



MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR ATTRACTING US AMERICAN TRAVELERS TO FINLAND

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this Bachelor's thesis was to analyze the desirability of Finland as a destination for US American tourists. Another purpose was to research whether development of the market was required to promote the country as a tourist destination amongst this population.

Data were gathered from various sources and the conclusions drawn from the findings have been used as a basis for a proposed marketing campaign. Whilst the findings suggest that Finland is a relatively popular tourist destination for US Americans, the number of US Americans travelling to the country is considerably smaller than the number of travelers entering the country from other regions.

Furthermore, there was also an apparent lack of knowledge about what Finland can offer to tourists. This indicates that further development of the market is required and could be beneficial to the tourist industry. Also a deeper insight to the US legislation would be necessary.

Key words: Finland, marketing campaign, tourist destination, US American travelers

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	TOURISM INDUSTRY	5
	2.1 Definition of tourism	5
	2.1 Motivation of travel	6
3	MARKETING	8
4	TARGET COUNTRY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	9
	4.1 Overseas destinations.....	9
	4.2 The main locations from where US Americans travel.....	11
	4.3 Purposes of travel.....	15
	4.4 Social media usage.....	15
5	FINLAND AND TOURISM.....	18
	5.1 Marketing campaigns.....	19
	5.2 US American tourists.....	20
	5.3 Finland’s attractions.....	20
6	THE MARKETING CAMPAIGN	22
	6.1 Strategy overview	23
	6.2 Structure of the marketing campaign.....	23
	6.2.1 Start of the marketing campaign	24
	6.2.2 Game release	26
	6.2.3 Other parts of the campaign	27
	6.3 Targeting	28
	6.4 Campaign roles	28
	6.5 Outreach.....	29
	6.6 Timeline	29
7	CONCLUSION	31
	REFERENCES.....	32

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most remarkable success stories of modern times. The industry, which began on a massive scale only in the 1960s, has grown rapidly and steadily for the past 30 years in terms of the income it generates and the number of people who travel abroad. It has proved to be resilient in times of economic crisis and shows no signs of slowing down, despite the uncertainty, caused by the events, such as September 11, other terrorist threats, and even unexpected new illnesses like SARS in the beginning of the new century. (Theobald 2005, ix.)

Historically, tourism has not been taken seriously by economists, economic developers, or even governments (Theobald 2005, 25). Tourism is a remarkable and a wide field, which creates several opportunities. The Finnish Tourist Board is one of the sources discussed throughout the thesis, as it actively tries to develop Finland's tourism and its destination attractiveness. The campaign idea has been developed with the idea of co-operation with the Finnish Tourist Board.

The structure of the thesis is the following; the first chapters are introductions to tourism industry as a whole, what tourism is, tourism destinations and why people travel. After this the market aspects are examined. Chapter four covers the US American tourists, where they travel to, from where they travel and how effectively they use the social media. In order to make a campaign for the US Americans there is a need to understand their market, however there is also a need to know what the destination country, in this case Finland, can offer to them. Chapter five covers Finland, its tourism strategy at the moment and its attractions. In chapter six the marketing campaign idea is discussed.

2 TOURISM INDUSTRY

In this chapter a closer look is taken to what tourism is. "Tourism is not only the world's largest trade, but a phenomenon of great social as well as economic importance. It is a mass movement of people impacting on a large number of destinations visited and many service trades, with major consequences (Lickorish & Jenkins 1997, 50)."

2.1 Definition of tourism

Tourism, according to the Oxford dictionary, is "the theory and practice of touring, travelling for pleasure" (Leiper 1979, 391). There are several definitions, and one of them is a general theory of tourism, which is from 1942, published by Professors Walter Hunziker and Kurt Krapf, and quoted by Burkart and Medlik (1981, 4). The definition is: Tourism is the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity. This concept was later approved by the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (AIEST) (Lickorish & Jenkins 1997, 34).

This definition has got critique as being too vague, however at the moment there does not exist only one definition but several different ones, and next are mentioned few other definitions, which were taken from Leiper's research "The framework of tourism": Tourism is an indentifiable nationally important industry. The industry involves a wide cross section of component activities including the provision of transportation, accommodation, recreation, food, and related services (Australian Department of Tourism & Recreation 1975:2; 1979, 392). Tourism can be defined as the science, art and business of attracting and transporting visitors, accommodating them and graciously catering to their needs and wants (McIntosh 1977: ix; 1979, 392). Tourism is the study of man away from his usual habitat, of the industry which responds to his needs, and of the impacts that both he and the industry have on the host's socio-cultural, economic and physical environments" (Jafari 1977:8; 1979, 394).

As a result we can see there are several definitions, some which are more related to economics or cultural aspects, as tourism is a diverse field and cannot be classified easily into one specific segment.

2.1 Motivation of travel

Caitlin Hall quoted well the motivation of tourism on her website. Crompton (1979) explains that motivation is only one of many contributing factors which assist with explaining tourist behavior although it is considered a critical factor as it is the "impelling and compelling force behind all behaviour" (Berkman & Gilson 1978 as cited in Crompton 1979, 409). Hill (1965) has defined it as such: The holiday is psychologically a period during which the individual is hoping to take in and store "internal goods" with which he will return enriched, regenerated and recharged to his own environment. From this point of view the environment in which the holiday is taken has to be perceived as rich in that all these imports are available. (Hill 1965, 30; Pearce 1982, 65.)

"Push & Pull factors have been widely accepted to explain tourist behaviour and travel motivations" (Crompton 1979; Uysal & Hagen 1993; as cited in Chan & Baum 2007, 359). Dann (1997) simply explains push factors as the motives that drive a tourist away from home and pull factors as the motives that drive a tourist towards a destination. However, with more complexity the push factors encouraging a person to travel are the socio-psychological needs of a person (Yoon & Uysal 2005) and the pull factors are the motivations arousing a person to visit a particular destination (Buhalis 2003; Flucker & Turner; as cited in Chan & Baum 2007). Crompton (1979) distinguishes seven socio-psychological motives: escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships and facilitation of social interaction; and two cultural motives: novelty and education.

Gray (1970), however defines the same push and pull motives as 'sunlust' and 'wanderlust'. Sunlust describes those "vacations in which are motivated by the desire to experience different or better amenities for a specific purpose than are available in the environment in which one normally lives" (Crompton 1977, 410). And alternative wanderlust is described as the "basic trait in human nature that causes some individuals to want to leave

things with which they are familiar and to go and see at first hand different existing cultures and places" (Crompton 1977, 410).

3 MARKETING

In the following two popular marketing definitions are mentioned: the first one by the UK's Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) and the second one by American Marketing Association (AMA):

“Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitability (CIM 2001).”

“Marketing is the process of planning and executing conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.” (AMA 1985; Brassington & Pettitt 2006, 7)

Marketing is a diverse and a complex subject that includes several different aspects. The definitions mentioned above do capture in short what are the purposes of marketing.

4 TARGET COUNTRY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This chapter will analyse the target country, evaluate where US Americans mainly travel to, which destinations they are attracted the most and explore their travel habits in general. In addition to this, their social media usage is also examined.

4.1 Overseas destinations

The following statistics mentioned in this chapter have been taken from the U.S. Office of Travel & Tourism Industries (OTTI) website if not stated otherwise.

It was stated that in 2014, there was an increase of 10% to international destinations, following Mexico as the most popular destination with 25.9 million US dollars. The top five most visited international destinations by US residents were:

1. Mexico (25.9 million \$)
2. Canada (11.5 million \$)
3. United Kingdom (2.8 million \$)
4. Dominican Republic (2.7 million \$)
5. France (2.1 million \$)

From the statistics given by OTTI it can be concluded that the most popular destinations were countries close by. However, two European countries also made it to the top 5 list in terms of US dollars, but there is a huge difference in the amount of travellers compared to the people who travel to neighbouring countries to the travellers who travel overseas. There is definitely a possibility for the whole European market to make it more appealing as a destination for US Americans. (U.S. Resident Travel... 2015, 1.)

In the table 1 we can see the most popular destinations in Europe visited by the US American tourists. None of the Nordic countries, including Finland, are on the list.

TABLE 1. Most visited destinations by the U.S. travellers (Profile of U.S... 2005, 9)

Profile of U.S. Travelers Visiting Overseas Destinations: 2014			
U.S. Resident Traveler Characteristics	All U.S. Travelers	For Vacation & VFR	For Business & Conv.
Total Number of Travelers **	30,780,000	25,455,000	5,233,000
International Destinations Visited:*			
Europe	35%	36%	37%
United Kingdom	9%	9%	10%
France	7%	7%	5%
Italy	6%	7%	4%
Germany	6%	6%	9%
Spain	4%	4%	3%
Ireland	2%	3%	2%
Netherlands	2%	2%	3%
Switzerland	2%	2%	2%
Austria	2%	2%	1%
Caribbean	24%	26%	13%
Dominican Republic	9%	10%	4%
Jamaica	5%	5%	2%
Bahamas	4%	4%	3%
South America	7%	7%	8%
Columbia	2%	2%	2%
Peru	2%	2%	1%
Central America	8%	8%	7%
Costa Rica	3%	3%	2%
Africa	3%	3%	3%

* Multiple Response.

** NOTE: Percentages listed in this profile can be converted into estimated numbers by multiplying the percentage by 30,780,000 (total U.S. Residents visiting overseas destinations), to yield 25,455,000 (82.7% Vacation/Holiday & Visit Friends/Relatives) and 5,233,000 (17.0% Business/Convention). Rounded percentages were listed for all categories reported by 1% or more of the respondents and may not sum to 100%.

4.2 The main locations from where US Americans travel

In this chapter it is examined, from which regions the U.S. residents travel and are there differences between regions. Based on the figures of table 2 and table 3 it can be concluded that the highest number of travellers to overseas destinations come from Middle Atlantic (24%), South Atlantic (20%) and Pacific (16%) regions. Rest of the regions represent the share of 10% or lower.

TABLE 2. The regions from where the U.S. residents travel to overseas (Profile of U.S... 2005, 2)

U.S. Resident Travelers to Overseas Destination

U.S. Resident Travelers to Overseas Destinations: ⁽¹⁾ Total Number of Travelers**	All U.S. Travelers
Region/State/City of Residence	30,780,000
New England	7%
Massachusetts	4%
Connecticut	2%
Middle Atlantic	24%
New York	14%
New York City	11%
Nassau	2%
New Jersey	6%
Pennsylvania	4%
Philadelphia	2%
East North Central	10%
Michigan	3%
Illinois	3%
Chicago	2%
Ohio	2%
West North Central	5%
Minnesota	2%
East South Central	3%

TABLE 3. The regions from where the U.S. residents travel to overseas (Profile of U.S... 2005, 3)

U.S. Resident Travelers to Overseas Destinations	All U.S. Travelers
Total Number of Travelers **	30,780,000
South Atlantic	20%
Florida	7%
Miami	3%
Virginia	3%
Georgia	3%
Atlanta	2%
North Carolina	2%
Maryland	2%
D.C. Metro Area	3%
East South Central	3%
West South Central	10%
Texas	8%
Houston	3%
Dallas	2%
Mountain	5%
Colorado	2%
Pacific	16%
California	13%
Los Angeles	4%
Washington	2%
Seattle	2%
Pacific Islands	0%
Atlantic Islands	0%

State and city of residence are listed if they represent at least 2% (rounded) of the U.S. travelers to overseas destinations. States are listed in declining percentages within U.S. regions. Metro areas are listed in declining percentages within states.

NOTE: Percentages listed in this profile can be converted into estimated numbers by multiplying percentage listed above by 30,780,000 (the total U.S. Residents visiting overseas destinations), 25,455,000 (82.7% Vacation/Holiday & Visit Friends/Relatives) and 5,233,000 (17.0% Business/Convention).

It was also asked with whom do the U.S. residents travel to overseas destinations. Table 4 shows clearly that the most of travellers were traveling alone, over half of the travellers. The number was even higher if the trip was business related. The table also concludes that the majority of the travellers are adults. With kids travelled less than 10%. This also shows that there is a market for families, as at the moment their percentage of the overall

travellers is low. This is one of the reasons why the focus of the proposed campaign is also on the families and children.

TABLE 4. Travel Companions (Profile of U.S... 2005, 5)

U.S. Resident Traveler Characteristics	All U.S. Travelers	For Vacation & VFR	For Business & Conv.
Total Number of Travelers **	30,780,000	25,455,000	5,233,000
Use of Prepaid Package:			
Yes	13%	15%	5%
No	87%	85%	95%
Pre-Booked Lodging*:			
Responded - Yes	55%	54%	62%
Sources for Booking Lodging*:			
The Lodging Establishment Directly	19%	20%	19%
Internet Booking Service	15%	17%	12%
Travel Agency Office	9%	10%	4%
Corporate Travel Dept.	6%	2%	27%
Tour Operator/Travel Club	6%	6%	2%
The Airline	1%	1%	1%
Other	4%	4%	4%
Travel Companions*:			
Traveling Alone	64%	58%	83%
Spouse/Partner	22%	27%	8%
Family/Relatives	12%	15%	4%
Friends	5%	5%	1%
Business Associates	2%	0%	7%
Tour Group	1%	1%	0%
Travel Party Size: (persons)			
Adults Only	92%	91%	97%
Adults and Children	8%	9%	3%
Average Party Size	1.6	1.6	1.3
Median Party Size	1.0	1.0	1.0

* Multiple Response.

** NOTE: Percentages listed in this profile can be converted into estimated numbers by multiplying the percentage by 30,780,000 (total U.S. Residents visiting overseas destinations), to yield 25,455,000 (82.7% Vacation/Holiday & Visit Friends/Relatives) and 5,233,000 (17.0% Business/Convention). Rounded percentages were listed for all categories reported by 1% or more of the respondents and may not sum to 100%.

So far it has been discussed where from the U.S. travellers travel and with whom. However, it has not been discussed who the travellers are, their ages and the gender. Table 5 1 takes a closer look in those details. The overall gender divide is quite even, with half being males 50% and half being females 51%. However when the reason for a travel is business, the percentage division is different, males 69% and females 31%. The average

age stays the same for both genders no matter what the reason for travels is, around mid-forties for both genders. Table 6 covers the race of the travellers and the majority of the travellers are white.

TABLE 5. U.S. Resident Traveler Characteristics (Profile of U.S... 2005, 14)

U.S. Resident Traveler Characteristics	All U.S. Travelers	For Vacation & VFR	For Business & Conv.
Total Number of U.S. Travelers **	30,780,000	25,455,000	5,233,000
Gender and Age of Traveler:			
Male Adults	50%	45%	69%
Female Adults	51%	55%	31%
Average Age of Male (years)	45.4	45.6	45.8
Average Age of Female (years)	44.0	44.7	42.7

TABLE 6. U.S. Resident Traveler Characteristics (Profile of U.S... 2005, 15)

U.S. Resident Traveler Characteristics	All U.S. Travelers	For Vacation & VFR	For Business & Conv.
Total Number of U.S. Travelers **	30,780,000	25,455,000	5,233,000
Ethnicity			
Hispanic	14.7%	14.6%	13.4%
Non-Hispanic	85.3%	85.4%	86.6%
Race*			
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.8%	1.6%	2.5%
Asian	16.2%	17.1%	13.3%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%
Black	7.6%	7.7%	6.6%
White	76.4%	75.8%	79.4%
Health Care Pre-Trip (Vaccinations, etc)			
Yes	12.2%	11.2%	10.3%
No	87.8%	88.8%	89.7%
Travel Insurance Purchased			
Yes	28.1%	29.8%	14.1%
No	71.9%	70.2%	85.9%

4.3 Purposes of travel

There can be several different reasons for travels and in this chapter it is shown what are the main reasons behind the travels to overseas for the U.S. residents. In the table 7 it is clearly distinguished that the main reason for travels is vacation/holiday for the U.S. travellers with 51%, 2nd biggest reason is visiting friends/relatives with 27% and for business, which was on the 3rd place with 11%. The main purpose for business travellers shows a different model.

TABLE 7. Purpose of travel (Profile of U.S... 2005, 7)

U.S. Resident Traveler Characteristics	All U.S. Travelers	For Vacation & VFR	For Business & Conv.
Total Number of Travelers **	30,780,000	25,455,000	5,233,000
Main Purpose of Trip:			
Vacation/Holiday	51%	61%	5%
Visit Friends/Relatives	27%	33%	3%
Business	11%	2%	68%
Education	5%	2%	1%
Convention/Conference/Trade Show	3%	2%	21%
Religion/Pilgrimages	2%	1%	1%
Health Treatment	0%	0%	0%
Purpose of Trip*:			
Vacation/Holiday	62%	75%	19%
Visit Friends/Relatives	37%	45%	13%
Business	13%	4%	78%
Education	7%	5%	6%
Convention/Conference/Trade Show	5%	3%	29%
Religion/Pilgrimages	3%	2%	2%
Health Treatment	1%	1%	1%

4.4 Social media usage

In this chapter the results of social media usage between 2005-2015 of US Americans, by Pew Research Center, are shown. According to the results, nearly two-thirds of US American adults (65%) use social media sites. “Young adults (ages 18 to 29) are the most likely to use social media – fully 90% do. Still, usage among those 65 and older has more

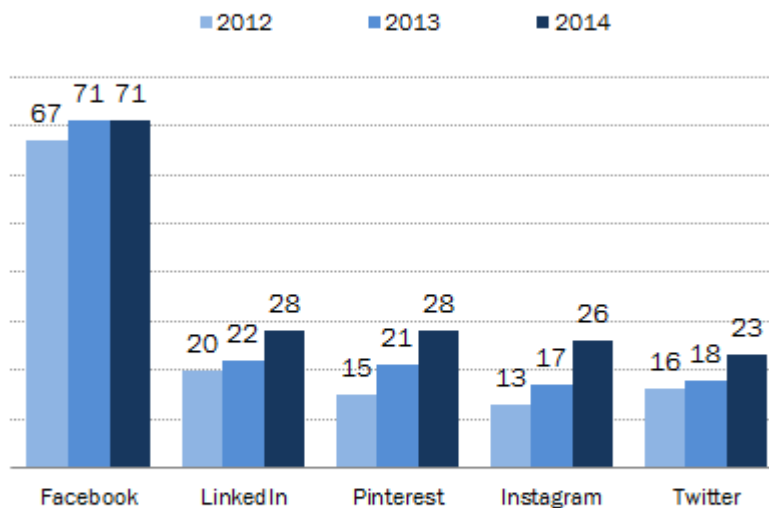
than tripled since 2010 when 11% used social media. Today, 35% of all those 65 and older report using social media, compared with just 2% in 2005 (Social Media Usage... 2015, 4).”

The usage by the gender is quite equal, 68% of all the women use social media and for men the percentage is 62%. And people with higher educational level and household income are more likely to use social media. The research also examined if there would have been a usage difference related to racial and ethnic similarities, however there were no notable differences by racial or ethnic groups.

The most popular social media websites of US American adult users, by Pew Research Center, can be seen in figure 1. Facebook still remains the most popular social media site, followed by LinkedIn, Pinterest and Instagram, which are equally popular, followed by Twitter.

Social media sites, 2012-2014

% of online adults who use the following social media websites, by year



Pew Research Center's Internet Project Surveys, 2012-2014. 2014 data collected September 11-14 & September 18-21, 2014. N=1,597 internet users ages 18+.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

FIGURE 1. Usage of social media sites (Social Media Update... 2015, 2)

5 FINLAND AND TOURISM

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries and its importance has been growing in Finland. In 2014 there were over 1.1 billion tourists from abroad (Tourism is one... 2015, 2). Figure 2 shows the tourism and income flows to Finland. Domestic overnights were 14.1 million and the income was 10 billion € (2013). Foreign travellers' overnights were 5.7 million and the income 2.7 billion € (2013). The difference between domestic and foreigner tourist flows is big, however it is estimated that there will be growth in the future years with tourist flows from abroad. In the figure two we can also see that the top 5 biggest tourist flows in terms of euros in order are Russia (956 M€), Sweden (317,3M€), Germany (159,7M€), Great Britain (117M€), United States (109,2M€).

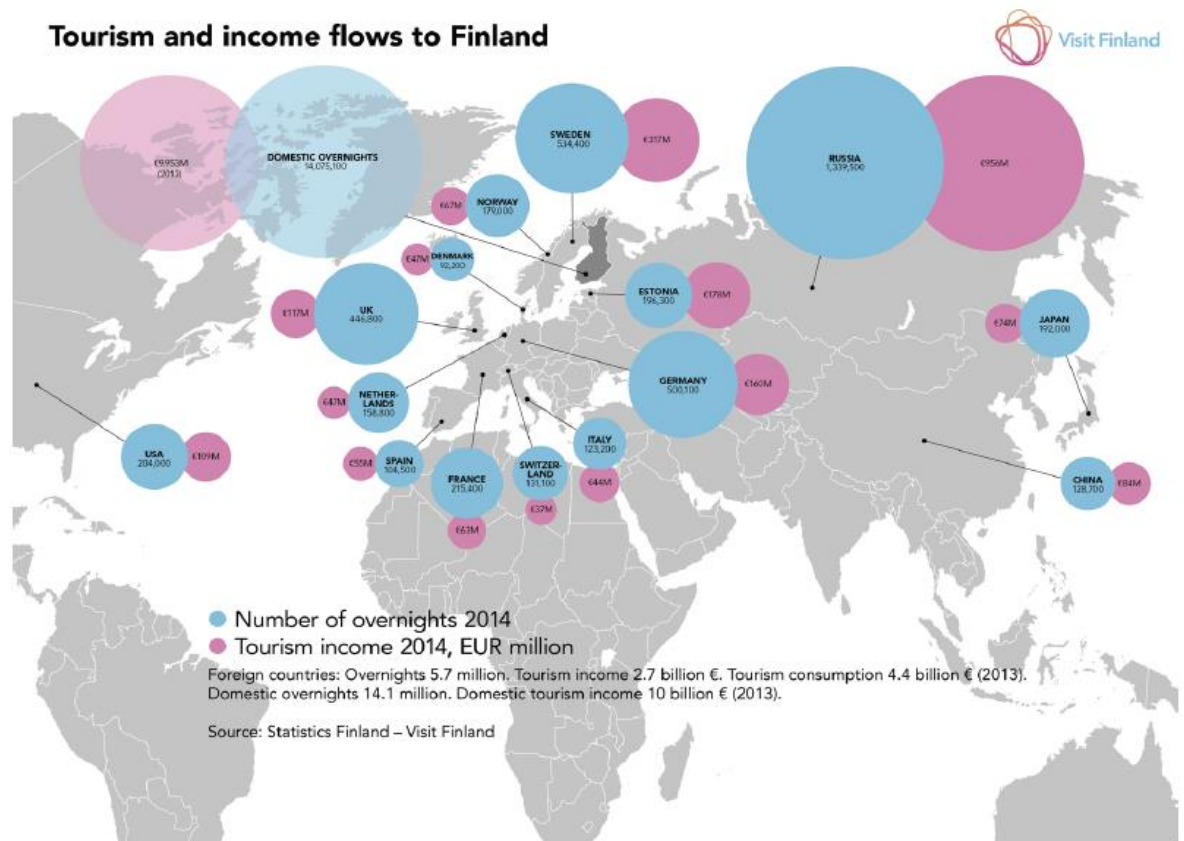


FIGURE 2. Tourism and income flows to Finland (Tourism is one... 2015, 10)

However, in table 8 the foreign number of overnights is shown, especially when taking a closer look at the US American numbers, we can see that even though their spending is good their number of overnights is much lower compared to the other biggest spender countries. These statistics reveal that there are US Americans traveling to Finland but

there is space for improvement and strengthening the destination appeal of Finland to gain growth within the US American travellers.

TABLE 8. Visitors to Finland in 2014 (<http://www.visitfinland.fi/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Top-inbound-tourism-markets-2014.png?dl>).

2014	Number of overnights	Number of visitors (same-day and overnight visitors)	Length of stay, days	Travel receipts, € million	Spending per visit, €	Spending per day, €
Foreign total	5 710 340	7 619 078	4,0	2 705,5	284	115
Russia	1 339 526	3 654 079	2,7	956,0	252	150
Sweden	534 358	654 138	3,8	317,3	156	56
Germany	500 057	293 577	6,5	159,7	401	103
UK	446 792	234 082	4,3	116,5	273	80
France	215 393	155 181	5,6	63,0	361	95
USA	204 036	162 529	5,5	109,2	339	88
Estonia	196 277	504 682	4,2	177,8	176	60
Japan	192 007	181 339	3,5	74,5	246	70
Norway	178 956	66 601	3,0	66,5	224	79
Netherlands	158 801	104 091	4,8	46,7	263	71
Switzerland	131 076	64 348	4,9	37,2	321	87
China	128 685	217 386	4,6	84,5	504	205
Italy	123 145	92 482	4,6	44,0	279	79
Spain	104 451	141 410	8,7	54,9	491	87

Sources: Statistics Service Rudolf, Visit Finland Visitor Survey, Travel accounts

In overall the tourism consumption was 14.4 billion euros in 2013, of which 4.43 billion was generated by international tourism. In addition, this meant that in 2013 tourism industry provided jobs for 140 000 people. Tourism contributes 2,5% to the GDP, as a result tourism industry contributes a lot into the Finnish economy. (Tourism is one... 2015, 17.)

5.1 Marketing campaigns

Finland's new objective is to get over hundreds of thousands tourists to Finland, and with this objective in mind, three new programs have been launched. These campaigns have taken into consideration especially the Asian tourists who just change planes at Helsinki – Vantaa airport. These three programs are Stopover Finland, FinRelax and the Marine Archipelago. Stopover Finland focuses on getting the passing through tourists also to stop and stay in Finland. FinRelax is more about wellness and Marine Archipelago concentrates on exploring the unique islands and the beautiful nature and the sea.

5.2 US American tourists

In this chapter the trends among the US travellers who have visited Finland are examined. The numbers are from VisitFinland research (Markkinakatsaus - Amerikkalaismatkailijat Suomessa...2015) if not stated otherwise. In 2014 there were 191 800 US American travellers and 36% did not stay overnight in Finland, 21% of these were day visitors and 15% transit travellers. 62% visited Finland the very first time. Compared between the summer and the winter, the summer has kept its popularity for the last 10 years among the US American travellers, with 70% of the visitors in summer and 30% in winter. Helsinki also stays the most visited place with 144 000 (70%), whereas only 5% of the US American travellers visit Lapland.

The majority of the US American travellers visit Finland for the holidays (41%), other reasons are passing through (24%), work related visits (20%), visiting friends/relatives (19%), studies (4%) or other reason (3%). 40% of the visitors stay at a hotel or at a motel and 18 % stay with friends/relatives, the rest of the travellers have other options. Their expenses in overall were around 65 million euros, which meant 88€ a day and 339€ during their visit. The main expenses were used for restaurants and coffee places 31% and for accommodation 28%.

5.3 Finland's attractions

The main focus of the marketing campaign is the Santa Claus and Santa Claus usually is related to winter and snow. For this reason Lapland will be one of the main attractions to build the story of this Winter Wonderland. Lapland also is not a popular place visited by the US American travellers, instead Helsinki is, and this could be a good opportunity to also increase the visits to the rest of Finland. In addition to Lapland, other parts of Finland would also be advertised, like the islands and the water surrounded by them. The awareness will be built through Santa Claus and Lapland, however the campaign will continue from there making familiar the whole Finland, with its diverse four seasons and possibilities, not forgetting Åland islands which also have a lot to offer. Finpro already has three programs running, mentioned earlier and these programs have good destinations that would be suitable for this marketing campaign as well.

6 THE MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The thesis has covered so far the theoretical aspects of tourism, marketing, the target group and the destination. With the help of this information the campaign idea has been planned and modified. Finland has been branded for its nature, education and many other things, however the idea of this campaign is to make Finland the Christmas Wonderland, which attracts kids. A land where you can feel the Christmas spirit and meet the real Santa Claus. Lapland has campaigned itself as a “Santa Claus Land” previously and this campaign would strengthen this image with new marketing ways and get US American children to interact with Finland.

The focus of the campaign is to increase the knowledge on Finland among US Americans, however the emphasis will be on children and Santa Claus. The campaign will be built as a story of this Wonderland where Santa Claus himself lives. People would be exploring Finland with Santa Claus throughout the year with a mobile app designed for children. As a result the main events planned around the campaign are for children to educate them about Finland and to increase their knowledge about where Finland is and what it has to offer. Children are the new generation and the future travellers who celebrate Christmas, as it is a popular holiday in the United States of America. Getting children interested in Finland can be considered as an investment in the long run, as they are not in the age of decision making yet. Through their experiences they can increase their families’ awareness of Finland as well. And some aspects of the campaign are targeted for adults and parents, not forgetting the main focus, the children.

With a successful launch this campaign would mark Finland on the map and would increase its attractiveness as a destination. However the goal is also to create the atmosphere and the feeling of experiencing something totally different in a safe environment. Nowadays people are going for experiences and this campaign starts with making people to experience things and making them curious, because the campaign interacts with people.

6.1 Strategy overview

The strategy of the campaign is to make people involved, in this particular campaign it is the US Americans and Finnish people. The US Americans are big social media users so involving social media in this campaign is seen as a must. However in addition to social media, you need to have something that people can see and touch with their own eyes, making things a step closer to reality that it is not just a subject on the screen. After deciding on having these aspects involved in the campaign, also the importance of growing the feelings and atmosphere of the destination is crucial, this is where the timing of the campaign and events become crucial.

6.2 Structure of the marketing campaign

The following events related to the campaign are taking place in the United States of America, if not specified otherwise. The structure of the campaign starts with building curiosity and interest in what is going to happen next. Publishing of the mobile app game for children is the main focus and the hype built around the publication day is crucial. Before the game is released a lot of promotion needs to be done, and as a result when the date for publishing the game arrives people would see, talk about and download it. The game will be the channel that will increase children's knowledge of Finland and will increase the emotional connection with Finland making it the land of Santa Claus, the fairy tale land.

The campaign would start off with leaving small hints of something to be happen on this specific date, however not clarifying in depth what is about to happen. But still obtaining positive feeling that the event will be something spectacular and filled with happiness and good spirit. Small clues will be given time to time before the publication date to make people interested and to obtain the interest and building the trust that it is something happy and an event that you do not want to miss out with your children.

6.2.1 Start of the marketing campaign

The beginning of the campaign would include Santa Claus popping into certain websites (like gaming sites for children and entertainment/news sites for adults), however not giving much specific details away, yet. Clicking on the Santa Claus would take you on a site which would reveal that something would happen on this specific date but more information would be given closer to the date. In addition to the websites, television channels could be used either during commercial breaks or during television shows (where Santa Claus pops up). This would start the talk and wondering about the mysterious Santa Claus character.

Website needs to be established, however at the beginning when the campaign starts there will not be any mentioning about Finland or anything else, it will be purely related to this mysterious Santa Claus. More information will start to launch on the webpage and when the final launching day of the game arrives then also the webpage will be in full function. Ideally this would be managed by the Finnish Tourist Board in co-operation with other parties. The webpage would have different functions but would be built around the Santa Claus and through him branding Finland as a destination and memorable experience with the Santa Claus. The website would be targeted more for adults as a place to look for information about Finland, whereas the game app would be targeted for children. However this does not exclude the option that there could be game variations and options for adults and children and same with the webpage, however in this marketing campaign plan the game has been targeted more for children and the webpage as a tool for adults. The idea of the game will be discussed further on in this thesis, firstly we shall examine the whole marketing campaign.

So far we have established that the marketing campaign will start with the mysterious Santa Claus popping around in the social media and making confusion, in addition to webpage. However, this by itself would not get enough attention and more happenings need to be built around the campaign and Santa Claus, so people would start to recognize the Santa Claus. Vehicles like huge trucks and busses would be driving around a certain city for several weeks, in different areas and at different times to be seen by as many people as possible and by different people. The design of the vehicles needs to be eye-

catching, they need to be colourful and huge to stand out from the surroundings. Santa Claus would be on the vehicles as well as the link to the website.

Before the launch the trucks and busses only drive around without the opportunity for the children to get in, however after the launch they would start stopping and people would have the opportunity to visit the vehicles inside and get a glimpse of Finland. The inside would be structured for being suitable for kids, more colourful and playful. Looking like the real Finnish Christmas Wonderland where Santa Claus himself lives, with the possibility to play the released game.

Not forgetting the adults we would also locate shipping containers around the cities. The containers would reflect Finland, bring Finland closer to people so they could actually experience it with their own eyes and hands, use their senses to feel the Finnish spirit. The containers would be decorated outside and inside, and marking clearly that they are related to Finland and the mysterious Santa Claus. In addition to the decoration there would also be short video clips of Finland and Finnish people. The idea is to establish the connection of these two parts Finland and Santa Claus and make people aware of Finland. They can enjoy the beauty of Finland and see that it is worth to visit or at least to get their interest to grow about Finland.

The design of the containers would include aurora borealis, the northern lights, meaning that there would be a dark space where people could enter and see the lights. In addition the environment would be winter themed (at least in the beginning of the campaign), so the container would be covered with snow, nature sounds, with fake animals and showing how the beautiful Finnish nature looks like during winter. This experience would be appealing for the whole family. This campaign brings a part of Finland to their neighbourhood and gives them the opportunity to discover Finland and a short getaway from the hectic everyday rush; when you enter the container you can get a feeling how your holiday would be if you would travel to Finland. Later on during the year the containers can appear again, however now showing the other seasons of Finland with the never ending sunlight, lakes, forests and summer activities.

6.2.2 Game release

So far we have covered the beginning of the campaign how to create the hype and the hype is meant for the game launch, which is the heart of this campaign. All the tension that is needed to build is for this moment, the moment when the game is released. The game connects children with Finland and their awareness of its existence and that is why it is crucial that they would find the game. Children are the future travellers so associating them with Finland in the early stage with good experiences will be a good move in the long run. They will learn things about Finland that they will remember in the future, and they will know that a country like Finland exists and what it is like. Even though the memories would be associated with Santa Claus it would leave joyful feelings meaning that the connection built with Finland gives out joyful feelings and memories.

For the game to be released a venue is needed to create this amazing atmosphere. The game launch needs to be spectacular in the eyes of the kids, an event they will cherish as a warm memory. The venue will be decorated themed with the games layout and presenting Finland at the same time. The venue and the details will be shown on the webpage and revealed before the actual date. The game app will be associated with Finland and Santa Claus. The game would have different levels and variations depending on the age group and skills. There would be educational parts like for example mathematical assignments and also proper adventure game modes, which are popular among children. There would be educational questions related to Finland and by answering the questions correctly you can earn extra points for the adventure site of the game. The main character of the game would be Santa Claus, as the idea is to build Finland's attractiveness by its wonderful fairy tale Christmas land where Santa Claus is from. Strengthening Finland's attraction as a Christmas holiday destination where you can experience a true Christmas with the Santa Claus. And from there to start building Finland's appeal in general. We use Santa Claus because it is huge appeal for children and even though Christmas is a short time it does not mean that Santa Claus would stop existing. In this game they can adventure with Santa Claus around Finland around the year. The purpose of the game is also to build the bond with Santa Claus and Finland, making also the children interested in visiting Finland which is the place of birth of our mystery Santa Claus. In Finland we have several gaming companies and co-operation with them for building the game would be essential. Working together with an US American gaming company or educational

institution would be an asset because then we could combine the strengths of both destinations, the Finnish knowledge of Finland and their expertise in addition to the US American knowledge of their players. In addition to all of this, there would be a prize related award.

6.2.3 Other parts of the campaign

The campaign would consist of several parts, however the game release would be one of the main ones because this is where it all will get started. In addition to the game, where there are different levels and possibilities for earning points for children, other competitions will be included. These competitions and challenges are for the whole family, and the campaign also focuses on families. Making fun competitions where families can spend time together and participate in competitions is a great way to interact with the destination. The prize would be a fully paid holiday package for the whole family in Finland to meet with the Santa Claus and experience the Christmas Wonderland, and depending on the resources, few families could be awarded.

To win the prize it is needed to participate in several different competitions and get scores. These competitions can include challenges like taking pictures with certain themes and adding them to Instagram with certain hashtags, sharing pictures on Facebook, blogs, recording videos etc. and gathering likes and shares. The themes can include Christmas, family with cute Christmas outfits, stunning Christmas tree, good deed of the week etc. There would be certain themes, instructions and deadlines that the families need to follow to be able to participate in the competition. This is using the social media and participants themselves, getting them involved and spreading the news.

In addition to competitions taking place on social media, also actual live competitions would be held. For example activity events would be held with different kind of tasks and clues for the whole family. Families would participate as groups and competing against other families. These tracks would be related to the Santa Claus game and Finland.

6.3 Targeting

The target group are people living in the United States of America and who are not familiar with Finland. In this thesis no restrictions have been made, where this campaign would take place, however it would be good to concentrate on certain areas, areas that are different when compared to Finland's nature. Also to focus on areas where the local people already travel more compared to other parts of the country and the access to airports and Finland is easier.

This campaign is targeted for the younger generation who are the future travellers. If we succeed in making them aware of Finland and creating a warm connection with it, it will work in the long run and with the future generation, because the travels and the familiarity of Finland would grow and would build the base for the next generation of travellers. In addition to this, children are surrounded by adults and families, so they have been taken into consideration as a target group as well, as these two are connected. We want to educate the children but at the same time we want to show the parents why Finland is worth the visit and build the trust with the destination, even though it is further away it is still worth the trip.

6.4 Campaign roles

The role of this campaign as mentioned earlier is to increase the knowledge of the existence of Finland. How can you plan a trip to Finland if you are not aware that such a country even exists? The role is to increase the knowledge of Finland as a destination and the possibilities it offers for travellers. What is the country like and what can you do there? Show the US Americans that Finland is one of the safest countries and you get customer service in English.

The campaign would promote Finland as Santa Claus's home the Christmas Wonderland, however the campaign would not only restrict to wintertime. The starting point would be from there but it would be developed to brand Finland as Santa Clause's home around the year with different activities and experiences no matter what time of the year you would

visit. For these reasons even in the game Santa Claus appears in different seasons and the campaign happens around the year with different aspects.

This campaign will work as a promoter for people planning for trips in the near future, however if done right this campaign can work in the long run as well.

6.5 Outreach

The outreach of this campaign will be wide spread. The campaign is planned to take place in a certain city in the United States of America, however the social media usage in the campaign can reach people around the country and outside the country. The game will be available in English to download for phones, iPads etc., as long as you have the access to the devices and language skills needed you can play the game. People will have access also to the webpage, people can see pictures which are tagged and shared. The main issues are that people actively would play, share and participate and that the technical part would work after the launch of the campaign and game.

6.6 Timeline

The timeline is crucial in these kind of campaigns as you start your campaign with building a tension and it is focused on Santa Claus. For that reason the launch of the game would take place around Christmas time, when the Christmas spirit is the strongest. And the tension building would start few months earlier. Even though the launch would take place during Christmas and people would not have time to book travels to Finland anymore, it does not matter as now starts the long process of building the connection with Finland. And people can start concentrating on the idea of having next Christmas vacation in Finland to experience the fairy tale with the whole family and to meet the real Santa Claus, children grow fast so this is a good opportunity to travel there when they still have the Santa Claus spirit inside them.

After the game launch different competitions mentioned earlier and the events through containers would happen throughout the year and the prizes would be handed out around fall.

7 CONCLUSION

This bachelor's thesis contains the marketing campaign to promote Finland for US American travelers. Different sources were used to identify the market in Finland at the moment and also the behaviors of the US American travelers. With the help of these results a marketing campaign was created to make Finland a more appealing destination for the US American travelers and also to raise their awareness of the possibilities that Finland can offer. Main target groups for this campaign were families and children, so the structure of the campaign was also based on the target groups.

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