their interest to watch all of them, despite useful information.

Given that the iPhones that have been rolled out to crew are a good opportunity to spread educational materials and to make them widely available.



"I wish I have more cultural information"


"Young F crew members who have been flying only a few times per year are like 'what should I say? What should I do?'"

"I didn't know there're some videos to learn"

"Finnair has schooling, e-learning about different cultures, how to serve better KR, JP, CN..."

#INSIGHT 10. DUE TO THE LANGUAGE BARRIER, FI CREW HAVE TO RELY ON KR CREW TO COPE WITH COMPLAINTS WITH KR CUSTOMERS, WHICH RESULTS IN MORE WORKLOAD AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KR CREW

Finnish crew have difficulty to communicate with Korean passengers. Also, if complicated issues occur, they have to entirely rely on the Korean crew to resolve them, although they would like to solve the problem by themselves. This can frustrate the Finnish crew as well as increase workload of the Korean crew.



"It's not nice to ask them many times to cope with bad situations"

"After bad situations, I heard from KR crew what really happened. That's sometimes very frustrating to me"

"I'd like to be involved and help KR crew in bad situations"

"We miss small talk because of language barrier, usually old people and tourist group. So, KR crew members are handling them"

#INSIGHT 11. KR REGIONAL CREW HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY AS A MEDIATOR BETWEEN FI CREW AND KR CUSTOMERS

Because of a language barrier between Finnish crew and Korean passengers, Korean crew feel responsible to take care of all the Korean passengers. Also, Korean passengers feel more comfortable and empathy as the same Korean when they encounter KR cabin crew, which also makes KR crew feel a sense of accomplishment. However, some KR crew expressed difficulty when they firstly entered the company because materials for regional crew lack in general. For example, during announcements, some feel confused because they are not familiar with the specific terms in Korean, even though they are native and experienced in Foreign airlines.



"KR customers like KR crew working here"

"Purser expect KR crew behave and understand and serve KR culture as local people"


"KR crew are 'ambassadors of Finland'"

"Everything required should be accepted without going through KR crew language wise"



#INSIGHT 12. IMBALANCE BETWEEN WORKLOAD AND AVAILABLE KOREAN HUMAN RESOURCES RESULT IN PERFORMING HIGH LEVEL OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR, SO THAT EVENTUALLY KR CREW CANNOT DELIVER SATISFYING SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

The flight, between ICN and HEL, is served by 3 Korean regional crew and 7 Finnish cabin crew including purser. While, the workload of KR crew is more than FI crew, and workload of KR crew in ECO is more than in BIZ, and complaints come more from ECO. Especially when resolving issues with Korean passengers, it all comes to the Korean crew as being a native speaker. Since Korean crew know what Korean customers expect from them, they go through emotional labour while heavily serving in the Korean way.




“Sometimes purser don’t know how much workload KR crew have”

“I wish more local crew in the cabin”


“Everything required should be accepted without going through KR crew language wise”

“In ECO, I should serve at least 150 people whereas 10-12 people in BIZ. ECO Pax ask many questions and requests at once. Thus, not 100% can be served.”



#INSIGHT 13. KR CREW STRUGGLE WITH DELIVERING BALANCED SERVICES BETWEEN “FINNISH WAY” AND “KOREAN WAY” TO KR CUSTOMERS

While Finnish crew expect Korean passenger experiences to be smoother by Korean regional crew, Korean crew think they should follow the Finnair rule. For them, it’s ambiguous what level they should follow the company rule and what they can be flexible for their Korean customers. Although they have been educated when they first entered the company for two months, the education does not contain contents for the regional crew to conduct their services, especially how to behave and how to balance their attitude.



“KR crew explains and make everything smoother when we do a strict rule. Otherwise, we might have a conflict with different cultures.”

“Finding balance is difficult (Between Finnish and Asian)”

“We ask other regional crew to understand Finnish-way-of-doing things”

“I know I can’t serve KR customers in 100 % in a Finnish way, nor in 100 % in a Korean way, which will be against the way of working at Finnair”

“We had to serve as KR crew, although we weren’t educated properly. That’s the biggest challenge”



#INSIGHT 14. GROUND SERVICES ARE NOT COHERENT WITHIN FINNAIR WAY OF DOING DUE TO ABSENCE OF FINNAIR GROUND CREW

In Korea, ground services are administered by staff from an outsourced company, who work for other foreign airline companies as well. Many complaints from customers came from the check-in and baggage drop desk. From my observation, it took an average of 5 mins to complete the baggage drop, and some people have to wait in a long queue. Moreover, the manners of the staff were also pointed out as too strict, even more than HEL airport, and some had negative experiences.



“We just do what is written in the regulations. We don’t behave differently depending on airlines.”

“They don’t attach my label on my luggage”

“My two friends couldn’t take the flights with us because the ground staff check the some marks on the passport and they didn’t let them go”

“Staff at check in desk have a gruff manner. I had several bad experiences from them. They spoke in a commending tone like under strict examination.”



#INSIGHT 15. 8-HOUR FLIGHT IS NOT ENOUGH FOR KR TRAVELLERS TO ADJUST THEMSELVES TO FULLY UNDERSTAND “FINNISH WAY OF DOING” SERVICES

Although there are Korean regional crew helping Korean passengers to understand Finnish way of doing, Korea crew cannot provide 100% Korean way of serving to them because they should behave based on Finnish company culture as part of it. e.g. flat hierarchy and hassle-free services and so on.

However, some Korean passengers especially using Finnair for the first time, feel uncomfortable because they do not understand what is “Finnish way of doing” but they broaden their perspective after the first experience. They present familiar with Finnair services, and sometimes even feel more comfortable than receiving superficial and too much services from other Asian airlines.



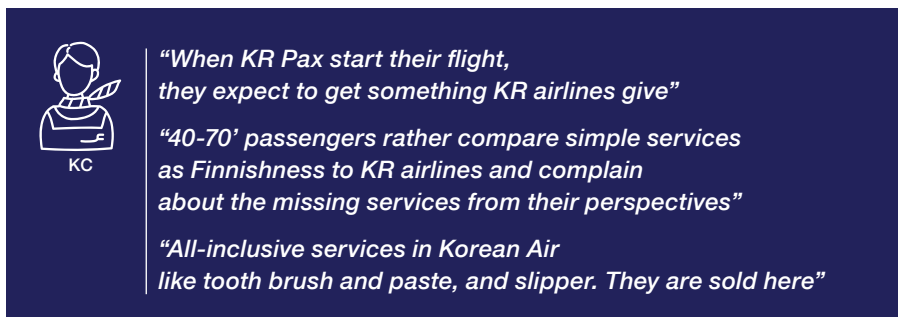
“In return flight, customers already learned and then complain less than departure flight (ICN-HEL)”

“People get to know Finnair culture step by step”

“I hope that customers also want to adjust themselves”

#INSIGHT 16. KR CUSTOMERS COMPLAIN IN FINNAIR FLIGHT WHEN THEY REALISE THAT THEY MISS WHAT THEY USED TO GET FOR FREE IN KR DOMESTIC AIRLINES

Korean travellers are used to flying with Korean domestic airlines. KR airlines, including Korean Air and Asiana Airlines, provide toothbrushes, toothpaste and slippers as complementary services to Economy seats. Moreover, only LCCs, where Korean choose simply because of the low price, do not provide any services. That is why Korean passengers complain about paid services comparing to Korean airlines. When they do not get the essential items which they used to get for free, they think service is impoverished, or airline brand is LCC level.



“When KR Pax start their flight, they expect to get something KR airlines give”

“40-70’ passengers rather compare simple services as Finnishness to KR airlines and complain about the missing services from their perspectives”

“All-inclusive services in Korean Air like tooth brush and paste, and slipper. They are sold here”

#INSIGHT 17. DIFFERENT PAYMENT SYSTEMS AND REGULATIONS BETWEEN KOREA AND EUROPEAN COUNTRIES DEMOTIVATE CUSTOMERS TO BOOK FLIGHTS IN FINNAIR DIRECT CHANNELS

Individual travellers often said they faced problems during proceeding with the payment as well as after booking to check the confirmation. Although there is a Finnair Kakao channel that Korean customers can contact when it comes to booking issues, it is not used commonly due to lack of awareness. Not that many people follow the channels, nor the Korean crew rarely know the existence of the Kakao Korean channel.

Also, complaints often come from the differences of regulations related to payment between European countries and Korea, which has been delaying the new Finnair website launching to the Korea market.



KT

“When checking booking info confirmation, I saw lots of the errors on the Finnair homepage”

“I have an error while in payment, and I had to call Finnair HQ abroad to solve the issue”

“Korean specific online payment regulations prevent Finnair from offering smooth services to local customers!”



KE



KC

“I now know there’s a Finnair Kakao channel”

#INSIGHT 18. MISPLACED INFORMATION HOW TO USE DIGITAL TOUCH POINTS IS THE BOTTLENECK IN ENGAGING WITH FINNAIR

Many Korean traveller have high expectations of watching contents in in-flight entertainment. The way of using IFE and Wi-Fi portals is not intuitive for Korean travellers, which frustrates them to start enjoying their entertainment.



“Passengers ask me how to use Nordic Sky. Young people use pretty well by themselves”

“How to use WIFI connection is not clear and intuitive especially for old travellers, which consumes crew’s time”

“People keep calling us, if they don’t know how to use”

“Most KR Pax are watching”

#INSIGHT 19. CONFLICTS IN THE CABIN OCCUR NOT ONLY FROM CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KR AND FI, BUT ALSO FROM GENERATION GAP LACKING DIGITAL LITERACY

One of the most common in-flight issues is how to connect Wi-Fi and how to use IFE. When I was told by the crew, they additionally mentioned the older generations and group travellers as a type. Talking about cultural differences, older people are generally conservative. When they cannot use IFE because of accessibility, they think a human being should serve them as service expectancy differs from generations. Also, aged travellers complained even though in-flight entertainment was not working they did not get enough support from the crew.



“Normally 50-60’s Pax feel stressed if IFE doesn’t work and call us. But then service sequence becomes delayed”

“How to use WIFI connection is not clear and intuitive especially for old travellers, which consumes crew’s time”

“Some people might feel why Finnair looks too free. They are common travellers and older generation”

“In-flight entertainment doesn’t have Korean subtitles. It was not good especially since neither Foreign nor Korean crew came to check.”



#INSIGHT 20. INCOMPREHENSIBLE CONTENT IS NOT USEFUL REGARDLESS OF THE NUMBER OF CONTENTS

Finnair has lots of movies, games and other entertainments also in Nordic Sky Wi-Fi portal. Nonetheless, for non-English Korean passengers it is not enjoyable as that many contents are offered in the Korean language. Besides, they have to look through the long list one by one to check what contents are provide in their language.



*"Movie titles are not in English.
Subtitles are not provided in KR"*

"I personally recommend a movie with KR subtitle"

*"Entertainments don't have Korean subtitles.
Finnish cabin crew didn't look at this nor Korean crew.
My friend couldn't even watch a movie."*




KC

KT

#INSIGHT 21. MISGUIDED CONCEPT OF COMPLEMENTARY AND PAID SERVICES MAKES KR CUSTOMERS HESITATE TO EVEN ENJOY COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES


While some travellers assume that every service is complementary, some others misunderstand everything is paid services. So, people who rarely travel for the first time to European countries do not press the call button. They are even afraid to ask cabin crew in person if the items are given as a complimentary service. If customers cannot enjoy services, which are already included in their ticket price, it is a great experience. This is derived from a misunderstanding of Finnair business model/service concept.



*"Customers are upset
when they don't get what they asked"*

*"Passengers who don't have many experiences are
likely to be afraid to ask crew because they think they
have to pay everything"*

*"Beer was for free and whisky was not.
I don't understand."*



KC

KT

Figure 24 shows how the insights mentioned above are interconnected to one another. Through this map activity, I created two main groups as customer typology (Section 5.2) and three themes for the opportunity areas (Section 5.3).

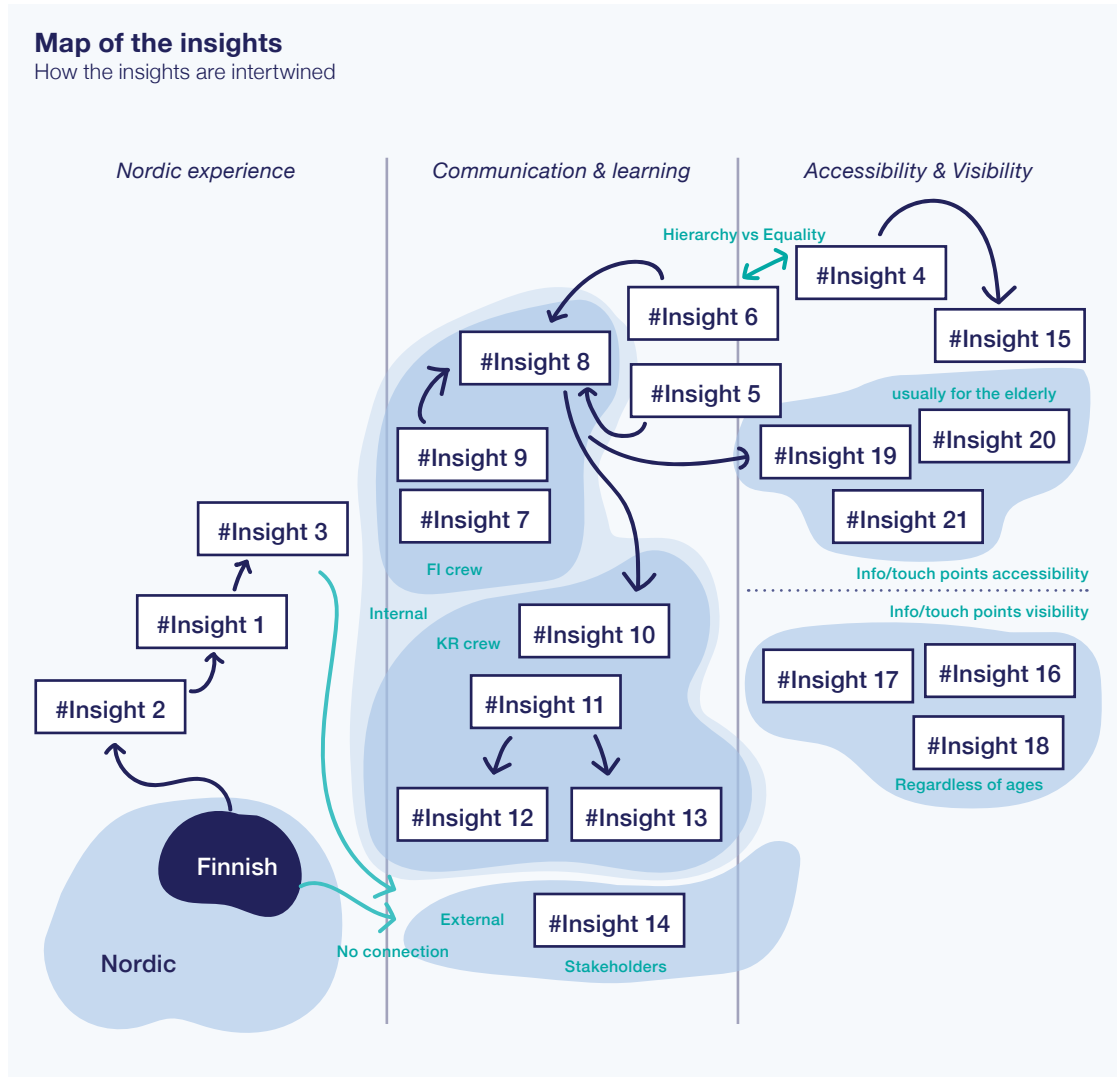


Figure 24
Map of the insights
(Source: author)

5.2 Customer Typology

I created a customer typology depending on the ages and travel styles of the target group. I illustrated the travel dependency level on the x-axis and the age variety on the y-axis (see Figure 25). Travel dependency means how dependant a traveller needs or desires help for travel-related information from other people or services, from family members to service providers such as travel agencies. According to the survey and expert interviews, I identified two main groups, which I labelled Group 1 and Group 2. The experiences of the two groups are relatively different from the planning to the end of their trips.

Group 1 contains 'group travellers', who buy a travel package through Korean travel agencies. From the survey, I found that these travellers are older than those in the other group. They also exhibit a high dependence on the travel agency of their choice to obtain, for instance, travel information and a plan. They are conservative and usually expect the same services that are provided by Korean domestic airlines since they are more familiar with them. In the Korean market, they have not engaged significantly with Finnair. Considering group travellers is vital since they contribute to the majority of the total revenue.

Group 2 is composed of individual travellers, Koreans residing overseas and family travellers. This group purchases their flight tickets through the direct channels of Finnair, such as the Finnair website or application. Individual travellers and family travellers plan their trips by themselves, and they search for detailed information about flights and trip schedules before travelling. Notably, family travellers encompass a wide age range depending on the family members. Compared to Group 1, the two traveller groups are familiar with the practicality of Finnair, and they have previously used Finnair flights. In terms of family travellers, parents do not engage with Finnair directly; rather, their sons and daughters over the age of

20 tend to cope with every situation on behalf of their parents. Thus, the family as a group appears to be independent as a whole. Finally, Koreans residing overseas, especially students and employees living in Finland, usually fly with Finnair as frequent flyers, as they offer the only direct flight between Finland and Korea.

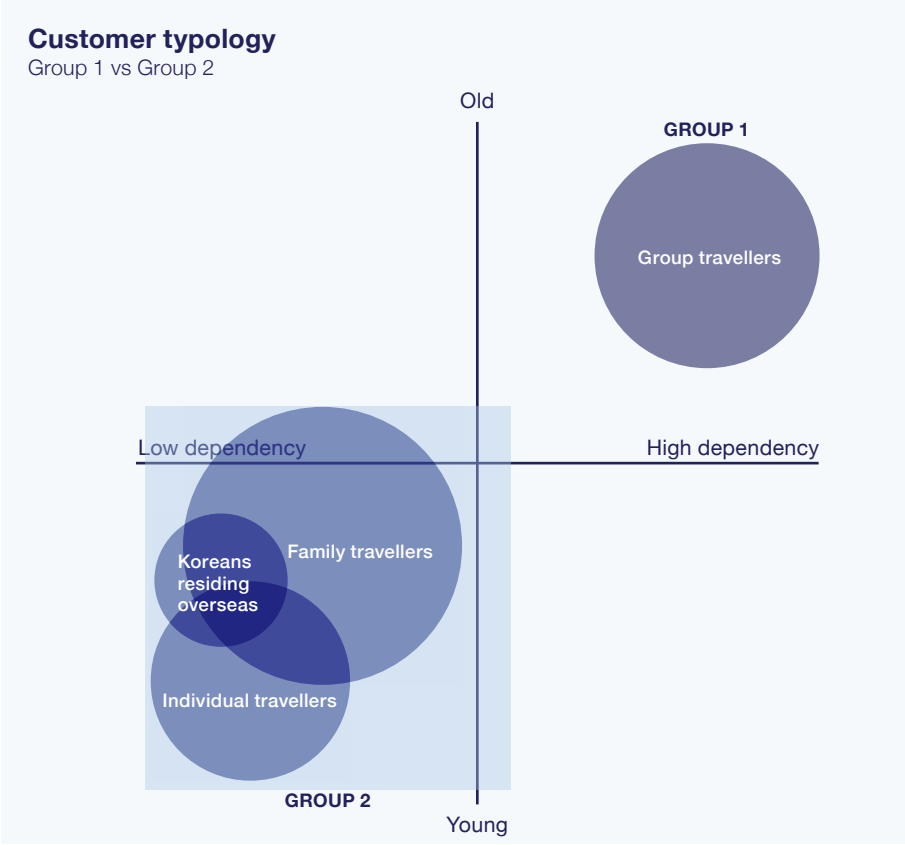


Figure 25
Passenger typology
(Source: author)

5.3 Opportunity Areas and Strategic Areas

Three opportunity areas emerged from clustering the insights into common themes connected to the areas to suggest strategic recommendations: the Nordic experience, communication and learning, and accessibility and visibility.

5.3.1 Nordic Experience

Job stories in Nordic experience		
Korean Passengers	Group 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 When flying with Finnair and staying for a few days' stopover, I want to hear local experiences of Nordic countries so I know what to do and where to visit when I arrive at Helsinki.
	Both	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2 When I travel with Finnair, I want to get more information about the products from Finland and stories of the elements I find in the cabin, so I know more about Finnair as an airline representing Nordic countries.
Crew	Korean Crew	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 When telling my personal stories about Nordic countries and knowledge about their lifestyles to Korean travellers, I want to say more about up-to-date local experiences than what tourists usually do, so they want to travel Finland and Nordic regions for the next time. 2 When I join Finnair and learn about Nordic experiences during the training period, I want to know what to say and how to behave as 'ambassador', so I will be able to deliver our value to customers. 3 When asked to explain Nordic experiences to customers, I want to tell a vivid and engaging story so customers want to travel Finland with Finnair. 4 When presenting Finnair during the flight, I want to deliver real Nordic stories to customers so customers can expect to visit Nordic regions.

Table 9
Job stories in the area of the Nordic experience
(Source: author)

The Nordic experience is one of the unique opportunities with which Finnair can attract Korean passengers. In addition, Finnair has a strong brand identity that has a positive impression on customers who seek novel experiences. Since Finnair represents Finland and aims to present the Nordic atmosphere as a whole, the company should deliver consistent pleasant experiences that allow international customers to feel comfortable. The visual identity that Finnair highlights and the behaviours of the Finnair cabin crew towards customers should be coherent and unified.

5.3.2 Communication and Learning

Job stories in Communication & Learning		
Korean Passengers	Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 When receiving in-flight services from crew members, I want to see their respectful attitudes so I can feel more respectful and comfortable, like at home.
	Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 When waiting in the line for checking in at ICN airport, I want to know exactly where to stand beforehand between online check-in and normal check-in lines so I can avoid waiting a too long time and then realising I have to join the end of the queue again in the different lines.
	Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 When talking to the crew about an issue in the flight, I want to communicate smoothly regardless of their nationality or language so I can quickly solve the problem without waiting for the Korean crew coming to check my situation. 4 When the FI cabin crew ask me to choose a meal option, I want to choose my preferred food without any barrier so I can enjoy the food I receive. 6 When dropping baggage at the check-in and luggage drop desk, I want to see the same level of the customer service like Finnair does so I will be experiencing the same tone of action and feel unique. 8 When it comes to check-in, I want to see what the included services are or not before departing to the airport so I can make sure what I will get e.g. food and beverage and luggage limit.
Crew	Finnish Crew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 When working with KR crew, I want to enjoy working together with them, so we can deliver a positive mood to our customers. 6 When providing services to KR customers, I want to behave like I understand their culture so they can think I avoid sounding like I am rude to them. 7 When a conflict happens between KR customers and me, I want to solve the issue by myself first, so I do feel a sense of achievement by being independent, which helps Korean crew to not have to work in a hectic situation. 8 When flying to the Korean route, I want to learn the Korean culture before the duty, so I can deliver appropriate services to KR passengers. 9 When working with KR crew, I want to learn about their culture and language so I can communicate with KR customers and avoid misunderstanding situations. 10 When I prepare for KR flight duty, I want to see where to check learning materials so I can watch them without spending too much time to find them. 11 When preparing for KR flight duty, I want to watch up-to-date information about the culture of a destination so I can keep catching up my understanding toward KR customers. 13 When delivering meal services, I want to communicate with visual languages with Korean customers who cannot speak in English so I avoid relying on Korean crew for help as well as work efficiently, and customers can understand what food they will get.
	Korean Crew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 When I cope with a Korean customer, and another customer asks for help at the same time, I want to help her/him solve the problem without going through me necessarily so I will be able to work in peace of mind. 14 When working for KR customers, I want to check more explicit guidance on how I cope with issues caused by cultural differences so I can deliver more balanced and customised services.

Table 10
Job stories in the area of communication & learning
(Source: author)

Finnair provides learning opportunities to its cabin crew to understand diverse cultural differences and encourages them to learn peer-to-peer while in flight.

However, in reality, they lack learning opportunities because of schedule limitations due to their duties. In addition, it is frustrating for the Finnish crew to realise that they must rely on the Korean regional crew whenever they encounter conflict. More educational opportunities and space for sharing knowledge should be provided to mitigate issues between passengers and crew.

5.3.3 Accessibility and Visibility

Job stories in Communication & Learning		
Korean Passengers	Group 1	<p>9 When facing Finnish crew in the flight, I want to be able to communicate and experience their local culture through them so I avoid misunderstanding their culture and could learn what to respect.</p> <p>11 When using IFE, I want to see only available contents and services for me, e.g. contents in Korean language and products according to my budget, so I do not have to spend extra time exploring and trying things which would not work on me.</p> <p>12 When purchasing my package trip through a travel agency which includes the Finnair flight ticket, I want to be informed clearly about what services are paid or complimentary before taking the flight so I do not unrealistically ask too much.</p> <p>16 When using IFE, I want to use it by just simply entering the contents I want to see so I avoid feeling confused and asking for help from the crew every time.</p>
	Group 2	<p>14 When checking my booking confirmation, I want to receive consistent information without disruption so I can make sure and feel relaxed about my trip schedule.</p>
	Both	<p>10 When I am about to take my flight, I want to be notified about explicit instruction about the local people and Finnair so I can understand the different culture and people.</p> <p>13 When paying for my flight ticket on the Finnair website, I want to be informed with clear instructions so that I complete the payment without many failures.</p> <p>15 When facing any issue while booking, I want to find contact information immediately and resolve the problem right away so I do not have to waste time or feel anxious about my trip.</p>
Crew	Korean Crew	<p>15 When I get inquired many times for the wi-fi connection, I want to inform them without visiting them one by one so I can avoid delaying service sequences.</p>

Table 11
Job stories in the area of accessibility and visibility
(Source: author)

Finnair provides customers with cross digital touchpoints throughout the travel journey. These touchpoints support their engagement with Finnair, highlight up-to-date events and allow them to enjoy their trips while using them. However, due to a lack of content translation and a poor understanding of functionality, it is sometimes challenging for customers to access and utilise the touchpoints. In this regard, Finnair should pursue a more intuitive and user-friendly experience to improve accessibility, especially for older generations, as well as visibility for everyone.

5.4 Prioritising Strategic Areas

Before examining the results, I must clarify how to interpret the matrix results on the next page (Figure 26,27 and 28). There are three matrixes which resulted from the Korean office and HQ representing customer phase and one outcome from an In-flight supervisor representing crew phase.

Prioritisation Results: Customer Point of View

The matrix in Figure 26 represents the perspective of the Korean office. In total, 16 strategic areas were evaluated. The majority of the strategic areas in the ‘communication and learning’ theme (green) are in the under-served area. Also, the areas in ‘accessibility and visibility’ are relatively shared out in equal. Both cards of the Nordic experience theme are in a served right. Some strategic areas have already considered at the Korea office for development, whereas others, such as design or technical issues, have not planned or implemented yet. The office more focuses on improving customer services and sales to take care of Korean customers as a whole, including individuals, businesses and groups travellers.

During the workshop, some insufficient points are realised. One point is to provide more information to travel agencies for group travellers. Furthermore, local touchpoints such as Kakao talk could be utilised after flight ticket purchase and before departure.

Then, the matrix (Figure 27) indicates the result from Digital solution of HQ. 16 strategic areas with some possible digital solutions are presented under each area. The current satisfaction of the strategic areas is generally lower than the result done by the KR office. Most of the areas are located between ‘served right’ and ‘under-served’ areas. Notably, their satisfaction with the ‘accessibility and visibility’ theme (blue) is generally higher than with the ‘communication and learning’ theme (green). Most of the strategic areas are shown as important to be developed in the future.

The red, green and blue colours surrounding the numbers indicate the defined themes in the previous chapter, namely the Nordic experience, communication and learning, and accessibility and visibility, respectively. The number in each circle represents the job story as marked in the three tables in Section 5.3.

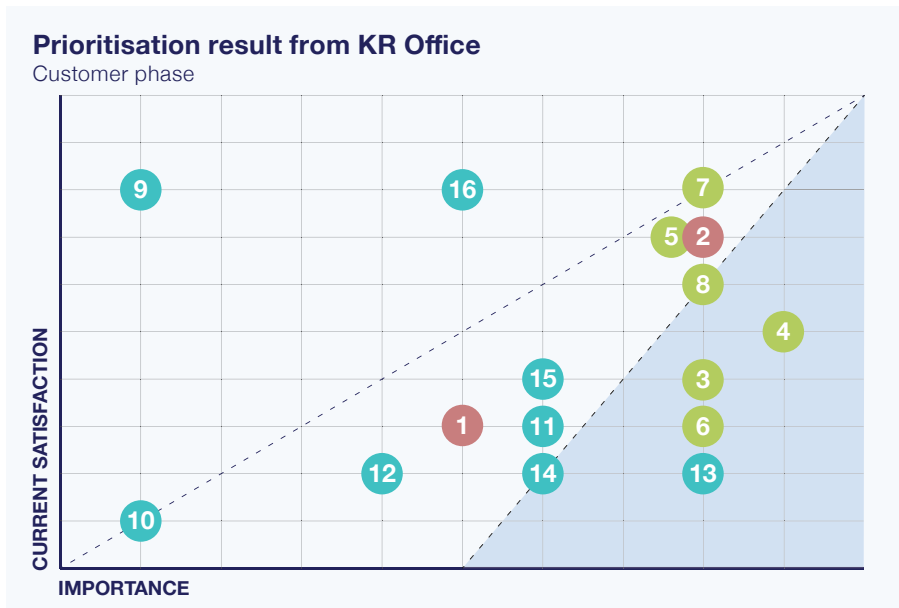


Figure 26
The strategy area prioritisation result from KR Office
(Source: author)

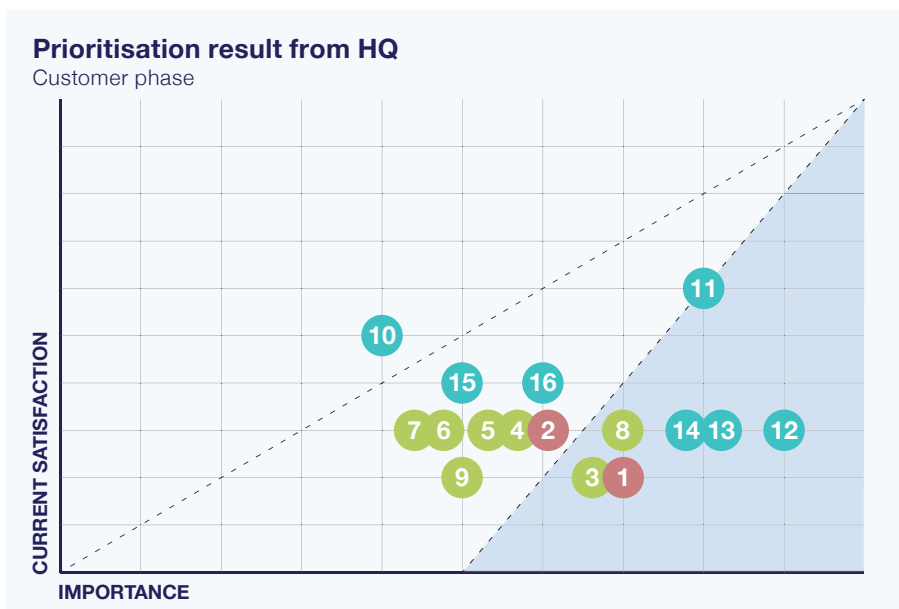


Figure 27
The strategy area prioritisation result from HQ
(Source: author)

Prioritisation Results: Crew Point of View

The next chart, Figure 28, displays the crew perspective. The manager measured 15 strategic areas in addition to possible solutions underneath. There are many strategic areas under the theme of ‘communication and learning’ since the theme itself is naturally more concerned with internal communication and learning between crew members to understand KR passengers. The majority of the strategic areas are located in the ‘under-served’ area. The x-axis marks most of the strategic areas as important for consideration except for one card, no. 8. Some of the areas are not yet implemented or developed; thus, the value of the current satisfaction is 0.

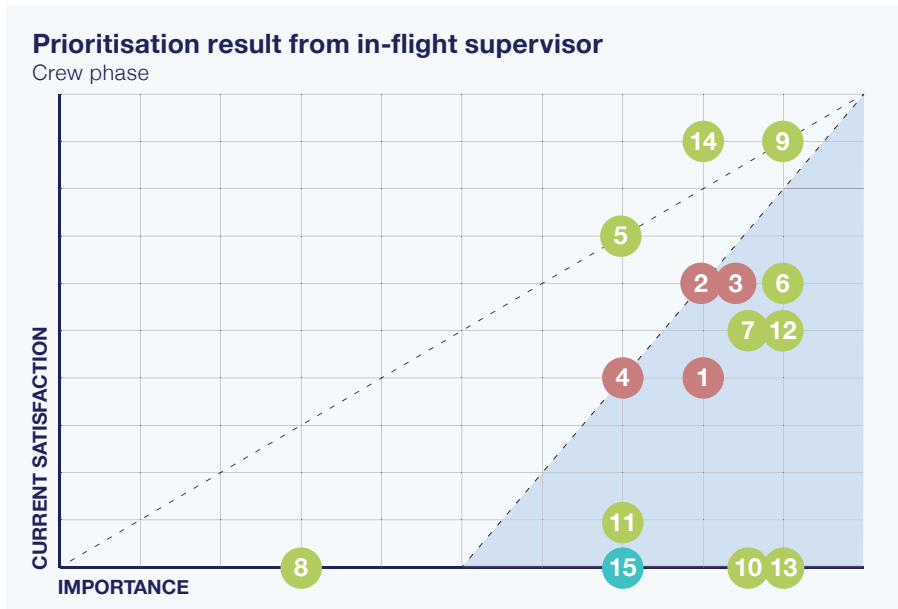


Figure 28
The strategy area prioritisation result from in-flight supervisor (Source: author)

5.5 Creating Roadmap

After the prioritisation activity, the strategic areas in the under-served zone were moved to build a roadmap. The direction for development and implementation was revealed during the roadmap creation. After the activity, I asked for the reasoning behind their decision and business values from their own perspective. Furthermore, the participants discussed possible stakeholders to be involved in each strategic area to collaborate with.

The roadmap graph (Figure 29) can be interpreted on the following basis. I define the dimension as follow. The x-axis represents the business value of customer on the left side and that of crew side on the right side. Meanwhile, the x-axis displays the years based on the company strategy period, which is set from 2020 to 2023.

The strategic areas for the customer phase were firstly created by Korean employees and then by an agile manager and the head of Digital platform in Digital solution department afterwards. On the one hand, from the KR office point of view, some strategic areas were considered for development shortly, from the beginning of next year, since those were necessary for Korean customers to experience. The roadmap was created based on customer feedback and the current situation they face. On the other hand, the perspective of Digital solution was aligned according to its internal plan, which is planned or already developed. Also, some of the strategic areas I created were previously discussed for the whole Asian market rather than for the Korean market, specifically.

After collecting the results from both perspectives, I generated the final roadmap for the customer phase. Some of the strategic areas of customers are connected to cause and effect. For example, utilising local digital platform was considered to be implemented during the same period; thus, they appear to be counted within the same timeline.

In terms of crew phase, the areas under the under-served area were arranged according to the customer phase. Some overlapped areas could be considered together because possible ideas for solutions are in the same context. For instance, during the flight, viable solutions for mealtime and communication between crew and passengers could be implemented together by integrating tools for crew and IFE or Nordic Sky.

In summary, the final roadmap is shown below Figure 29. The implementation periods displayed simultaneously. Some of the opportunities are considered to have immense business value, whereas others are perceived as less valuable.

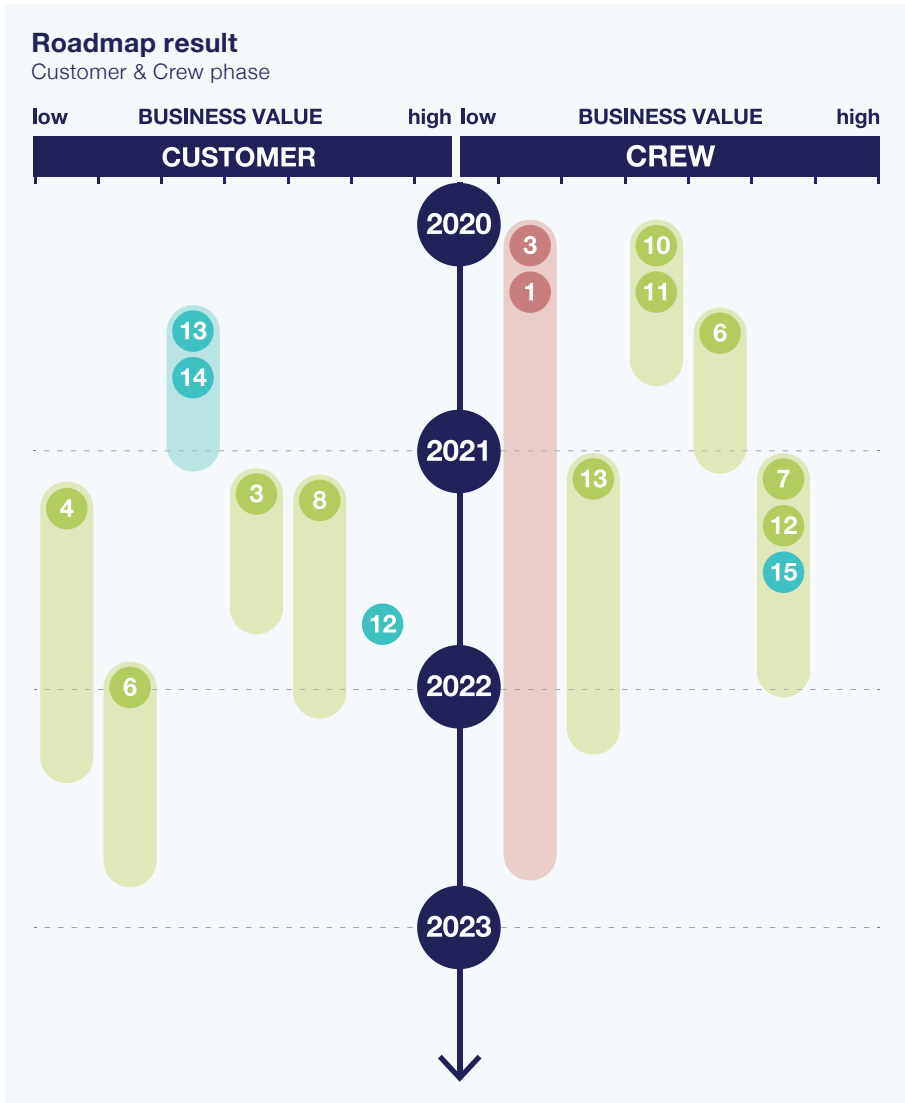


Figure 29
Roadmap result,
Customer and
Crew phase
(Source: author)

5.6 Strategic Areas for Localised Passenger Experience and Business Goals

The strategic areas are shown to influence a strategic decision in the organisation, which contains aspects of time frame, stakeholders, economic commitments. In this part, I propose the final strategic areas and business goals for a localised passenger experience for the Korean market based on the viewpoints of the Korea office, crew and HQ of Finnair.

The recommendations are categorised primarily based on the passenger journey, which is derived from what I created during the initial analysis (see Figure 15). Throughout the whole journey, I chose the core stages to be developed: dream, plan, prepare and departure. Notably, the crew journey is different until the departure stage since they do other duties and do preparation for KR flights. Two separate journeys merge at the departure stage, where crew and passengers interact with one another in the cabin.

At the end of the section, Figure 30 presents a summary of the whole recommendation as a form of journey.

STRATEGY AREA 1:

Plan & Prepare—Maximise the Korean Local Platform

Description

The Korean local platform, namely Kakaotalk, should be utilised by building a local development team to enhance the onboarding experience. By using the platform, Finnair should give explicit information to Korean customers with the Korean language. So the travellers will be able to follow up on the information and be aware of the benefits that they can receive. Finnair can initially try out some

business services from the service provider for free use. Then, intervention for a short term is to work on translating the Korean language of the core information based on what customers need and desire. Through cost-benefit analysis, the office should decide what level of intervention they should develop further. The communication between HQ and the Korean office is crucial to building a unified platform which follows the look and feel of Finnair.

Rationale

Korean travellers miss flight information in their languages before boarding Finnair, which gives them a negative first impression. Also, great opportunities are found from the shopping style in that Korean consumers tend to spend their expenditure while shopping before and during their holiday travel. In this case, Finnair can attract Korean customers by up-selling or cross-selling pre-order retail products and ancillary products.

Related Job stories

Job story No.	Job story
Customer: 12	When checking my booking confirmation, I want to receive consistent information without disruption, so I can make sure and feel relaxed about my trip schedule.
Customer: 13	When paying for my flight ticket on the Finnair website I want to get informed about clear instruction, so that I complete payment without many fails.
Customer: 14	When purchasing my package trip through a travel agency which includes the Finnair flight ticket, I want to get informed clearly about what services are paid or complementary before taking the flight, so I don't ask too much unrealistically.

Table 12
Relevant Job stories to Strategic area 1 (Source: author)

Related Insights

- 16. KR customers complain in Finnair flight when they realise they miss what they used to get for free in KR domestic airlines.
- 17. Different payment systems and regulation between Korea and European countries demotivate customers to book flights in Finnair direct channels.
- 21. Misguided concept of complementary and paid services have KR customers hesitate to even enjoy included services.

Several examples:

- Distribution of a clear instruction page to travel agencies for group travellers to get informed.
- Clear payment instructions in real-time through local digital channels when customers are about to pay.
- Follow-up notification through the local digital channel.

Possible stakeholders

Digital platform, Digital Solution Development, KR office, the platform service provider.

STRATEGY AREA 2:

At the Airport—Construct Strategy to Enhance the Ground Service at ICN Airport

Description

Building a strategy and feasible implementation is necessary for outstations of Finnair. Understanding the current situation of the outsourced company and having a positive relationship with the partner is fundamental. Also, the guideline should be built based on the feedback both from the outsourced ground staff as well as Korean travellers. For sustainable management, Finnair must invest in a local human resource to manage the service quality and train the staff. However, for the short term, the guidelines can be delivered in a digital format that the staff can use to learn and behave as Finnair crew do. Also, a regular examination from HQ and a local employee must be done for maintaining the service quality. In addition to the guidance of Finnair ground crew, local practicality can be considered through benchmarking Korean domestic airlines. In the long term, Finnair should invest to use a kiosk for luggage drop, so that customers avoid waiting for a long time and have a smooth experience. A strategy can be scaled in the long term for other outstations where Finnair ground crew do not work.

Ensuring the service provider must be done before the departure by sending a notification to the customers. Contents contain hand luggage limit and complementary and paid service provision. This should be implemented using the Korean local platform.

Rationale

The majority of the KR passengers are from travel agencies who do not receive enough information about Finnair until they arrive to ICN airport. In addition, most complaints came from the airport ground services. The opportunities are found from the fact that they are potential customers if they have a positive first impression about Finnair. By improving this point, Finnair will be able to strengthen its brand value which is built on customer feedback.

Relevant Job Stories

Job story No.	Job story
Customer -6	When I drop baggage at the check-in and luggage drop desk, I want to see the same level of the customer services like Finnair does, so I will be experiencing the same tone of action and feel unique.
Customer -8	When it comes to check-in, I want to see what the included services are or not, before heading to the airport, so I can make sure what I will get e.g. food and beverage and luggage limit.

Table 13

Relevant Job stories to Strategic area 2 (Source: author)

Related Insights

14. Ground services are not coherent within the Finnair way of doing due to absence of Finnair ground crew.

Several examples

- Luggage drop using Kiosk at outstations.
- Clear instructions about hand luggage limit and complimentary and paid services through local digital channels.
- Distributing an explicit guideline to the outsourced ground crew how they should behave based on the Finnair regulation.

Possible stakeholders

KR office, In-flight Service Delivery and Development, Outstation manager (ICN airport), Digital platform, ICN airport.

STRATEGY AREA 3:

Other Duties & Prepare—Encourage Learning Opportunities of Crew Members

Description

For crew to deliver unique Nordic travel experience to Finnair Korean passengers, the crew should be encouraged to learn more cultural aspects. By increasing opportunities for the crew, they can naturally share their local cultures, exchange languages and get more information when it comes to serving diverse passengers. This communication includes between Finnish and Korean crew in a digital way as well as among cabin crew members during the briefing session before their departure flight. Furthermore, it is more important to maintain the working culture from a long term perspective. For instance, active users are necessary to upload contents which are interested in sharing knowledge. In this way, saved data can be utilised to build a training tutorial for future crewmembers. This community-based platform can be scaled to the other regions. Not only that, encouraging regional crew to explore Finnish/Nordic local culture is recommended as they live in outside of Finland or even European areas. When it comes to developing tools or contents for crew, it is necessary to make them as a visible and digestible format. Also, some visuals and entertainment can invite them to enjoy the learning process. The most essential elements must be validated by crew members to prioritise the contents to be shown.

Rationale

From the interviews, it is revealed that crew members are enablers as well as ambassadors. Crew enable passengers to experience Nordic experience in the cabin by telling their personal stories. Furthermore, they are proud of being as a crew in Finnair, which has many Finnish cultural elements. Hence, it is seen that they represent Finland. Also, since the ios platform is their working tool, they have to install many apps for in-flight services, which sometimes make them confused to find correct materials they look for.

Relevant Job Stories

Job story No.	Job story
Crew: 1	When telling my personal stories about Nordic countries and knowledge about their lifestyles to Korean travellers, I want to say more about up-to-date local experiences than what tourists usually do, so they want to travel Finland and Nordic regions for the next time.
Crew: 3	When asked to explain Nordic experiences to customers, I want to tell a vivid and engaging story, so customers want to travel Finland with Finnair.
Crew: 6	When providing services to KR customers, I want to behave like I understand their culture, so they can think I avoid sounding like I am rude to them.
Crew: 10	When I prepare for KR flight duty, I want to see where to check learning materials so I can watch them without spending too much time to find them.
Crew: 11	When preparing for KR flight duty, I want to watch up-to-date information about the culture of a destination so I can keep catching up my understanding toward KR customers.

Table 14

Relevant Job stories to Strategic area 3 (Source: author)

Relevant insights:

1. Finnair contains representative elements of Finland in collaboration with Finnair brands, which increase KR customers expectations.
2. Nordic experience is often interpreted as activities/scenes in Finnish nature.
3. Cabin crew share information about Finland and Finnish design to passengers who are interested in the products in the cabin.
15. 8-hour flight is not enough for KR travellers to adjust themselves to fully understand “Finnish way of doing” services.
19. Conflicts in the cabin occur not only from cultural differences between Korea and Finland but also from generation gap lacking digital literacy.
20. Incomprehensible content is not useful regardless of the number of contents.

Several examples

- Utilising internal platform between local and regional crew.
- Regular excursion to local areas in Finland/Nordic regions for regional crew.
- Introduction of showing stories and experiences of Finnair through NS or IFE.
- Up-to-date cultural tutorials on a regular base.
- Language filter showing only corresponding contents for international passengers on IFE.

- Increasing the number of entertainment contents available with the Korean language

Possible stakeholders

Finnish crew, Korean regional crew, In-flight supervisors, Employee experience, Crew trainers, IFEC team

STRATEGY AREA 4:

Departure Flight—Keep Digital Interaction Visible

Description

During the flight, all passengers in the cabin should be able to enjoy the digital touchpoints to the fullest, regardless of age or digital literacy. This can raise a possibility for them to engage with Finnair furthermore. In this regard, a quick start guide with a universal user interface should be investigated considering accessibility and visibility.

For example, frequently asked questions can be uploaded on IFE as part of the contents. By acquiring what the frequently asked questions arose while in the flight from the user perspective, through survey, the appropriate contents should be initially prioritised and uploaded. In the long term, once enough data is gathered, this solution can be scaled. Also, chatbot using voice recognition technology on IFE can be further developed as a helper to assist passengers. This is more advanced than using FAQ contents and more straightforward for passengers because they do not have to search the contents they look for.

Rationale

In a unique environment and limited context of the aeroplane where passengers have to use Finnair touchpoints necessarily, this is naturally an exceptional opportunity for user onboarding.

Relevant Job Stories

Job story No.	Job story
Crew: 12	When I cope with a Korean customer, and another customer asks for help at the same time, and I want to help her/him solve the problem without going through me necessarily, so I will be able to work in peace in mind.
Crew: 15	When I get inquired many times for Wifi connection, I want to inform them without visiting them one by one, so I can avoid delaying service sequences.

Table 15

Relevant Job stories to Strategic area 4 (Source: author)

Relevant insights

7. Due to the language barrier, Finnish crew have to rely on Korean crew to cope with complaints with Korean customers, which results in more workload and responsibility to Korean crew.
9. Imbalance between workload and available Korean human resources result in performing high level of emotional labour, so that eventually Korean crew cannot deliver satisfying services to customers.
18. Misplaced information how to use digital touch points is the bottleneck in engaging with Finnair

Several examples

- Easily accessible FAQ contents on IFE
- A quick start guide on the home screen
- Chatbot service on IFE using AI for voice recognition technology, helping to solve fundamental problems of passengers as a text message/voice.

Possible stakeholders

Customer research, IFEC team, KR office (CS), AI service provider

STRATEGY AREA 5: Departure Flight—Envision Meal Menu

Description

Food is one of the primary services during the flight. The expectations of Korean passengers towards food is high. According to the survey conducted, Korean passengers were generally satisfied with the Korean meal options they received. Therefore, the satisfaction level can vary depending on the menu. In this regard, detailed food information must be delivered accurately and visually for those who are not familiar with exotic cuisine.

Rationale

Korean passengers are not familiar with local Finnish food. Furthermore, communication is a challenge between non-English speaking Korean passengers and the Finnish crew to describe food in detail.

Relevant Job Stories

Job story No.	Job story
Customer: 4	When FI cabin crew asked me to choose a meal option, I want to choose the food I want without any barrier, so I can enjoy the food I received.
Crew: 13	When delivering meal services, I want to communicate with visual languages with Korean customers who cannot speak in English so I avoid relying on Korean crew for help as well as work efficiently, and customers can understand what food they will get.

Table 16
Relevant Job stories to Strategic area 5 (Source: author)

Relevant insights

4. The mood among cabin crew influences on customers' comfort.
7. Due to the language barrier, Finnish crew have to rely on Korean crew to cope with complaints with Korean customers, which results in more workload and responsibility to Korean crew.
9. Imbalance between workload and available Korean human resources result in performing high level of emotional labour, so that eventually Korean crew cannot deliver satisfying services to customers.

Several examples

- Pre-ordering meal notification to Korean local channel before check-in.
- 360 view pictures of the menu in the tool of Finnair cabin crew.
- Providing meal information and ingredients in IFE & NS.
- Giving examples of similar Korean food as comparison.

Possible stakeholders

Finnair kitchen, IFEC team, Translator service, Crew trainers

STRATEGY AREA 6:

Departure Flight—Enable Communication between Finnish Crew and Korean Passengers

Description

Small conversation between crew and Korean passengers are seen to be positive. Thus, this should be developed among crew and passengers who experience language barriers. In this case, a tool for crew can encourage them to approach the passengers. As an illustration, auto-translation or pre-made translation of frequently used expressions during the flight should be considered to develop further. In this way, Finnish crew may communicate more comfortable with Korean passengers who are non-English speakers. This needs long term investment and may require huge effort to build up; thus, voluntary work from Korean crew and Finnish crew are required to collect data. This can be scaled to other non-English speaking countries.

Rationale

Finnish cabin crew are obviously the excerpts of Finland and Nordic experiences as they are the local people from Finland. However, different languages are a barrier aspect blocking conversation among Finnish crew and Korean passengers. Communication can be a plus to make passengers feel pleasant during the flight and interested in Finnair, which eventually contributes to positive brand value and to have more return and repeat customers.

Relevant job stories

Job story No.	Job story
Customer: 3	When talking to the crew about an issue in the flight, I want to communicate smoothly regardless of their nationality or language so I can quickly solve the problem without waiting for the Korean crew coming to check my situation.
Crew: 7	When a conflict happens between KR customers and me, I want to solve the issue by myself first, so I do feel a sense of achievement by being independent, which helps Korean crew to not have to work in a hectic situation.

Table 17

Relevant Job stories to Strategic area 6 (Source: author)

Relevant insights

4. The mood among cabin crew influences on customers' comfort.

Several examples

- Auto translation on IFE and Crew tool helping communication between passengers and cabin crew who do not have a common language.
- Pre-made translation tool for helping communication of crew.

Possible stakeholders

Employee experience, IFEC development and service provider, Korean regional cabin crew and Finnish crew.

Strategic recommendations

Aligned with the passenger Journey

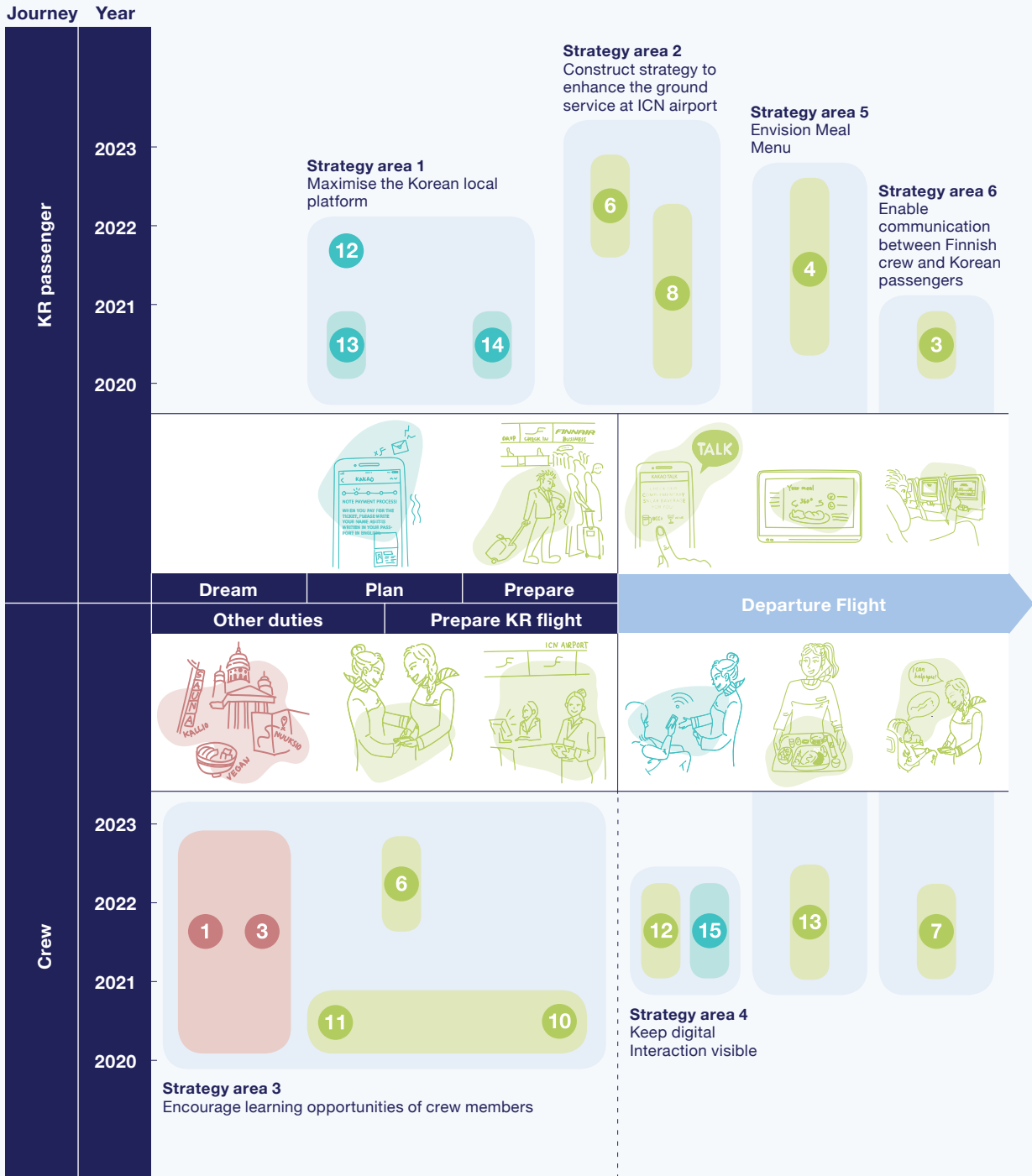


Figure 30
(left) Strategic
recommendations
aligned with
the passenger
journey
(Source: author)

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION



6.1 Conclusion

Nowadays, the airline industry is unique and fast-growing as diverse international passengers travel freely as part of their everyday lives. From my personal motivation and experience, I have started this thesis project as a foreign employee with a different cultural background working for a Finnish airline company. The research question is: What are the opportunity areas to localise airline services in the Korean market while maintaining the cultural identity of the airline as a crucial part of the travel experience?

With four main objectives regarding the research question, I have conducted a case study of a Finnish airline company, namely Finnair, targeting the Korean market. Throughout the project, I have applied service design methods and tools based on the passenger-centric approach. The following sections indicate how I have reached each objective and what my conclusions are.

Objective 1. Understand the needs and expectations of long-haul travel to Finland or European countries and examine the feelings and frustrations that Korean travellers experience when using foreign airlines, including Finnair.

I have collected data mainly from Korean travellers to reach the first objective. I have obtained insights into the passenger travel experience when performing the airport and in-flight observation and the traveller survey as mixed methods.

I realise Korean travellers face many challenges when using foreign airlines where different languages are spoken, exotic food is served, and unusual behaviours they encounter in comparison to the Korean domestic airlines they used to fly with. While individual travellers have mostly flown with foreign airlines, group travellers have rarely flown with international airlines or Finnair, especially for long-haul travels. Also, Finnair has lower awareness than other airlines operating in South

Korea due to the lack of marketing research. Nevertheless, some travellers who are aware of Finnair tend to have a positive image of the airline, reflecting on the positive image toward the Northern European country.

Objective 2. Explore how Finnair wants to communicate and deliver their DNA (so-called 'Finnairness') to Korean passengers through their products and services as well as the perceptions that those passengers have of 'Finnairness'.

I have achieved this objective by interviewing experts and stakeholders from HQ, the Korean office and ICN airport. The literature of cultural differences between Korea and Finland (Section 2.3.4) supports how contrast behaviours exist between Finland and Korea.

I learn that communication between the Korean office and diverse departments in HQ lacks since the Korean office only focuses on sales and customer service. Hence, the opinions from the Korea office are not spread enough to the various departments in HQ. At the same time, I realise that insights from the local office should be actively shared across departments, e.g. Finnair Kitchen and Digital solution.

The interviews with both Finnish and local Korean crew result in several opportunity areas. The analysis of the interviews reveals that crew members are proud of working in Finnair and represent Finland/Nordic countries delivering cultural aspects. Also, the Finnish crew has potential and vital role in sharing stories with the Korean passengers to invite them to explore Finland and the Nordic countries as a whole. However, they sometimes face challenges to cope with diverse international passengers, especially from Asia, mainly because of the language barrier and misunderstanding behaviours from different cultures. Furthermore, I find out that the Korean crew often struggle with harmonising their practices between the Finnish way of doing and Korean hierarchy when behaving toward Korean passengers. This is due to the Nordic working environment of the company which values equality, while Korean customers take account of customer hierarchy.

Nordic elements highlighted in the organisation appear to have a positive image to Korean customers, although the awareness of the Nordic brands is still lower than other Asian countries. Nevertheless, the branded amenities and china from Finnish brands in the cabin are seen to give a positive and unique experience to the targeted passenger.

Throughout this study, I conclude that understanding local behaviours should play a role in the design of international airline services since traveller experience contrasts highly between Finnish and Korean culture. Hence, these differences could be leveraged through the design of the traveller experience.

Objective 3. Comprehend the different purchase patterns of South Koreans who use digital services, especially for flight tickets.

I have reviewed literature into industry articles, especially in Section 2.3.3. Digital Nomad: Korean Travellers. On top of that, the survey on Korean travellers has contributed to reach this objective since they answered some questions about behaviours when purchasing their last flight tickets. Mystery shopping has also been beneficial to increase my understanding of how Korean domestic travel agencies present airline information differently. It also has helped me understand the journey of buying a flight ticket through a package trip of group travellers.

The survey results indicate that the group travellers purchase their flight tickets as a part of their package trip through Korean domestic travel agencies. Thus, they do not choose an airline; instead, they select within the options as travel agencies plan to depend on their partnerships. I find a shortage of travel agencies that do not give enough information about an airline to group travellers. This eventually causes issues on a misunderstanding of service provision that Finnair promises. Individual passengers, on the other hand, buy their tickets via the direct channels of Finnair or online travel agencies (OTA). Although travellers book tickets from other digital platforms than Finnair direct channels, they receive information directly from Finnair and thus visit the Finnair touchpoints before departure flight.

Objective 4. Investigate design opportunities and create service principles that are based on the end-to-end experience of the company for both physical and digital service products.

After reaching the three objectives mentioned above, I have been able to reach the final goal. During the ideation, I have applied Jobs-to-be-done theory and techniques to highlight strategic areas. Then, the managerial employees in the company have prioritised and evaluated these strategic areas. As the outcome of the project, I have proposed the six strategic areas in line with the passenger journey that the organisation may implement across digital channels for the Korean market.

Using JTBD techniques is beneficial to make stories by giving a specific situation. It firstly helps me to create some examples during the ideation. Furthermore, the job stories help evaluators to envision the given conditions and feel empathy about the stories. However, I have found one challenge when using the JTBD matrix during the prioritisation: the ambiguity of the evaluation using Job stories. This is due to the current business in the organisation which does not use JTBD nor prioritises the ideas by cultural dimension. Instead, it has different criteria in its agile culture or its own standard. Thus, other solutions could be considered when overlapping with other Job stories.

Impact of Cultural Behaviours in Traveller Experience

Throughout the study, I have emphasised the need for the airline industry to consider behavioural aspects within the local culture of Korea in the development of services for Korean passengers.

By implementing the strategic recommendations for the South Korean market, Finnair can decide which cultures to include further. The organisation can attain direct or indirect benefits that include an understanding of the culture of Korean passengers, the provision of more localised and satisfying services for the target customers and, ultimately, heightened profits from the corresponding market. In addition, since there are no Korean employees at HQ, internally sharing the process can allow other employees to more fully comprehend the South Korean market and its culture.

Further behavioural studies of various regional markets should be conducted individually because behaviours of passengers from different markets appear to be distinctive. However, the approach to crew training should be scaled and

implemented nationally or regionally, depending on the market size. By further investigating the suggested strategic areas, the passenger experience of the target country could be improved. Consequently, more international customers onboarding could be acquired.

This study can be useful to other airline companies that are headquartered in a non-Asian country. Otherwise, airlines that do not have an in-house service or experience design team but wish to explore how localised service could be designed in Korean or Asian markets as a benchmarking case. Although the strategic recommendations cannot export to other airlines to apply in the same way, the design process through a passenger-centric approach can be utilised similarly.

Moreover, the passenger-centric approach can be broadly used in the commercial transportation industry, such as cruise and commercial vehicle businesses. Additionally, global corporations where the customer experience should be centred in their business can take it as a broad perspective, user-centric approach.

Throughout the study, cultural behaviour reveals that this is a pivotal dimension to consider when developing services for airlines. This is because the airline has specifically its own culture, which is a crucial selling point that, at the same time, needs to be made available and compatible with diverse cultures. This project studying the Korean market as a case study was possible since Finnair operates to ICN on a regular basis and the significant number of passengers bring to economic value to the company. However, the cultural dimension in other businesses where diverse cultural factors should be considered may have less impact than this type of research.

Finally, I hope that this study can contribute to service design in the aviation industry in both academic and practical regards.

6.2 Limitation

During the case study project, I encountered a few limitations. These limitations are relevant to further research on this topic.

First, as a native speaker conducting user research, I may have a biased view even though I attempted to assume a researcher perspective. In terms of the level of integration as an ethnographer, the roles of the ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ should be taken into account to gain sufficient insight and avoid overemotional experiences (Muratovski, 2016). My role has offered several benefits, such as communication with travellers without a language barrier, empathy for the same culture and the working environment of the Korean employees. Nevertheless, more neutrality should be considered for further research.

Another aspect to mention is the time limit. This project was conducted from June to September. During this four-month period, employees had to devote time to arrangements and workshops during their working hours and especially during the summer holiday season. Finding a suitable time for decision-makers was challenging. For instance, the prioritisation of the crew phase should be carefully validated by more stakeholders and decision-makers. A more accurate result could be obtained if the schedule for the project was flexible to allow the invited stakeholders to participate in the workshop.

The third limitation to discuss is that the study cannot provide a universal answer for all Asian countries in terms of customer phase solutions. This case study only addresses the Korean market. Every country has a unique culture, and the results cannot be generalised to other Asian countries. Thus, further research is required toward other Asian countries.

The fourth limitation is the complexity of the research. This project was carried out by myself alone, though in collaboration with the company. During the project,

I expended significant effort to meet many stakeholders and sometimes travel to a remote area (South Korea), which caused burnout. Furthermore, meeting travellers required airport access that restricted the flexibility of the research. Future research should incorporate more time and human resources.

The last limitation is the implementation considering the market size versus the value of the investment. Although the Korean market is promising and growing steadily, it still represents a massive investment to develop an idea in production. Further research could reveal similar patterns or insights from other regions, surrounding nations, then the investment for development could be scaled and prioritised to implement. More prioritised markets can be investigated. Nevertheless, this study may highlight an opportunity to carry out further research in other countries with different cultures.

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Appendix

A. Survey Form



한국고객의 디지털 채널 선호도 조사

먼저 귀중한 시간을 할애하여 본 설문에 응해주심을 진심으로 감사드립니다. 본 설문지는 핀에어의 한국 고객에 대한 소비 속성과 디지털 채널 이용 경향을 연구하고 보다 만족스러운 서비스를 제공해 드리려는 목적으로 작성되었습니다. 본 조사는 무기명으로 실시되며, 응답해주신 내용은 순수한 학술적인 연구와 본사의 서비스 향상 목적으로만 사용될 것을 약속드립니다.

기본 정보

1. 귀하의 성별은 무엇입니까?

- 1 남 2 여 3 밝힐 수 없음

2. 다음 중 귀하의 연령대는 어디에 해당됩니까?

- 1 10대 2 20-24 3 25-35 4 36-45 5 46-55 6 65세 이상

3. 귀하의 거주지역은 다음 중 어디에 해당합니까?

- 1 서울 2 서울 외 수도권 3 강원지역 4 충청지역 5 호남지역 6 영남지역 7 제주 8 기타 9 기타 외 해외지역

4. 귀하의 이번 여행 형태는 다음 중 어디에 해당되십니까?

- 1 개별여행 2 가족여행 3 단체여행(여행사) 4 기타:

핀란드 방문에 대하여

5-1. 최근 3년 동안 귀하가 해외여행을 다닌 횟수는 총 몇 회입니까? ()회

5-2. 이번 여행을 포함하여 핀란드 방문 횟수는 총 몇 회입니까? ()회

5-3. 이번 해외여행 기간은 모두 며칠이며, 그 기간 중 핀란드 체류기간은 며칠입니까?

총 해외여행 기간은 ()일, 핀란드 체류기간은 ()일

5-4. 귀하는 이번 해외여행에서 핀란드만 방문하십니까? 아니면 다른 국가도 함께 방문하십니까? 핀란드와 함께 다른 국가도 방문하셨다면 핀란드 방문 이전 또는 이후 어느 국가를 방문하시는 지 적어주십시오.

1 핀란드만 방문

2 핀란드 입국 전 방문한 국가:

3 핀란드 출국 후 방문할 국가:

5-5. 이번 핀란드 여행을 결정한 시점은 언제입니까? ()개월 또는 ()일 전

5-6. 핀란드를 여행목적지로 선정한 과정에 대하여 귀하에게 해당하는 것을 선택해주세요.

1 여행계획시 처음부터 핀란드를 목적지로 선정했다.

2 다른 국가와 비교하여 최종적으로 핀란드를 목적지로 선정했다.

3 다른 유럽 국가로 경유하기 위해서 선택했다.

4 기타:

5-7. 핀란드 방문의 주된 목적을 하나만 선택해 주십시오.

1 여가, 위락, 개별휴가 2 친구, 친지 방문 3 건강 및 치료 4 쇼핑

5 사업 및 전문 활동 6 교육 7 기타:

항공권 구입/항공사 선택에 관하여

6-1. 보통 해외 여행 항공권을 구입하실 때 영향을 미치는 가장 큰 요인은 무엇인가요?

1. 가격 2. 기내서비스 3. 브랜드 4. 안전성 5. 친절함 6. 연결편 7. 기타

6-2. 이번 항공권 구입처 경로는 다음 중 무엇인가요?

- 1 핀에어 웹사이트 2 핀에어 앱 3 검색엔진(네이버, 다음 등) 4 여행사 추천 5 여행사 추천 6 기타 ()

6-3. (핀에어를 포함한) 외항사를 이용하신 경험이 있으신가요?

*외항사: 외국항공사, 국적기: 대한항공, 아시아나

- 1 핀에어와 다른 외항사 둘 다 이용해 봄
 2 핀에어만 이용해 봄
 3 핀에어 제외 외항사만 이용해 봄
 4 핀에어 포함 외항사 경험 없음 (국적기*만 이용)

6-4. 위 질문에서 핀에어 이용 경험이 있다고 응답하신 경우, 다른 외항사와 비교하여 핀에어의 특징은 무엇인가요?

6-5. 위 질문에서 핀에어 이용 경험이 있다고 응답하신 경우, 핀에어를 이용하신 이유는 다음 중 무엇인가요?

- 1 가격 2 기내서비스 3 브랜드인지도 4 안전성 5 친절도 6 연결편 7 기타 ()

6-6. 국적사와 비교하였을 때, 외항사 이용 시 불편했던 경험이 있다면, 무엇이었나요?

*국적사: 대한항공, 아시아나

항공권 구매부터 인천 공항, 연결편, 기내 서비스 등의 전체적인 고객 경험을 전체적으로 고려해서 적어주십시오.

6-7. 핀에어를 이용하실 때 불편한 점은 무엇이었나요?

항공권 구매부터 인천 공항, 연결편, 기내 서비스 등의 전체적인 고객 경험을 전체적으로 고려해서 적어주십시오.

6-8. 핀에어를 이용하실 때 기대했던 점이 있었다면 무엇인가요?

핀에어 경험이 없다면, 미래에 핀에어를 이용한다면 특별히 기대하는 점을 적어주십시오.

온라인 채널에 관하여

7-1. 귀하의 가장 선호하는 온라인 검색 채널은 다음 중 무엇입니까 (정보 검색: 여행정보와 항공권 포함)?

- 1 카카오톡/다음 검색 2 네이버 검색 3 유튜브 4 구글
 5 인스타그램 6 여행정보전문 웹사이트 7 기타()

7-2. 정보를 찾을 때 주로 어떤 기기를 이용하십니까?

- 1 스마트폰 2 태블릿기기(아이패드, 갤럭시 탭 등) 3 컴퓨터/노트북 4 기타

7-3. 선호하는 여행정보공유 커뮤니티가 있으시다면 적어주십시오.

e.g. 네이버 및 다음 카페 이름 명시 부탁드립니다.

7-4. 해당 여행 커뮤니티를 이용하는 이유는 무엇입니까?

- 1 신뢰성이 있어서 2 트렌드를 알기 쉬워서 3 질문하기 쉬워서 4 여행동반자를 구하기 쉬워서 5 프로모션이 있어서 6 기타

B. Interview Forms

- Korean cabin crew

FINNAIR

Question list for Korean cabin crew:

1. 핀에어에 입사하신 지 얼마나 되셨나요?
2. 핀에어 이전에 근무하신 곳이 있으신가요?
3. 다른 항공사와 비교했을 때 핀에어만의 특징이 있다면? (고객응대법/역할/환경 등)
4. 한국고객에게 핀에어의 Nordic experience가 어떻게 전해지고 있다고 생각하시나요?
5. 핀란드 항공사에서 일한다는 것이 본인에게는 어떤 의미인가요? 한국 국적사에서 일하는 동료들과 비교했을 때 다른 기대감이 있나요?
6. 핀란드스러움이 본인에게 어떤 의미인가요? 핀란드스러움이 본인에게 어떻게 보여지고 있나요? 당신에게 연관시킬 수 있는 경험인가요, 아니면 아주 이질적인가요?
7. 핀란드스러움이 고객에게 핀에어를 선택하는 USP(Unique Selling Point)라고 생각하시나요, 아니면 고객들이 전혀 고려하지 않는다고 생각하시나요?
8. 핀에어다움을 한 문장/단어로 정의하신다면?
9. 한국고객에게 핀에어스러움을 서비스를 하실 때, 어떻게 전달하고 있나요?
10. 혹시 외항사로써 한국 고객을 대할 때 어려운 점이 있나요?
11. 있다면 서비스를 하실 때 차이점이 있다면?
12. 한국 고객에게 핀에어가 외항사/북유럽 항공사로써의 강점이 있다면?
13. 한국 고객에게 핀에어가 외항사/북유럽 항공사로써의 약점은?
14. 핀에어에서 한국 고객들을 상대할 때와 외국 고객을 상대할 때의 차이점이 있었나요? (외국 고객들과 비교)
15. 한국 고객들의 주요 컴플레인/요구사항
17. Eco/Biz 한국 고객들의 행동의 차이점이 있다면?
18. 고객들의 카카오톡/앱/웹사이트에 대한 질문을 받아보신 적이 있으신가요?
19. 고객들로부터 디지털 채널에 관하여 피드백을 받는다면, 어떤 피드백을 어떻게, 언제 받나요? 한국 고객들로부터 가장 자연스럽게 피드백을 받을 수있는 방법은 무엇이라고 생각하시나요?



Question list for Finnish crew

1. How long have you been working at Finnair?
2. Have you worked somewhere else then Finnair before?
3. If so, comparing to other airlines, what is differentiated characteristics of Finnair?
4. What do you think of serving Finnairness/Nordic experience?
5. Is the nordic experience something you value as part of your job? Do you feel it in your job and do you see your colleagues do the same?
6. What does "Finnish-ness" mean to you?
7. How has it been presented to you? Is it an experience you can relate to or is it very foreign
8. Personally, how do you serve to international passengers?
9. Do you think inflight services are localised for international passengers?
10. How do you serve Non-Finnish/non-English speaker? Maybe especially for Asian passengers who have a language barrier?
11. Frequent Feedback especially from Korean passengers/flights between ICN-HEL?
12. Challenges when you serve Korean passengers?
13. How do you communicate with the Korean crew who are based in Korea?



Question list for Crew supervisor

1. How long have you been working at Finnair?
2. Can you describe what you are doing and how you work with crew members?
3. If you have other work experiences in other airlines, what are differentiated characteristics of Finnair comparing to them?
 1. If not, when comparing to our competitors, what could be the characteristics?
4. What do you think of serving Finnair-ness/Nordic experience?
 1. Do you think those experiences are connected to features of Finland as a country?
 2. What's the most important aspect of what you said?
 3. Finnair as one sentence? "Finnair-ness is _____"
5. Is the nordic experience something you value as part of your job? Do you feel it in your job and do you see your colleagues do the same?
6. What does "Finnish-ness" mean to you?
7. How has it been presented to you? Do you think it could be very foreign for other non-Finnish people?
8. Personally, what have you considered when you made those tutorials/materials for international passengers?
9. What was challenging when you make those materials?
10. Do you think inflight services are localised for international passengers?
11. What's your optimal scenario to serve non-Finnish/non English speaker? Maybe especially for Asian passengers who have language barrier?
12. Frequent Feedback especially from Korean passengers/flights between ICN-HEL?
13. Challenges when you serve Korean passengers?
14. How do you communicate with the Korean crew who are based in Korea? How do you usually do?
15. What are you expecting as becoming a crew supervisor of the Korean crew?
16. Any ideas to improve especially Korean localisation services? (based on your experiences)?

- Korean employees



Question list for Korean employees

1. The ways how Korean customers purchase flight tickets
 - 1.1. Top season besides holiday season/promotion period
2. Do you have any idea if Finnair digital touch points do not fit to Korea market and Asian market? (If data available?)
 - 2.1. E.g. translation/ service limit
3. Frequent complaints from customers?
4. Ticket type/purpose? E.g. Direct flight/connection to other European countries
5. Brand awareness
 - 5.1. As an employee working in a foreign airline company, what do you think "Finnair" Brand?
 - 5.2. Characteristics of Finnair - Opportunities aiming at Koreans
 - 5.3. What do you think Nordic/Finnishness mean to Koreans?
 - 5.3.1. if there is a specific target group who are affected by?
 - 5.4. The way(s) that the Korean office tries to express "Finnairness"?
6. Relationship/Network between Korean crew?
 - 6.1. Contact/ availability to have interviews
7. Research that has to be done/need to investigate?

B. Job Story Cards (Customer phase)

Theme 01

Nordic Experience

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When flying with Finnair and staying for a few days stopover, I want to hear local experiences of Nordic countries, so I know what to do and where to visit when I arrive at Helsinki.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

1. Finnair contains representative elements of Finland in collaboration with Finnish brands, which increase KR customers' expectation
2. Nordic experience is often interpreted as activities/scenes in Finnish nature
3. Cabin Crew share information about Finland and Finnish Design to passengers who are interested in the products in the cabin

OPPORTUNITIES
e.g. Finnair's local guide through app, VR travel in IFE



The illustration features a stylized drawing of the Finnish Parliament building (Edenranta) in the center. To the left is a vertical sign for 'KALLIO' with a crane. To the right is a box labeled 'NUUKSIO' with a location pin icon. Below these is a bowl of food labeled 'VEGAN'.

Theme 01

Nordic Experience

Group 1 Group 2


CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When I travel with Finnair, I want to get more information about the products from Finland and stories of the elements I find in the cabin, e.g. Finnish plates and ancillaries, so I can gain knowledge about Finland as well as more about Finnair as an airline representing Nordic countries.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

1. Finnair contains representative elements of Finland in collaboration with Finnish brands, which increase KR customers' expectation
2. Nordic experience is often interpreted as activities/scenes in Finnish nature
3. Cabin Crew share information about Finland and Finnish Design to passengers who are interested in the products in the cabin

OPPORTUNITIES
e.g. Ancillary stories through IFE,
Crew pick - recommendation from cabin crew in the cabin



The illustration shows a speech bubble containing the text 'Sit to tell you about ourselves..'. Below the speech bubble are drawings of a glass of beer, a plate of food, and a small box.

Theme 02

3

Communication & Learning

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When talking to the crew about an issue in the flight, I want to communicate smoothly regardless of their nationality or language, so I can quickly solve the problem without waiting KR crew coming to check.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

4. The mood among cabin crew influences on customers comfort.

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Chat using auto translation in IFE



Theme 02

4

Communication & Learning

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When FI cabin crew ask me to choose a meal option, I want to choose the food I want without any barrier, so I can enjoy the food I receive.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

4. The mood among cabin crew influences on customers comfort.

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. 3D pictures of the menu, ingredients and information in IFE & NS



Theme 02

Communication & Learning

Group 1

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When receiving services from crew members at Foreign airlines, I want to see their respectful attitudes, so I can feel more respectful and comfortable like at home.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

5. KR Passengers want to receive comfort services with an attitude of respect attitude rather than a friendly approach
6. Customer hierarchy is underlined in Korean airline industry, whereas Finnair pursues equality in personal hierarchy between customer based on the Finnish company culture

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Greeting messages with crew faces of the day on IFE, Instruction about different cultures before take-off



5

Theme 02

Communication & Learning

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When I drop baggage at the check-in and luggage drop desk, I want to see the same level of the customer service like Finnair does, so I will be experiencing the same tone of action and feel unique.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

14. Ground services are not coherent within the Finnair way of doing due to absence of Finnair ground crew

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. luggage drop using Kiosk, a tool for outsourced ground crew



6

Theme 02

7

Communication & Learning

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When waiting in the line for checking in at ICN airport, I want to know exactly where to stand beforehand, so I can avoid waiting a too long time and then realising I have to join the end of the queue in different lines.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

14. Ground services are not coherent within the Finnair way of doing due to absence of Finnair ground crew

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. App contents informing where to wait and how long it would take at outstation airports



Theme 02

8

Communication & Learning

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When it comes to check-in, I want to see what are the included services or not, before departing to the airport, so I can make sure what I will get. e.g. food and beverage and luggage limit

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

14. Ground services are not coherent within the Finnair way of doing due to absence of Finnair ground crew

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Clear instruction through local digital channels e.g. hand luggage limit & complementary and paid services



Theme 03

Accessibility & Visibility

Group 1

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When facing Finnish crew in the flight, I want to be able to communicate and experience their local culture through them, so I avoid misunderstanding their culture and could learn what to respect.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

15. 8-hour flight is not enough for KR travellers to adjust themselves to fully understand "Finnish way of doing" services

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. IFE - Fun cartoons or contents to get to know Finnish cultures & videos about local crew stories (like youtube channels)



9

Theme 03

Accessibility & Visibility

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When I am about to take my flight, I want to get notified about explicit instruction about the local people & Finnair, so I can understand different culture & people.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

15. 8-hour flight is not enough for KR travellers to adjust themselves to fully understand "Finnish way of doing" services

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Introducing stories and experiences of Finnair through NS or IFE



10

Accessibility & Visibility

Group 1

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When using IFE, I want to see only available contents and services for me, e.g. contents in Korean language and products according to my budget, so I don't have to spend extra time exploring and trying things which wouldn't work on me.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

19. Conflicts in the cabin occur not only from cultural differences between KR and FI, but also from generation gap lacking digital literacy
20. Incomprehensible content is not useful regardless of the number of contents

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Filtering functions in IFE, increasing contents with KR subtitles



Accessibility & Visibility

Group 1

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When purchasing my package trip through a travel agency which includes the Finnair flight ticket, I want to get informed clearly about what services are paid or complimentary before taking the flight, so I don't ask too much unrealistically.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

16. KR customers complain in Finnair flight when they realise they miss what they used to get for free in KR domestic airlines
21. Misguided concept of complimentary and paid services have KR customers hesitate to even enjoy included services

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Distribute a clear instruction page to travel agencies for group travellers to get informed



Accessibility & Visibility

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When paying for my flight ticket on the Finnair website, I want to get informed about clear instruction, so that I complete payment without many fails.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

17. Different payment systems and regulations between Korea and European countries demotivate customers to book flights in Finnair direct channels

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Clear instruction in real time through local digital channels
When about to pay, payment instruction is sent to customers.



Accessibility & Visibility

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

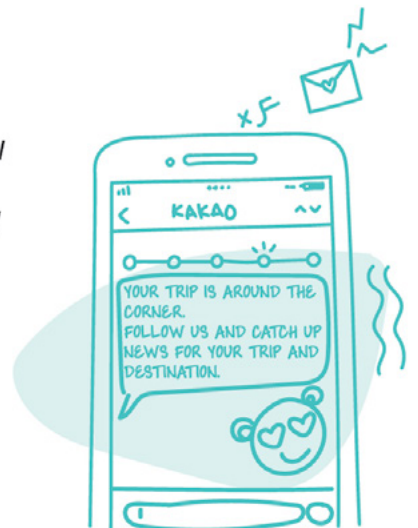
When checking my booking confirmation, I want to receive consistent information without disruption, so I can make sure and feel relaxed about my trip schedule.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

17. Different payment systems and regulations between Korea and European countries demotivate customers to book flights in Finnair direct channels

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Following up notification through local digital channels



Accessibility & Visibility

Group 1

Group 2

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When facing any issue while booking, I want to find contact info immediately and resolve the problem right away, so I don't have to waste time nor feel anxious about my trip.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

17. Different payment systems and regulations between Korea and European countries demotivate customers to book flights in Finnair direct channels

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. locate the contact info (including local digital channels) on the landing page



Accessibility & Visibility

Group 1

CUSTOMER JOB STATEMENT

When using IFE, I want to use it by just simply entering the contents I want, so I avoid feeling confused and asking for help from the crew every time.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

19. Conflicts in the cabin occur not only from cultural differences between KR and FI, but also from generation gap lacking digital literacy

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. customising font size (like e-book), and accessibility testing



C. Job Story Cards (Crew phase)

Theme 01

Nordic Experience

KR crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When telling my personal stories about Nordic countries and knowledge about their lifestyles to Korean travellers, I want to say more about up-to-date local experiences than what tourists usually do, so they want to travel Finland and Nordic regions for the next time.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

1. Finnair contains representative elements of Finland in collaboration with Finnish brands, which increase KR customers' expectation
2. Nordic experience is often interpreted as activities/scenes in Finnish nature
3. Cabin Crew share information about Finland and Finnish Design to passengers who are interested in the products in the cabin

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Community between local & regional crew



The illustration features a stylized red line-art drawing of the Finnish Parliament building (Edenranta) in the center. To the left is a vertical sign for 'SALONKA KALLIO'. To the right is a box labeled 'SUUKSIO'. Below these are a bowl of 'VEGAN' food and a small map icon.

Theme 01

Nordic Experience

KR crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT


When I join Finnair and learn about Nordic experiences during the training period, I want to know what to say and how to behave as an 'embosser', so I will be able to deliver our value to customers.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

1. Finnair contains representative elements of Finland in collaboration with Finnish brands, which increase KR customers' expectation
2. Nordic experience is often interpreted as activities/scenes in Finnish nature
3. Cabin Crew share information about Finland and Finnish Design to passengers who are interested in the products in the cabin

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. training tutorials (recorded by senior regional crew, accumulated data for future gen)
Tutorial benchmarking from Korean airlines (How to announce in Korean)



The illustration shows a stylized red line-art drawing of two people, a man and a woman, looking at each other. Above them is a Finnish flag with three stars, and some small decorative elements.

Theme 01

3

Nordic Experience

KR crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When asked to explain about Nordic experiences to customers, I want to tell a vivid and engaging story, so customers want to travel Finland with Finnair.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

1. Finnair contains representative elements of Finland in collaboration with Finnish brands, which increase KR customers' expectation

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. regular excursion to local areas in Finland



Theme 01

4

Nordic Experience

KR crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When presenting Finnair during the flight, I want to deliver real Nordic stories to customers, so customers can expect to visit Nordic regions.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

2. Nordic experience is often interpreted as activities/scenes in Finnish nature

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Local Crew's pick (as recommendations) on IFE



Theme 02

Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When working with KR crew, I want to enjoy working together with FI crew, so we can deliver positive mood to our customers.



FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

1. The mood among cabin crew influences on customers comfort

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Regular 'Get together' sessions between FI based crew and regional crew

5

Theme 02

Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When providing services to KR customers, I want to behave like I understand their culture, so they can think I avoid sounding like I am rude to them.



FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

2. KR Passengers want to receive comfort services with an attitude of respect attitude rather than a friendly approach.
3. Customer hierarchy is underlined in Korean airline industry, whereas Finnair pursues equality in personal hierarchy between customer based on the Finnish company culture.

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Up-to-date cultural tutorials on a regular base

6

Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When a conflict happens between KR passengers and me, I want to solve the issue by myself first, so I do feel a sense of achievement by being independent, which helps Korean crew don't have to work in a hectic situation.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

4. The mood among cabin crew influences on customers comfort.

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Auto-translating/pre-made translation tool for crew communication



Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When flying to the Korean route, I want to learn the Korean culture before the duty, so I can deliver appropriate services to KR passengers.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

5. KR Passengers want to receive comfort services with an attitude of respect attitude rather than a friendly approach

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Guidebook shared by regional crew, open platform for cultural knowledge sharing



Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When working with KR crew, I want to learn about their culture & language, so I can communicate with KR customers and avoid misunderstanding situations.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

5. KR Passengers want to receive comfort services with an attitude of respect attitude rather than a friendly approach

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Knowledge sharing platform/ crew-pedia (encyclopedia uploaded by crew)

Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When I prepare for KR flight duty, I want to see where to check learning materials, so I can watch them without spending too much time to find them.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF..

5. KR Passengers want to receive comfort services with an attitude of respect attitude rather than a friendly approach

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. compact learning package as visible and digestible format, showing only necessary parts depending on the destination (personalised information)

Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When preparing for KR flight duty, I want to watch up-to-date information about the culture of a destination, so I can keep catching up my understanding toward KR customers.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

6. Invisible access to cultural learning materials for crew is the cause of understanding and respecting local cultures

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Crew briefing including the short cultural contents (of the destination)

Communication & Learning

KR crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When I cope with a Korean customer, and another customer asks for help at the same time, and I want to help her/him solve the problem without going through me necessarily, so I will be able to work in peace of mind.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

7. Due to the language barrier, FI crew have to rely on KR crew to cope with complaints with KR customers, which results in more workload and responsibility to KR crew
9. Imbalance between workload and available Korean human resources result in performing high level of emotional labour, so that eventually KR crew cannot deliver satisfying services to customers.

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. FAQ on IFE, digital crew on IFE - as a helper to solve problems of pax



Communication & Learning

FI crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When delivering meal services, I want to communicate with visual languages with Korean customers who can't speak in English, so I avoid relying on Korean crew for help as well as work efficiently, and customers can understand what food they will get.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

7. Due to the language barrier, FI crew have to rely on KR crew to cope with complaints with KR customers, which results in more workload and responsibility to KR crew
 9. Imbalance between workload and available Korean human resources result in performing high level of emotional labour, so that eventually KR crew cannot deliver satisfying services to customers.

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. 3D picture of the menu in the crew's digital tool, examples of similar Korean food as comparison



Communication & Learning

KR crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When working for KR passengers, I want to check more explicit guidance on how I cope with issues caused by cultural differences, so I can deliver more balanced and customised services.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

8. KR regional crew have the responsibility as a mediator between FI crew and KR customers
 10. KR crew struggle with delivering balanced services between "Finnish way" and "Korean way" to KR customers

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. Pocket book explaining the culture and behaviours (as a portable and readable format e.g. crew's tool)

Accessibility & Visibility

KR crew

CREW JOB STATEMENT

When I get inquired many times for Wifi connection, I want to inform them without visiting them one by one, so I can avoid delaying services sequences.

FROM THE INSIGHT(S) OF...

18. Misplaced information how to use digital touch points is the bottleneck in engaging with Finnair

OPPORTUNITIES

e.g. More visible instruction on IFE, Chatbot in IFE



blank page

FINNAIR

