THE NEEDS AND WISHES OF TOURISTS CONCERNING LOCAL TRAVEL

Spotted by Locals
Experience cities like a local

RESEARCH REPORT

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Summary

Research has been conducted to gain insight into the role of different types of information needs in general and specifically local travel information in the decision-making process of visitors to European cities in order to give recommendations to the commissioning client, Spotted by Locals, on how the service offered can be improved. Trends and developments in the continuously growing market of cultural tourism, such as the increasingly fragmentation of the market, has given reason to carry out this research and find out about the needs and wishes of the city traveller in order to better fit his needs and expectations. Spotted by Locals is an organization offering travel information by locals, so called spotters in 41 European cities and 28 different countries. The about 200 spotters write about their own experiences and share their favourite places and spots in their own city with the traveller. These travel guides are offered on the website of the commissioning client, as well as in PDF format and as smartphone apps in order to ensure a variety of channels.

Cultural tourism and urban tourism go hand-in-hand and new developments in the sector point at the urge of constantly looking at the needs and wishes of the traveller in order to satisfy his needs and consequently encourage positive feedback and word-of-mouth promotion to his friends. The diversity of the offers is growing and new technologies make it possible for the traveller to be well informed about backstage processes and compare the huge variety of products. One of these new developments are smartphone apps, which can be used in each stage of the travel-process and give the traveller access to all kinds of information, he might be interested in. The information need model, developed by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), which proposes that five different needs might cause the traveller to search for information, has been used in order to carry out this research. These information needs include functional needs, which is the most acknowledged need and addresses the need for knowledge and the urge to reduce risks. Furthermore, the innovation needs point at the need for innovative experiences and to be informed about original places as well as the need for innovative strategies gather information and to make a destination choice. Hedonic needs, the third dimension addresses the need to learn about culture and experience the daily life of the local community. Aesthetic needs point at the urge to look at images and fantasize about an exotic place. The last dimension includes sign needs, which include social interaction with peers and the expression of one's own travel behaviour. These needs have been incorporated into a questionnaire, which has been distributed online as well as in a printed version to travellers visiting European cities to find out about their information needs and specifically their use of local travel information. Moreover, interviews have been carried out with experts, working at European tourism boards or tourist information office and are involved in the process of information provision. The semi-structured interviews addressed the information that tourists look for and the change over the last

five years. Furthermore, the experts have been asked about their opinion about the local travel market and its potentials.

The results show that the city traveller included in this research is young, educated, travels on a low budget, mainly with friends and relatives and is a frequent traveller. He is interested in learning about the local culture and wants to be informed about hidden spots as well as events and highlights of the city he is visiting. These aspects should be included more in the offer by the commissioning client in order to satisfy this need. The functional needs play the most important role and friends and relatives as well as locals are the most trusted source for travel information. Social interaction and sharing of information, thus sign needs play a very important role as well. This need has to be focused on more by the city tourism boards in order to satisfy the needs of this specific group of travellers. Local travel information is being used by 95 % of the respondents, which shows the importance of this type of information. Most important to the traveller is the fact that he can trust the information, that he knows who the writer of the information is and that it is written without a commercial-aim. Cooperating with an organization, offering this type of information, which is up-to-date and written by locals who know their city best can be very beneficial for city tourism boards in order to satisfy the travellers' needs and more importantly go with the trend and distinguish oneself from the other many European cities. Deeper experiences are the key to success in this specific market in order to satisfy the needs of the specialty-seeking city traveller.

Foreword

Three years of studying Tourism Management in Amsterdam, Italy and Germany are about to end. With this research I am finishing the last step of this insightful and exciting period of my life. These three years are also connected to many experiences and knowledge I have gained, and people I met.

The idea for this research topic arouse during the minor Global Perspectives in Tourism because of the close connection between tourists and local residents that it focused on. The interest developed further in a research project in Amsterdam about the involvement of locals in a tourism product in a rather non-touristic area of the city. Because of this, the curiosity in the interaction between locals and tourists arouse and due to this also the interest in conducting further research into this topic.

The support offered by Spotted by Locals; Bart and Sanne van Poll as well as my school lecturers and peers gave me the opportunity to conduct this research in a supportive environment.

Annika Rösch

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1. Introduction

Imagine you are planning a trip to a city and you are looking for information about things to do and see in the city that might be interesting to you. Where do you look for this information? Exactly: On the internet, as it is most convenient, easy and fast to access. You will find loads of information about the 'top ten attractions' within a city and sightseeing tours. You come to find information about a canal cruise, a visit to one of the city's museums or a suggestion for a coffee break at a café that is world famous. Is this the information you are actually looking for? This is where a company such as Spotted by Locals comes in handy. Spotted by Locals offers up-to-date information and insider tips by locals, who know their own city best and know where to drink the best coffee, eat the most delicious pizza and where to visit a special museum that none of your friends has ever heard of. The locals can tell you about those hidden spots that you will love and most probably have a special experience. With this kind of information you will find yourself experiencing a city from a completely different angle: The local's perspective. This might be more the kind of information that you are interested in, but where and how do you find it? How do you know if the information published in a guide book or any other travel information source is actually still valid? Maybe essential information has changed but the travel guide you bought won't inform you about these changes, thus the information is not up-to-date anymore. Possibly, the information was written by the company themselves in order to market a certain museum, to increase their number of visitors and thus is rather biased. Wouldn't you prefer travel information that is un-biased, written without a commercial-idea behind it and written by someone who is sharing his own opinion about a place instead of advising you something with the hidden agenda to enhance sales? Consequently, it is vital to know by whom the information is offered in order to ensure that a trustworthy source is consulted. When you travel you want to make sure that the travel information you have is correct and thus your experiences will meet your expectations.

Even though this information exists, it is crucial to get a thorough insight into the needs and wishes of the users and what exactly a tourist is looking for when visiting a city and what his expectations are towards the information offered. Further on, an insight should be gained into the decision-making of potential visitors; for what reason do they choose the information source and with which input do they make the decision about which destination to visit. An important question is which source of information plays what kind of role in the decision-making process and which type of information is leading towards the final choice. This research aims at finding answers to this question by analysing the needs and wishes of tourists, when it comes to consulting travel information in general as well as more specifically local travel information.

Local Travel has not been defined yet concretely, therefore various articles that try to define local travel have been taken into account in order to substantiate this way of travelling. According to a discussion on www.goinglocaltravel.com, it is very difficult to define local travel. The authors' ideas include the fact of awareness and the "rethinking the way we have become accustomed to travelling" (Baker, 2010). According to Dunston (2010) "it's about experiencing a destination, culture, places, and people, through the eyes of a 'local' whether they're rich or poor, old or young, left or right, a national or expat". Consequently, it can be said that local travel includes various forms of travelling with one common goal, to get to know the culture and hidden, rather unknown spots and places, through the eyes of locals.

1.1 Background and Reason for Research

In the following section, the commissioning client will be introduced in order to ensure an understanding about his position in the field of tourism. The next step will be the analysis of trends and developments in the sector of local travel, which create the need for carrying out this research. This need will then lead to the explanation of the reason for this research.

1.1.1. Commissioning Client – Spotted by Locals

Figure 1: Spotted by Locals – promotion (www.spottedbylocals.com)

Spotted by Locals was established in 2008 by Bart and Sanne van Poll after their own travel experiences. The idea was to offer up-to-date information by locals about trendy cafés, nice walks through a city or where the best spot for a nice picture can be found, so that the tourist can see and explore more than just the usual, well known tourist attractions that are being presented in every traditional tourist guide (figure 1). When travelling around the globe, Bart and Sanne van Poll realized that only few insider information is offered, which is simultaneously up-to-date. In addition, it is not known if the user generated content is written by professionals or locals; so that it makes it difficult to estimate the trust you can pay to this information. Furthermore, the experience using travel guides, such as the Lonely Planet, was not convincing either, in the sense that the content in the travel guides was not always up-to-date because of the time it takes to publish the volume; opening hours might have changed and upcoming events cannot be published in the guide book either. In addition, the information offered in the usual travel guide contains mostly well-known attractions and places in a city, instead of hidden spots that represent the local culture and the daily life of the residents, in which the couple as many other travellers are interested in exploring. Through this information, the traveller can explore the culture and 'live' it with tips offered by real locals about things they like to do themselves in their leisure time. Creating this contact between locals and tourists is one of the main characteristics of the information offered by Spotted by Locals. Therefore the idea arouse to create a website as well as printable travel guides and since recently also apps for smartphones, where the information is always up-to-date and all in one spot, written by locals themselves. The different types of guides guarantee that every traveller can find his preferred way to make use of the information. A vision, which is accessible on their website for everyone, has been created in order to transfer this specific aim through all the service offered.

> *By experiencing cities the local way, you learn about the culture and habits of the inhabitants. We are convinced a better understanding of different cultures will make the world a better place. We think we can make a modest contribution! (Spotted by Locals)*

The vision of Spotted by Locals shows clearly, that their aim is to offer information for tourists in order to create a better understanding of cultures by visiting places and learning about the culture. This should be gained by offering information by locals who know most about their own traditions and giving the tourist the opportunity to experience the culture when visiting a city.

Many locals also make use of the website in order to get tips from other residents about their own city and places they have not yet heard about. The website is constantly growing; by now there are about 200 so called spotters in 41 European cities that update the tourists about things to do and see in their metropolis. These spotters are mainly young locals living in one of the 41 European cities, who like to share information about great places in their own city. Spotters write about places, they know or have explored before and these articles are then being published by Spotted by Locals. Bart and Sanne van Poll meet each and every spotter in order to ensure a good work relationship and also good quality information.

The service that is being offered gives the reader the opportunity to find up-to-date information about for instance new cafés, nice stores, beautiful places or information about events that are taking place in the city that they consider visiting. Spotters share their own experiences and things they like to do, see, smell or taste. Not only a nice, cozy café but also an one-of-a-kind vintage store, in which old clothes are turned into modern and hip, unique dresses, can be found on the website of

Spotted by Locals. Besides the spotters, the company works with freelancers for marketing, editing and technical support in order to constantly ensure good quality information.

Spotted by Locals, publisher of city guides, offers information on their website as well as city guides in PDF format with all the tips mapped out by the spotters. Now that in tourism the trend even is shifting towards the use of mobile devices, applications for smartphones are also being offered. The guides as well as the applications are for sale through Spotted by Locals. Furthermore, a visitor will be able to access all the tips, information and the map throughout his trip by making use of his smartphone.

The steps and the outcome of this research will be communicated through a blog on the website in order to inform spotters, visitors and other tourism organizations about the research, the results and conclusion of this research.

1.1.2. Trends and Developments

According to Dennis Pyka, IPK analyst, city trips have increased by 10% in 2011 in comparison to beach holidays, which increased only by 6% (ITB World Travel Trends Report 2011/12, December 2011). In this report, the increase of urban tourism becomes clear and thus, also the need for further development is obvious. Due to this development, more and more tourism maketers focusing on urban tourism, face the problem of a growing competition within their sector. Consequently, tourism organizations must find a way to distinguish themselves from their competitors, if they want to be successful. Due to new technologies, the power of tourists is growing; they have the possibility to choose from a variety of products and are able to compare, which makes the need to distinguish oneself even more crucial.

Kansa and Wilde (2008) discuss the issue of location-based service and the impact peer production has in tourism. New technologies give the user the possibility to explore backstage processes and thus, get the chance “to filter and augment their own experiences” (Kansa & Wilde, 2008). Through this opportunity, tourists will be able to improve their travel experiences by gaining more knowledge about backstage processes. However, also businesses get the chance to improve their offer regarding the needs and wishes of visitors, due to the fact that they also have the chance to learn about the interests of the tourists. According to Kansa and Wilde (2008), the tourists use a variety of travel material in order to broaden their knowledge, but “increasingly, they draw upon mobile devices” (Kansa & Wilde, 2008) in combination with online information, in order to get the most up-to-date information. As stated by Kansa and Wilde, location-based information services will increasingly play an important role in travel and tourism.

As mentioned earlier, the active participation of users in the field of tourism will continue to grow in the future and bring more changes to the tourism product and the experience the visitor will have during the travel process. In addition, a growth in the need for online trials before acquiring a product is being recognized by various researchers. As this demand is said to grow, it will become very important to satisfy this need by offering the opportunity to inspect the product in advance. According to Buhalis and Costa (2006, p.13), the booking process will become shorter due to new technologies and most of the travel decisions will be made while travelling instead of pre-departure, as it used to be. Consequently, it is vital for the tourism industry to assess the needs and wishes of the travellers in order to specify what information the tourist needs, and how and when it should be presented in order to fulfil the user's expectations.

As a consequence of new technologies, the travel behaviour of tourists is changing according to many researchers, one of which being Buhalis. According to him, this new trend offers "greater access to information", "greater transparency", as well as "increased negotiating power in the market" for the tourist (Buhalis & Costa, 2006, p.11). As stated by Buhalis, consumers with many different characteristics, such as age, income and education make use of these new technologies. According to him, the users become more and more creators of the information instead of just being a passive collector of the data available. "Consequently, technologies that allow for an active participation in the creation, presentation and sharing of travel information have grown and will continue to grow in importance" (Buhalis & Costa, 2006, p. 12).

One of these new technologies are smartphones, with which information about a destination can be accessed as well as the planning of the trip can be done; they are being used more and more by travellers. Many travel organizations are developing applications; so-called 'apps', for smartphones in order to offer their customers the possibility to access information, make bookings or reservations from everywhere before as well as after their arrival at the destination. Visitors are now able to find information fast and efficiently by downloading an app which in most of the cases can be even used without having an active internet connection. The tourist has the opportunity to consult and compare information about the destination. By doing this, he will be able to choose the product best fitting his needs. Because of this it is vital for a tourism organization to answer the tourist's needs in order to be successful and offer the best product on the market.

In addition to the development of new technologies, the need for deeper experiences and a better insight into the culture is growing and demanding for satisfaction. Travellers used to look for tailor-made trips in order to have something special that others might not experience. The offer, product or information is supposed to match the tourists' needs. Now this trend is even heading further in the direction of experiencing the local culture by consulting information offered by locals and also the idea of getting to know the information provider to a certain extent. One of those organizations offering this is the commissioning client as well as other organizations in this particular market that offer information by locals. Cultural tourism is the main market in this sector and considered as having a great potential to grow (McKercher & du Cros, 2002, p. 231).

According to Ryan (2002), mass tourists are low risk takers because these trips are completely organized by a tour operator, in comparison to individual travellers, who are in most of the cases seeking for more knowledge and experiences. Only superficial interest is paid to the culture of a country by the usual mass tourist. In comparison to this, the cultural tourist is interested in exploring a destination and learning more about the culture, by for instance visiting museums or eating at a local restaurant. According to Richards (1996a, cited by McKercher & du Cros 2002, p. 39), “37 percent of international tourists are cultural tourists”, with the definition of a cultural tourist being someone who visits a museum, heritage attraction or attends a performance at some point during his visit of the destination. Saying this, the definition of a cultural tourist is quite vague and can be applied to almost every tourist. Cultural tourism is not a new phonomenon, it actually is considered as being “the oldest of the ‘new’ tourism phenomena” (McKercher & du Cros, 2002, p. 1). This way of travelling exists since the Romans started travelling but has for many centuries never been considered as a reason for travelling on its own.

As this trend is heading even further towards getting in contact with locals and experiencing a city from their point of view. Tourists no longer want to stay on the surface, they are actually seeking to experience a culture by travelling like a local or getting insider tips by residents. Visitors would like to explore the shops and restaurants that locals go to as they are thought to know best. Together with WHL Group, Spotted by Locals is a foundation member of the Local Travel Movement, which is a non profit organization that brings businesses together that share Local Travel values, such as being mindful towards the local people, being mindful of the local environment, being mindful of the local culture and the local economy (http://www.localtravelmovement.com). “WHL Group – travel local, globally”, is a global network of local travel companies, which also provides information to local tourism operators. On the Local Travel Movement platform, new ideas and trends in the field of local travel are being shared as well as companys’ experiences in this regard. It can be seen that many organizations offering local experiences sprang up within the last 10 years. Couchsurfing for instance is a way of finding cheap accommodation combined with a local experience, which is continously growing throughout the world (http://www.couchsurfing.org). In consequence of this uprising competition, it is crucial to research the demand of the tourists in order to ensure a competitive position in the market.

1.1.3. Reason for Research

Bart and Sanne van Poll, the owners of Spotted by Locals, founded their organisation based on their passion for travelling. Now that their website is continuously growing, it is important to gain a deeper insight into the current developments in the field of local travel and more importantly into the needs and wishes of the users and potential users of their services. A deeper knowledge must be gained about the wishes of the seekers of insider knowledge, which is offered by the so-called spotters who share their knowledge about their own city with visitors. Former research by the commissioning client dealt with the profile of the followers of their service to find out who they are. The users, as an outcome of this study, are between 20-40 years old, rather educated; graduates and post-graduates, have no kids and are pretty affluent (Audience, www.spottedbylocals.com). According to a later study conducted in August 2010, most of their Facebook followers are in the age group 25 to 34; out of which 30% female and 17% male. In the age range between 35-44, 13% were female and 11% male followers. Both age ranges look at together, 58% were female and 39% were male followers of the Facebook page of Spotted by Locals. In a visitor survey three months before this study however, male and female were equally distributed (Poll, August 22nd, 2010). A later study in 2012 about the Facebook page shows that most of their followers are from Germany (783), Belgium (616) and the USA (615) (Poll, April 13th, 2012). The followers of the Facebook page can be assumed as simultaneously being users of the service offered by Spotted by Locals, due to the fact that the chance is very high that they liked the Facebook page after experiencing the service and would like to stay in touch and updated about any news and developments. After knowing who the users of the service and the followers of the Facebook page are and where they come from, the next step consists of finding out what the users and potential users of the service offered by Spotted by Locls exactly look for when consulting travel information.

Due to the fact that many tourism organizations are adjusting their offer according to the current trends and developments in the sector and the changing demands of tourists, ongoing improvement of the service is essential. In order to be successful in the sector, this research will form a basic step. Due to the developments mentioned in section 1.1.2 of this research report, it is important to see how the visitors to European cities search for information and what exactly their expectations are in order to be able to stay competitive in the market. By getting a deeper insight into these expectations, Spotted by Locals will be able to understand the behaiour of their users and how the experience of a cultural trip can be optimised in order to adjust their services according to the current trends and needs.

Furthermore, Spotted by Locals is seeking to know what their position is in this rapidly changing environment of providing tourists with local travel information and aiming at strengthening this position in the market. According to their vision, local travel is a good way of travelling due to the fact that the tourist will develop a better understanding of the experienced culture and with this create a mutual awareness. By finding out about the needs of the tourists and making sure, that this demand is satisfied by the service offered by the commissioning client, the position of the organization within the market can be improved. Furthermore, this research is aiming at finding out if this way of travelling is growing and if tourists are looking for this kind of information when travelling or rather not.

In addition, with this way of travelling, the tourists can be spread out over a city instead of experiencing high tourism flows only in the city center, which is a current problem in various European cities. Consequently, with the offer by Spotted by Locals, they could support the city tourism boards marketing, by creating a link to their website on the tourism boards official webisite and therefore making the visitor aware of the fact that this offer exists in the city is going to visit. This way, the city tourism board would profit by marketing a good way of travelling and the spreading of the word by tourists and the literally spreading of tourists within the city. One of the cities facing the problem of too many tourists visiting the city center is Amsterdam. "Residents of the inner city have sort of had it with the tourists. The muncipality wants to spread tourism over the districts, but implementation is sluggish." (Spreading tourism proceeds with difficulty, February, 7th, 2009). New marketing strategies for the various districts and a range of new museums should overcome this problem and motivate the tourists to also visit the other districts of Amsterdam surrounding the overcrowded city center.

A cooperation between an organization, such as Spotted by Locals and the city tourism board could be beneficial for all stakeholders involved and help to overcome the problem of a crowded city center. The commissioning client would be able to improve his position within the market, the city tourism boards can profit from a better marketing, as well as the spreading of tourists over the various districts and the tourists have access to travel information, which make them aware of rather hidden sites, adviced by locals, in order to enhance a local experience.

1.2.Objective

In order to ensure an understanding of the needs and wishes of the users and potential users of local travel information, different types of needs as well as the influence of the travel information in the decision-making process have to be taken into account. Therefore, the research objective has been formulated as follows in order to specify the topic as well as the outcome, thus, its further use. The relevance of the research will also be defined in this part of the research report.

Research will be conducted to gain insight into the role of different types of information needs in general and specifically local travel information in the decision-making process of travellers visiting European cities to make recommendations on how the commissioning client can improve their service offered to users.

The outcome of this research will be beneficial for several parties involved in this sector of the field of tourism.

The research has social relevance for the tourists, who will get access to information that will fit their needs better and thus, answer their expectations. The outcome of this research will show what exactly the tourist looks for and with which expectations he seeks information. This result can be used in order to optimize the service offered by Spotted by Locals. Consequently, local travel will develop further and offer a better way of travelling, which is part of the commissioning client's vision. An awareness of this market will be created not only amongst tourists but also amongst tourism boards and various tourism organizations in this sector. Additionally the relationship between tourists and locals can improve as this is still a point of concern in many destinations. Locals have the chance to present their own city from their point of view and make it accessible for the potential tourist and thus create a mutual understanding of both cultures and their traditions.

Furthermore, the research has practical relevance for the commissioning client as a deeper insight into the demands of tourists as well as potential tourists will be gained. The organization will be able to adjust their offer according to the outcome of the research, in order to increase their success and in addition, also the number of the tourists using the service offer. Not only that, but in addition a better insight into the role that travel information plays for the tourists in the decision-making process and specifically local travel information will be gained. This deeper knowledge will be beneficial for the European city tourism boards regarding the city marketing and the spreading of tourists throughout the cities. This spreading of tourists will in return increase the tourism potential and more areas can benefit from this market. The less visited parts of the cities will be marketed as well through the spotters that share their information and experiences about various sites and places.

1.3.Reading Guide

The first four chapters of this research report build the framework and guideline for the research that was carried out by clarifying the purpose and background of the research topic. In chapter one, the reason for this research, the background of the commissioning client, as well as the relevance of the research for every party that is involved were described. The trends which are connected to the sector have also been explained in connection to the research, which then led to the reason why it is important to conduct this particular research. In chapter two, the literature that is available about the topic of local travel and needs and wishes of travellers concerning local travel information, will be looked at critically. Models, as well as theory, will be taken into account when looking at the usefulness of the literature available. In chapter three, a central question as well as sub questions will be formed referring to the theory in order to clarify the ultimate goal of this research.

In the second part of chapter three, the methodology will be demonstrated. Per sub question, it will be explained which method has been used, such as interviewing technique, making use of questionnaires or desk research. The reason for choosing this method, as well as the exact way of putting it into practice will be explained. In chapter four, the results of the research, divided into the various techniques, are presented. The conclusions and recommendations can be found in chapter six and seven. Within the last part of this research, the bibliography can be found. It includes all literature that was used for this research. The sources are listed by type of literature and alphabetical order.

2. Critical Literature Review

In the following, the important literature for this research will be looked at critically and explained in terms of its usefulness in the context of this research. In order to understand the needs and wishes of tourists in the context of urban tourism and cultural tourism, it is essential to understand the concept of needs and how they are being developed. Furthermore, the decision-making process will be looked at in order to find out if the information influences the final travel decision. Finally, the theory used in the substantial guidance will lead towards a central question and sub questions that form the basis for this research.

2.1.Urban Tourism

In the introductory part it has been explained, that local travel takes place in urban destinations and in this research European cities are the main focus. In order to conduct research and find out about the needs and wishes of tourists in the urban environment, it is important to clarify the definition of urban tourism and its connection to the arising needs of tourists regarding local travel.

Urban Tourism is changing from mass tourism, which started right after the Second World War towards more "alternative – fragmented and flexible - forms of tourism" (Gospodini & Aspa, 2001). The offer regarding urban tourism is growing, so that the tourists visiting cities can choose between a constantly increasing variety of products. Due to the growing choices of products, it is important for a destination to distinguish itself from its competitors. Urban tourism is recognized more and more as an important part of tourism due to the fact that it is beneficial to many different stakeholders, such as the residents and especially the economic situation of a city: "Tourism has therefore become an important component of economic development" (Selby, 2004, p. 10). A lot of research addressing the topic of urban tourism and its problems has been conducted in the last few years, one of which being the Quality Management in Urban Tourism by Murphy, in 1997. Furthermore, the 'tourist experience' in urban tourism has been researched as well. According to Pearce, urban tourism research has to be done from different perspectives, including amongst others the points demand, supply and development, marketing and planning (2001, cited by Selby 2004, p. 13). In this particular research, the focus will be on the demand side as well as the supply from the commissioning client and the market in general.

Co-operation and co-ordination between the plethora of tourism businesses within an urban destination is essential, so as to be successful and distinctive, as stated by Selby (2004). In order to create a promising urban tourism strategy for future development, it is vital that the tourism organizations go hand-in-hand instead of competing with one another. The tourism planning should be in line with the created image of the destination and has to be communicated to the potential tourist by using an efficient marketing strategy.

Connected to urban tourism, city marketing also plays an important role as this influences the decision the visitor will make when deciding which destination to visit. According to Selby (2004), the development of a unique selling proposition is the most important factor when it comes to the promotion of a city. Furthermore, the image should be coherent and precise in order to be successful. Thus, these factors have to be taken into account when developing a marketing strategy for an urban destination. Additionally, mass marketing is not enough anymore, so that a detailed and fragmented marketing strategy has to be developed. As said by Meheen (1996, cited by Selby, 2004), a shift has taken place away from mass marketing and mass consumption towards niche marketing and fragmented addressing of consumer groups (Selby, 2004). Many different types of urban tourism are becoming apparent, one of which being local travel that is studied in this particular research and can be assumed as part of cultural tourism, which will be discussed in detail in the following section, due to the fact that the tourists making use of information by locals are interested in the culture and its traditions.

2.2.Cultural Tourism

Evidently, according to Selby, arts and culture form an integral part of urban tourism thus have to be considered when doing research about the needs of tourists travelling in an urban environment. "Not only is 'culture' considered as being an increasingly important motivation for tourism, but the relationship between culture and tourism is assumed to be mutually beneficial (Selby, 2004, p. 21). In order to ensure a benefit of cultural tourism for all stakeholders involved, especially the tourists and the locals, it is important to research and consider their needs.

This type of travelling dates back to the Grand Tour in the 17th century, when the English aristocracy started travelling to the mainland of Europe in order to learn about the culture. Cultural tourism has developed further since then but is still continuously growing and becoming more and more diverse and fragmented. People travelling for cultural reasons are attracted to differences, thus seek for experiencing a different culture. In fact, the main motivation behind cultural tourism according to Ivanovic (2008) is the replacement of the everyday life and thus one's own culture with something that is new, unknown and exciting to explore.

Reisinger (1994, p. 24) defines cultural tourism as "[...] an experiential tourism, based on searching for and participating in new and deep cultural experiences". As stated by Reisinger, cultural tourism can include visiting museums, monuments and travel to cultural events or even pilgrimage. One part of cultural tourism is the meeting of locals and getting in contact with them. This part of cultural tourism is becoming more and more evident and tourists are interested in seeking deeper experiences by getting in contact with the local culture, as explained by Reisinger: “People to people contact facilitates learning experiences and increases understanding of other’s lifestyle and culture” (Reisinger, 1994, p. 24). It includes the ‘tasting’ of culture by visiting different cultural attractions, witnessing the traditions and interacting with the local community.

As stated by Ivanovic (2008), the phenomenon of cultural pluralism also plays an essential role for an urban destination. The mixture of different cultures within one city is very appealing to tourists as they get to see different cultures within one destination. Due to the very short distances between major cities in Europe, it is one of the most common destinations for urban travel and with this also some smaller European cities are able to “secure a continuous flow of tourists” (Ivanovic, 2008, p. 84).

An important cultural tourism project has been established in 1985, so as to increase tourism flows. The EU introduced the ‘European Cities of Culture event’ in order to secure tourism flows also to the less known cultural cities of Europe. The city that wins this competition gets to carry the name of the ‘Cultural Capital of Europe’ for one year, until the competition starts again. The first city to be honoured this name was Athens in 1985. The initiative started with the objective “to promote urban heritage”, “showcase the host culture” and “to foster cultural exchange” (Ivanovic, 2008, p. 86). Two major tourism destinations were honoured this title as well, Amsterdam was the Cultural Capital of Europe in 1987 and Paris in 1989. This project besides builds a link between cultural tourism as well as urban tourism and moreover has a very positive effect on the economy and increases the interest in the culture and history of the city respectively.

The link between urban tourism and cultural tourism is straight forward due to the fact that urban tourism without the cultural heritage could not exist and furthermore could not be successful. However, a clear definition of cultural tourism is difficult to establish because there are many different layers to this type of tourism. ‘Art tourism’, ‘heritage tourism’ and ‘cultural tourism’ are therefore used interchangeably by many researchers when talking about this type of tourism (Selby, 2004, p. 21). Ivanovic (2008) also states that many definitions of cultural tourism exist, however according to him the best approach has been achieved by Tomlinson who states that each cultural tourism definition can be placed in either of the two following approaches:

- “*Culture is seen as a process*” (Ivanovic, 2008, p. 75). The culture of a specific group indicates a certain ‘way of living’ thus it represents their traditions and habits and is seen as a constantly changing process which creates meanings.

- "*Culture is seen as a product*" (Ivanovic, 2008, p. 75). Culture is seen as a cluster of arts and crafts but also intellectual work of individuals to which meaning is attached.

Subsequently, culture should be seen as a combination of tangible and intangible heritage that is connected in a meaningful way to a specific group of people. Cultural tourism is based on the specific culture of a destination with all their history, traditions, developments and personal characteristics, to summarise, tangible and intangible elements.

In connection to cultural tourism, also authenticity plays an increasingly important role. Visitors are looking for the 'real' culture instead of gazing after the staged attractions. According to Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2008, p. 335) in many cases, tourists experience a destination as "some idyllic fantasy world", due to staged events or attractions that fool the visitor into this experience, even though it has no connection to the real culture. The best situation, according to Cooper et al. (2008, p. 335), occurs when both the host and the guest understand the situation as being non-authentic. The term 'authenticity' is defined as "generally used to show that something is original and honest, that it is what it appears to be" (Cooper et al., 2008, p. 681). Even though some types of tourists might not be interested in an authentic experience but rather in entertainment, the cultural tourist is mainly seeking for authenticity during his travels.

There are many different approaches when defining the profile of the cultural tourist. McKercher and du Cros (2002, p. 137) state that the definition of cultural tourists cannot be assumed as easily, due to the fact that labelling of tourists according to their main travel reason is more complex than thought to be. According to them, a business traveller visiting a museum does not immediately turn into a cultural tourist. Thus, the term 'cultural tourist' cannot be applied as easily as other tourist typology terms. Consequently, the main reason for travelling has to be detected and if cultural tourism plays a role or rather not. Concluding, a cultural tourist can be someone visiting a destination for the culture or someone taking part in cultural activities. Therefore, a distinction between different motivators is essential, when analysing the needs of tourists.

2.3.Decision-making Process

The need to research the reason for choosing a specific destination instead of any other is growing, due to the fact that the variety of offers increases simultaneously with the transparency of the offer. Because of this, the competition is growing, and therefore it is important for a tourism organization to understand the choice of destination and how this can be influenced through efficient marketing. The decision-making process is described as the evaluation of the attributes forming the destination image and the travel services in order to solve the recognized need, for the least cost (Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999).

According to Schmoll (1977, cited by Cooper et al., 2008, p, 57-58) the destination choice is linked to many factors, influencing the decision. These factors include travel elements, social factors and external elements that influence the decision of the individual. Travel stimuli include travel literature and advertising material, the social factors combine the socio-economic background and personality features and the external elements include for instance previous travel experiences and constraints of time and cost. In order to analyse the choice of a traveller, the extent to which the individual is searching for information about the destination has to be taken into account. According to Mayo and Jarvis (1981, cited by Cooper et al., 2008, p.58), there are two ways of decision making. Routine decision making is a rather spontaneous approach and does not include a mental effort; the perceived need for information is low. On the contrary, an extensive decision-making approach will include a higher effort, more time and the evaluation of different information in order to point out all the alternatives.

According to Moutinho (1987, cited by Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999, p. 24-27), there are three phases to the decision-making process that should be analysed. The first step is the pre-decision and decision process, which includes the aforementioned stimuli that influence the choice. The second phase is the post-purchase evaluation, which concludes with satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the individual. The last phase is the future decision-making, which is influenced by the result of the second step. If the individual was satisfied, the chance is high, that the purchase will be repeated. On the contrary, if the traveller was dissatisfied, the probability of changing to a competitor is fairly high (Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999).

For this research, it is most important to look at the choice of information, rather than the complete decision-making process. A recent study carried out in Shanghai in 2011 focused on this specific topic. This research has analysed the 'Influence Online Information has on Chinese buying behaviour' and was published in the Travel & Tourism Category Report. The outcome of this research showed that 57% of Shanghai travellers based their decision on information from the internet about the destination, accommodation, transportation and activities (Travel & Tourism Category Report, 2011). This report shows the high influence of online information and this is not only the case in Shanghai, but throughout the world. The online information gathering process is therefore growing on importance and the urge to satisfy this need of the visitor is indispensable.

Now that it has been discussed which factors influence the decision of the tourist to travel to a specific destination and to search for certain travel information about accommodation, transportation or activities, the next step is to see how the user satisfies his need and what exactly drives him to look for more information. Former research into needs and wishes will be looked at more closely.

2.4. Role of Information

In order to understand the needs and wishes of tourists when looking for information about a specific destination, a definition of information needs should be made clear. Many researchers have looked into this topic in order to find out about the motivators, as well as the needs of individuals in the field of tourism. For a long time already, it has been clear that satisfying the needs of travellers leads to a positive evaluation of the travel experience and might turn them into repeaters. Kozac pointed at the importance for businesses to analyse the tourists' needs, in order to give them what they are looking for and expect (cited in Mazanec, Crouch & Woodside, 2002, p. 303). In addition, this positive feeling about a destination or a product will make the tourists talk about it and spread the word; the so-called 'word-of-mouth promotion'. The returned traveller will talk about his positive experience and through this; promote the destination or product unconsciously to his friends and the outside world. This feedback is one of the best ways of marketing, as individuals tend to believe their peers more, compared to trusting professionals (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The right information plays an essential role in this process due to the fact that a customer will only buy a product if he receives the information he needs to make a decision. But not only in the first phase is information important, as soon as the traveller chose the destination, the information search will go on and he should be able to find the information he looks for in order to be satisfied. In a later stage, the right information plays still an essential factor because the traveller will only reflect on his choice of destination with satisfaction if his needs are met.

2.4.1. Information Need Model

Vogt and Fesenmaier developed a model in 1998 in order to assess the information needs of travellers. The aim of the model is to find out about the information needs of tourists before travelling: What exactly they are looking for and what is most important to them when gathering information about the destination or package they consider acquiring. Vogt and Fesenmaier have expanded the functional tourism information search model by Assael (1984) with the aim to make it even more detailed and appropriate when analysing travellers' needs for information.

According to Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), travellers do not only use travel information in order to plan where and when to go, but also for entertainment and communication reasons, they might want to satisfy other needs, like curiosity or sharing experiences and information with peer travellers. Therefore, Vogt and Fesenmaier developed a model by Assael (1984) further, so as to incorporate aesthetic, hedonic, innovation and sign dimensions to better and more complete analyse the information needs of tourists. Assael only laid his focus on functional needs of tourists to satisfy their needs for information. The aim of the research, which has been conducted by Vogt and

Fesenmaier in 1998, was to develop a scale, in order to measure a variety of needs, besides the functional needs of tourists searching for information.

The model, which is the outcome of the research, can be seen in figure 2. According to the authors, the individual searching for information is goal oriented, thus, seeking for an answer to a specific question (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998). They likewise point out that various researches have been conducted in the relationship between information search and knowledge built up by prior experiences. One assumption is that individuals with a greater knowledge tend to look for deepening their knowledge. A second assumption is that this relationship is positive, which means that travellers with a little state of prior experiences encounter the need to gather more information. A third scenario would be a that individuals with a little state of knowledge and travellers with a high state of knowledge look for further information and one with a moderate level of knowledge is satisfied and does not feel the need to consult further information sources besides his own internal source (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998). Consequently, three different approaches to explaining the need for more information and its relationship to former experiences are being addressed.

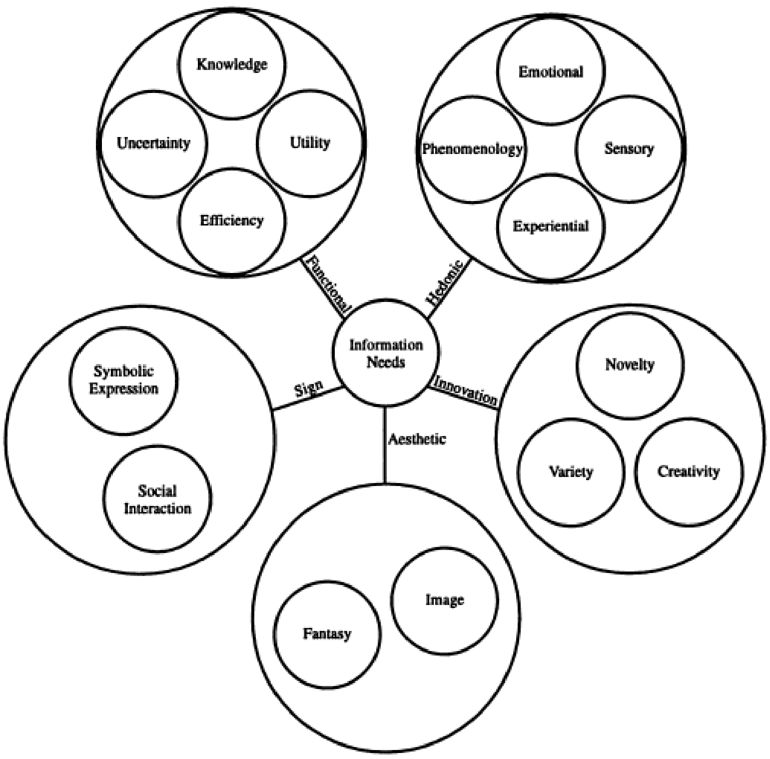


Figure 2: Model of Information Needs (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998)

In the following, the dimensions of the information need model by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) will be explained. The model consists of five layers; functional, hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign needs. The original model by Assael only consisted of the functional needs, which is due to the fact that each individual searching for information was considered to be doing this in order to get more practical information for the following purchase. The fact that the needs mean more to them than just the function of finding information, hadn't been considered yet. As briefly explained earlier, Vogt and Fesenmaier suggest that an individual might be satisfying other needs than the mentioned functional needs, because of this, the model has been expanded (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998).

Functional needs

The functional needs refer to knowledge, uncertainty, utility and efficiency, as can be seen in the model in figure 2. When encountering a gap in the already existing knowledge, the individual will consider searching for more information in order to fill this lack. Thus, the functional need should be satisfied by consulting information from various databases. When consulting information, the individual is looking for information, in order to learn more about a destination through comparing with other places or by searching for images or articles about the specific topic. The second component refers to uncertainty. The individual will look for information, in order to reduce the level of risk when purchasing a product. This uncertainty, which should be removed, refers to financial, performance, social, psychological, safety and convenience risks. The consumer will try to reduce the level of uncertainty by acquiring knowledge through the information search.

Utility, the third component of functional needs refers to the usefulness of information gathered. An individual will stop searching for more information if the financial costs outweigh the benefits. The last component, efficiency, relates to the situation when an individual is faced with a problem-solving task and therefore will consult information in order to solve this issue. According to Vogt and Fesenmaier, the most efficient source of information is one's own previous travel experience (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998). This however belongs to internal sources and cannot always fulfil the need for more information; in those cases that the internal sources are not sufficient, external sources have to be approached.

In 2011, Jani et al. conducted research into the topic of international tourists' information needs by analysing the behaviour of tourists in a specific travel forum on the internet. This research made use of the model by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), however, only took into account part of the model: The functional needs, as the original model by Assael.

This research looked deeper into the topic of fulfilling customer information needs and proposes that they look for information when deciding, that there is a gap in their current state of knowledge, consequently the traveller consults sources, in order to close this gap (Jani et al., 2011). Jani et al. looked at the postings about Japan and Korea on a travel forum by focusing on three characteristics; knowledge, risk reduction and efficiency needs. These aspects form the functional part of the model of information needs by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) as described before. The posts on the travel forum were sorted into four categories: ‘accommodation only’, ‘attraction only’, ‘accommodation + attraction’ and ‘others’. It can be seen, that 30,9 % of the posts were only about attractions and 45,9 % of the posts were about other information (Jani et al., 2011).

Consequently, it becomes clear, that most of the travellers post information about attractions or other information about the destination. Furthermore, Jani et al. (2011) conclude, that tourists in an earlier planning stage are more concerned about risk reduction than efficiency. The efficiency; itinerary and logistics become more important at a later stage (Jani et al., 2011).

The research conducted by Jani et al. used the functional aspects of the information need model by Vogt and Fesenmaier and therefore shows some results when applying this model in the field of tourism. This outcome can be used as a guideline, when conducting this research about the needs of tourists concerning local travel and very specifically the functional needs of the travellers. The functional needs of the traveller looking for information will be researched by looking at the trust the traveller has into various information sources and which are the preferred sources. Furthermore it will be looked at the stage in which the traveller consults what kind of information. The knowledge element of the functional needs will be of the main focus, in contrast to the utility aspect, which will not be addressed in this research.

Hedonic needs

Hedonic information needs refer to a non-functional aspect of the search process. The user might also look for information for other reasons than only to satisfy the aforementioned functional needs. Leisure activities are understood as being a source of happiness and enjoyment, as a result, the seeker for information is also likely to be satisfying these needs. ‘Phenomenology’, ‘experiential’, ‘sensory’ and ‘emotional’ are components of the hedonic needs (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998).

Phenomenology refers to the experience linked to the phenomena and takes not only the functional need for information, but also the hedonistic side into consideration; the whole experience of the process of gathering information is becoming important. Internal sensations and thoughts are being created. The second component, ‘experiential’, relates to the fact that the individual in need for information is making use of an intangible product, this being leisure, arts and also tourism. The pleasure benefit plays an important role in this process, thus, the user becomes a player and participant and is not only seen as the problem-solver anymore. Another component of hedonic behaviour is the sensory element. With this, also the senses like taste, sound and touch are being addressed and with these a feeling mode rather than a thinking state is being activated. In addition, the emotional component, which is also part of the hedonic needs, include the feeling and enjoyment aspects and with this the arising of enthusiasm in the traveller. These are said to be linked closely to consumer behaviour, in consequence, the excitement and pleasure feelings will arouse when buying or consuming a product. Due to the fact that not the actual user of the offer by Spotted by Locals will be taken into account but rather travellers that might be potential users, the consumption process of a tourism product will not be taken into account. In this particular research only the interest in other cultures and the excitement about this will be looked at regarding these specific needs.

Innovation needs

According to Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), the innovation needs consist of three components: Novelty seeking, variety seeking and creativity. Innovation is referred to the perception of a new product by the individual, as well as the need for a variety of products, sources and the creativity of new and original offers. Also a new strategy of gathering information is taken into consideration in this need aspect.

Novelty seeking is connected to individuals, who are venturesome and keep looking for new and original products, in order to broaden their knowledge and thus, also their possibilities. It is furthermore linked with the urge of the individual to seek new experiences. Making use of different media sources is, for instance, defined as variety seeking. The individual will access different information, in order to in the end be able to make a choice. Variety seeking, however, also includes the choice between different known products and brands, so as to come to a conclusion. Creative thinking is also part of the innovation needs and refers to the ability of cognitive thinking and the question whether the individual is able to make a successful choice between different products. As Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998, p. 560), state; "Highly creative individuals display open-mindedness, empathy, sensitivity, rationality and excellent problem-solving skills". Thus, the individual is able to make use of the data available and come to a conclusion as the final outcome. The importance of finding out about original places that few tourists travel to, will be looked at in order to determine the variety seeking aspect. In addition, the content on the website of Spotted by Locals will be looked at and analysed in terms of diversity of topics and original places to visit. Moreover, the fact whether travellers are able to be creative with their choice of destination will be addressed when looking at the content on the website of the commissioning client.

Aesthetic needs

Aesthetic needs also form part of the information need model. In contrast to functional needs, aesthetic impressions are abstract and subjective. The aesthetic needs can be fulfilled, both, through verbal, as well as visual forms, so that not only the design is important, but also the style of writing. Imagery and fantasizing both build up the aesthetic needs.

Imagery needs suggest that verbal and visual advertisements are part of the reader's experience. In tourism, for instance, the choice of the destination depends on the image the individual already possesses. This image is made up of earlier experiences, stories told by friends or articles, television programmes and many more sources. There are two different image-types in tourism. Organic images are non-tourism related images without the purpose to pull the reader to buy this specific product. On the contrary, induced images are mainly promotional material, which is being produced, in order to attract the reader to the destination. The second aspect, fantasizing refers to unconscious, everyday activities like daydreaming or fantasies that are based on elegance and beauty. These subconscious stimuli are sought to be fulfilled by, for instance, looking at images of destinations. In this particular research, only the organic images will be taken into account due to the fact that the offer by Spotted by Locals has no commercial background, even though the content might very likely be able to convince the reader to visit a specific destination.

Sign needs

Without taking into account the social or sign needs of a user, the information need model would not be complete. The four other dimensions of the information need model address the intrapersonal needs; the individual needs. The sign needs on the contrary address the interpersonal or social needs. Symbolic expression and social interaction build up this dimension.

The symbolic expression relates to the need of the individual to express oneself. Laurent and Kapferer state that the 'sign' is being perceived as the ability of a product or experience to represent one's personal identity (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985, cited in Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998). Moreover they say that the choice the consumer makes tells us something about his personality. In addition, also the source of information consulted can serve as a symbolic statement by the individual, when fulfilling his needs. According to Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), three different motives are underlying the social interaction needs and with this the sharing of information with peers. First of all, the information seeker wants to broaden his knowledge in order to gain social mobility. Secondly, he shares information, in order to develop a mutual exchange of ideas with others. The desire to convert or educate others forms the third reason for sharing information. Especially, in the field of tourism, the need to share information and pass on experiences is well established. Because of this, the need to share experiences with peers is done either through informal communication or more professional consultation, such as through events and travel presentations. This need of the traveller who is seeking for information, also includes the need to relate oneself to the author of the information and if the personality matches one's own interests. The research will look at the social aspect by looking at the sharing of experiences with peers and the need to interact with other travellers.

Concluding, the model of information needs, developed by Vogt and Fesenmaier in 1998, will form the basic theory when conducting this research. The information needs of visitors will be analysed by using the five aforementioned dimensions of the model. This theory will be incorporated into a questionnaire, in order to be able to examine the needs of travellers concerning local travel. The needs will moreover be looked at in relation to the content of the offer by Spotted by Locals. The outcome will show which needs are most important to satisfy and at what stage the tourist is most concerned about which type of need.

3. Definition of Research Problem and Research Methodology

The theory about cultural tourism and needs and wishes of tourists looked at in the substantive guidance will now help to delineate a central question, which will further be answered by several sub questions. The research objective, outlined in chapter one, will be the basis for formulating the central research question. In the second part of this chapter, the research methods will be laid down in detail, in order to get an overview of what has been done to answer the aforementioned sub questions and further on the central question of this research report. Different research methods have been taken into account to ensure a reliable outcome.

3.1. Central and Sub Questions

As explained in chapter one, the aim of this research is to find out about the needs and wishes of travellers, visiting European cities, concerning local travel information and if this market is growing in order to make recommendations on how the offer by Spotted by Locals can be optimized to increase the number of users and furthermore to get proof, that the interest in this way of travelling is growing.

This research will aim at answering the following central question:

What is the role of different types of information needs in general and specifically local travel information in the decision-making process of travellers visiting European cities?

The central question will be answered with the help of the following sub questions:

What is the role of different types of information needs in general and specifically local travel information in the decision-making process of travellers visiting European cities?

- What is the profile of travellers visiting European cities?
- What are the functional needs (knowledge, uncertainty, utility, efficiency) of tourists?
- What are the hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign needs of tourists?
- How is the use of travel information of tourists changing?

1. What is the profile of travellers visiting European cities?

The profile of the traveller to European cities has to be looked at closely in order to understand the choices he makes. Questions about the nationality, gender, age, education, frequency of doing city trips, main reason for travelling and travel-budget are addressed in order to clearly determine what the behaviour of the travellers to European cities is. Furthermore, the choice of the destination is determined by the thought of the tourist, whether the destination can fulfil his demand or not. For a tourism business, this knowledge is vital in order to adjust the offer and hence influence the decision made by the tourist towards one's own benefit. As described above, the decision-making process by tourists is determined by different factors and divided into three different stages. In order to draw a conclusion what kind of information has to be offered and to whom in order to draw the traveller to a specific destination, which would fit his profile and interests, these factors have to be researched. Understanding the decision-making process of tourists and the factors influencing this choice is essential when looking at the underlying needs and wishes of a specific type of traveller. Hence the profile in connection with the factors influencing him is looked at thoroughly.

2. What are the functional needs (knowledge, uncertainty, utility, efficiency) of tourists?

According to the information need model by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), the needs are divided into five dimensions, which determine the information needs by tourists. In order to evaluate the exact needs, all of these five elements have to be taken into account and researched. The functional need is looked at separately due to the fact that the functional needs make up the most important need, as stated by previous researchers and mentioned in a previous chapter. This dimension deals with knowledge, uncertainty, utility and efficiency. All of these subcomponents are addressed in order to answer this sub question thoroughly. In addition, the knowledge component determines how the tourists would like to receive information, which sources they prefer to consult, and whether they are actually interested in information from locals or if they prefer information offered by professionals. The level of trust in the various sources is researched as well as the trustworthiness and objectivity of the content of the information offered by locals. Finally, this sub question answers the question to what extent the tourist is interested in information offered by locals, hence in local travel.

3. What are the hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign needs of tourists?

Hedonic needs, according to Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), include elements of emotional, sensory, phenomenology and experimental factors which determine the need for information. The interest in culture and the daily life of the community is being addressed in this particular research. The innovation needs according to the researchers refer to the creativity of an individual and his choice to broaden his mind in order to be able to select between different products. This includes the interest in learning about original and new places, which is being addressed in this research. It furthermore deals with the element of novelty and with this the need for unknown and original offers, which the innovation seeking tourist is trying to fulfil. Aesthetic needs on the other hand are more abstract and subjective. This aspect is researched in relation to the content written in the blogs on the website of Spotted by Locals and determines, whether this information inspires and is written in an attractive way. Especially verbal and visual advertisement is being addressed with this need. Sign needs are more interpersonal compared to the other components of the information need model, which are rather intrapersonal needs. Thus the sign needs indicate the goal of answering the need of tourists to share the gained knowledge with their peers. This aspect is determined by looking at the need to share knowledge and the indication of being an active traveller. As a result, these factors are researched with this sub question in order to get a complete picture of the needs and wishes of visitors to the various European cities.

4. **How is the use of travel information of tourists changing?**

Regarding the trends and developments in the sector mentioned above, the use of information by travellers has changed in the last couple of years. The internet plays a vital role in the decision-making process and in the gathering of travel information. Nowadays also smartphone apps seem to play an ever more important role for travellers, due to the fact that they can be used anytime during the travel process. This sub question aims at gaining an insight into the changing use of sources and types of travel information of tourists. Furthermore, it answers the question what experts in the field of tourism think about the local travel market, if it is growing and which actions or projects they include in relation to this specific trend.

3.2.Research Methods

In the following, the exact research methods will be explained and substantiated by explanations why these particular choices were made. Further on it will be outlined per each sub question, which research method has been used. A combination of desk research and field research has been carried out as well as a combination of questionnaires and interviews in order to get the most reliable outcome.

3.2.1. Desk Research

Desk research includes collecting literature about the research topic, in this specific case local travel and the needs and wishes of travellers, regarding travel information. This literature includes secondary literature, which can be explained as: "*secondary literature sources* such as books and journals are the subsequent publication of primary literature" (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 51). Sources, such as newspaper articles, books, journals as well as the internet belong into this group of literature.

Desk research is, like for almost every research, the starting point of this research. The current available literature and theory about the topic of local travel and needs and wishes of tourists regarding travel information have been looked at critically in the substantive guidance. Different approaches to define cultural tourism and the phenomenon of urban tourism have been looked at in order to create a better understanding of the background of this research. Printed sources as well as online sources were used to get an insight into these topics. To the printed sources belong newspaper articles as well as tourism journals, reports and books. Websites, such as the Spotted by Locals-website, as well as the tourism boards' websites were used to gather more information about the different methods used by the various city tourism boards and to see if they do include local travel in their marketing or else have not taken any actions about this trend.

A second approach, which is also part of desk research, is conducting a content analysis. This research technique aims at analysing secondary literature in a thorough way, by looking at either visual or verbal content. The qualitative approach, analysing verbal content, is used in this research report. The data looked at is the offer on the website as well as the Facebook page of the commissioning client, Spotted by Locals. The textual material is looked at in terms of the style of writing as well as the information that it delivers. Moreover images on the website are taken into account in order to analyse their meaning and attractiveness or the message they deliver to the reader.

3.2.2. Field Research

Field research might include questionnaires, interviews and observations. Questionnaires most probably lead to quantitative data due to the fact that a wide number of responses will be collected. Qualitative data is collected through interviews and is usually “based on meanings expressed through words” (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 378), without stating numbers. The analysis of qualitative data furthermore requires the division into various categories or topics in order to compare the different responses with each other in regard to the various themes (Saunders et al., 2003).

3.2.2.1. Questionnaire

The field research can be divided into two different parts. First of all, questionnaires were conducted by asking tourists to find out about their demands (see addendum I for the sample questionnaire). This questionnaire consists of different parts to ensure the complexity of the outcome and with this a reliable conclusion. The questionnaires distributed to the tourists incorporated mainly closed questions but also one open question in order to give the respondent the opportunity to reflect on local travel and share his opinion about this market. By using an open question, not yet thought of ideas might arise. The questions mainly consist of 5-point Likert scale formats in order to get a clear result about the level of the need and how highly influential it is. A variety of types of questions were used, such as multiple response questions, where the respondent had to tick a box, but also questions indicating the level of trust in the different information sources. A matrix has been used in order to find out at which stage of the travel-process, the tourist looks for which kind of information. Statements were used in order to find out about the respondent’s opinion regarding different topics.

Spotted by Locals offer their service in 41 European cities and 28 countries, thus being one of the biggest publishers of city guides (Pressitt, 2012). In order to get a valid result of this research, it is important to not only focus on one destination but take several into account. Consequently, an **online survey** has been used in order to address tourists all over the world, of different age ranges and various nationalities. The traveller using modern technology in order to inform himself about a destination can be found online, thus an online survey addressed exactly this group of travellers. According to Saunders et al. (2003), the return rate of an online survey is estimated at a low rate of 10%, thus it was necessary to spread the questionnaire in various directions in order to increase this rate. A reminder has been used in order to get more respondents to fill out the online survey. In order to increase the number of responses, the precise same questionnaire has been developed as printed questionnaire and carried out as well. This has been done in Amsterdam as well as Cologne, due to the location of the researcher.

The location for the online questionnaire, include various platforms on the Internet, to spread the survey by using a snowball effect. The platforms used include Facebook, Linked-in, and tourism forums. Spotted by Locals works with about 200 spotters, in 28 different countries, who are of different ages. In addition, these spotters were used as a starting point to spread the questionnaire. The spotters sent the questionnaire to their group of friends and colleagues. This targeting made sure that the questionnaire was spread in 28 different European countries to many international, potential respondents. The spotters themselves were not allowed to fill out the questionnaire due to the fact that their answers would be biased because of their connection to the commissioning client. The online questionnaire has been launched on the 16th of May, 2012 in the morning as this is supposed to be the best time to get good results as stated by Ipathia, Inc. (2009). The questionnaire on paper has been carried out between the 29th of May and the 3rd of June.

A few characteristics of the sample group were determined in order to address the right respondent with the **printed survey**. Only respondents travelling in small groups or individuals were chosen as potential respondents in the cities. Mainly people sitting somewhere were addressed, as they most probably have the time to fill out the survey. The willingness of the respondents to fill out the questionnaire in the city was not too bad. However, most of the males, that were asked, answered with a lack of time to fill out the survey and neglected, which makes a surplus of female respondents. The filling out of the questionnaire took about 5 to 10 minutes and was done in presence of the researcher in order to be able to answer potential questions and uncertainties. Due to the fact that in the survey on paper the definition of local travel was missing, this had to be explained to every respondent in advance in order to ensure an understanding and the ability to properly answer the questions.

For both survey versions, the **sample population** is the same and includes people who have visited a European city within the last two years and are interested in sharing their opinion about their use and demands concerning travel information. The guideline of two years has been chosen in order to make sure the respondent can still recall the trip he made and also the sources he consulted for gathering travel information. A questionnaire has been used in order to get an insight into what sources the respondents used and about their level of trust regarding these. The questionnaire addresses the last city trip made within those two last years for the best outcome. A questionnaire is the most appropriate method in this case in order to get an insight into the travel behaviour of a large number of respondents. The nationality of the respondent is not important but still interesting for the results. The traveller is characterized as not travelling in big groups and not participating in organized group trips but rather small groups or individuals organizing their trip by themselves. The age is not very significant; however the age range of visitors of European cities, travelling in small groups or as individuals and organizing the trip independently can be assumed to be between 20 and 50, which represents also the users of the service provided by Spotted by Locals. Due to the fact that it is impossible to ask each and every person that has travelled to a European city about his opinion, a sample size has to be determined in order to get a reliable outcome, which is also achievable within the limited time frame (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 150).

In order to decide on a suitable **sample size**, a sample size calculator (Creative Research Systems, 2012) has been used. In this case that the population size is very big and unknown: City travellers of all nationalities visiting any European city - the population size has been estimated at 20.000 (Raosoft, 2004). The level of certainty however was determined by 95%, which is a common factor used by researchers (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 155). The margin of error has been set at 5%, which has led to a sample size of 377. Concluding, 377 questionnaires with tourists would have to be carried out in order to ensure a reliable result. In total, a number of 226 responses have been collected, 50 on paper and 176 online. Out of the 176 online surveys, 11 were not filled out completely, thus these responses have been deleted. The collected data from the questionnaires has been analysed by making use of SPSS. This program helped to analyse frequencies of various answers as well as comparing different aspects in order to find out if a relationship exists and how strong this relationship would be.

3.2.2.2. Interview with experts

Besides the questionnaires, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with experts in the field of tourism were carried out (see addendum V for the interview sample). These interviews consisted of various topics, such as the current demands of tourists concerning travel information and future developments. The experts mainly have an idea of where the tourism trends are heading and thus also the changing demands of travellers regarding travel information. These semi-structured interviews have the advantage to get the respondent talk about a specific topic, incorporating his own ideas and thus gives room for own thoughts. Twelve questions were prepared, which dealt with the topics of travel information use of tourists and its changes as well as the opinion of the respondent about the local travel market and its future and the actions they take or not take in this respect.

The second **research population** consists of experts in the field of tourism. Experts that have certain knowledge about local travel or providing travel information to tourists in one of the European cities are included in this research population. City tourism boards as well as tourist information offices were addressed in order to find out about current trends and developments in the sector and with this the changing demands of tourists. Due to the fact that the tourists are the main research group, only a limited number of experts were addressed, namely 9. A list of the respondents can be found in the results chapter. A list of contacts from European city tourism boards as well as tourist information offices offered by the commissioning client has been used in order to find interview respondents for this particular research. Moreover the researcher's personal contacts have been added to this list. The potential respondents were contacted by mail as well as phone in order to set a date for the interview. The interview itself has been carried out via Skype due to the different locations of the researcher and the interview respondents. Conducting the interview, the whole conversation has been taped in order to later own transcribe the answers given in detail.

Below, the precise method per sub question under the heading field research will be explained.

1. **What is the profile of travellers visiting European cities?**
The first sub question addresses the profile of the visitors to the various European cities. Questions about the gender, age, nationality, level of education, and travel behaviour were asked in the questionnaire. The number of city trips done in 2011 as well as the accommodation, budget and reason for travelling were indicated. This sub question furthermore addressed the decision-making process and showed what influences the tourists when deciding where to go and especially about where and when they look for the necessary information, in order to close the gap in their knowledge. This theory of the decision-making process has been incorporated into the questionnaire. The outcome of this sub question shows what type of traveller visits the European cities and what his travel behaviour is in relation to gathering travel information. In addition the result displays what drives and motivates tourists to seek for information and how they make the decision, which destination to visit and if this decision is influenced by the information they found. The results point out, which aspects are important for the information in general, and also in order to pull the tourists towards a specific destination.

2. What are the functional needs (knowledge, uncertainty, utility, efficiency) of tourists?
The functional needs are part of the information need model by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) and build the main part of this model. Jani et al (2011) also conducted research, as described above, making use of the functional needs of this model. The functional needs are the most recognized information needs of travellers and the most important to be satisfied, therefore this component of the information need model is seen as an individual sub question. The sources used were researched by asking the respondents to answer a multiple choice question about their gathering of travel information for their last city trip. A question about the level of trust in the various information sources, by using a 5-point Likert scale, was incorporated in the questionnaire as well. A second part incorporated questions about local travel information, the use of these and local travel sources that were consulted. The ease with which the local travel information was found as well as statements about this information are incorporated into questions. The importance of trustworthiness, accuracy, honesty and objectivity of the content were determined. An online questionnaire was chosen in order to answer this sub question with a wide-ranging number of respondents with a variety of nationalities. Hence, the outcome will be more valid when many travellers of European cities will be asked. The questions were developed as an online survey and then distributed to a very diverse audience in order to address respondents with different backgrounds, travel behaviour and various travel information needs.

In order to answer sub question number 3, a mix of desk research and field research has been used, which is explained in more detail hereinafter.

3. What are the hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign needs of tourists?
This sub question is based on the last four components of the model of information needs by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998). These four dimensions are combined to one sub question due to the fact that they make up a smaller part of the needs compared to the functional needs, but still will be taken into account, in order to get a complete result about the various types of needs of tourists concerning their information use. This sub question made up a small part in the questionnaire, distributed to European city travellers, due to the fact that it is not as apparent as the functional needs. In addition, this question has been answered by conducting desk research about the blog entries on

the website of Spotted by Locals as well as the Facebook page by the commissioning client, where everyone can write an entry that is interested and wants to share information with others. These blog entries and the articles written by the spotters were analysed by doing a content analysis. The content was looked at in terms of the different information needs and what exactly they inform the reader about and which information needs are being addressed. The content was looked at in terms of innovation and if the travellers are able to find innovative information and experiences. The next information need according to the model by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) addresses the hedonic needs. The content was looked at in terms of entertainment and if the reader is able to learn about the local culture, daily life of the area and imagine the food, sounds and smells of the area. Furthermore, the articles were looked at in terms of the ability to fantasize about a specific destination, which is part of the aesthetic needs. The last component of the information need model, the sign needs, were analysed by looking at the fact that visitors try to advice others on travel information, share the gained knowledge and showing that one is an active traveller. The content was looked at in detail by keeping in mind these aspects in order to analyse which information needs were addressed and what tourists ask about. The results show what exactly the tourists' needs are, with regards to travelling, when seeking information.

4. How is the use of travel information of tourists changing?

This sub question has been answered by interviewing experts in the field of tourism who are involved in travel information provision within Europe. Experts, who work for city tourism boards, as well as tourist information offices, were addressed, in order to find out about trends and developments in this market and what change they experience in the search for travel information by travellers. Different European countries were addressed in order to get answers from diverse respondents. 9 experts from tourist information offices as well as city tourism boards were interviewed about the use of travel information of tourists and the changing demand of this, as well as their opinion about the local travel market and its potential as a growing market in the field of tourism. The criterion for an expert was that they have worked for their tourism organization at least 3 years, in order to ensure a good level of knowledge and experiences in this field. The interviews took approximately 20 minutes and were mainly conducted via Skype and one face-to-face. The respondents, that arranged a meeting for an interview, took their time and revealed all information that was needed. However, many tourism boards indicated a lack of time or resources to carry out this interview.

Semi-structured interviews have been carried out in order to ensure an open talk about the topic so that the respondent had room to reveal his own ideas and thoughts about this topic. However, a few main questions, about 12, were prepared in order to lead the respondent into the right direction about local travel information and to be able to compare the answers of the different respondents and to later obtain a reliable outcome.

3.3.Reflection on Research Process

Reflecting on the research carried out, a few issues and problems can be detected, which have an influence on the total outcome, thus the results of this research. First of all, due to the fact that the preparation of the questionnaire took a very long time, the field research period had to be diminished, which led to a smaller amount of surveys carried out. Only 226 out of the 377 aimed at questionnaires were filled out by respondents. This fact results in a too small sample size, in order to be able to draw precise conclusions and generalize the characteristics of the visitor of European cities. When reflecting on the sample size, which has been chosen for this research it can be said that this sample size does not precisely reflect the actual respondents. The age of the respondents was supposed to be between 20 and 50; however the results show that most of the actual respondents are 23 years old, with an age range between 19 and 70, which does not represent the sample well. Furthermore a high percentage of German respondents are represented, which can be explained by the background of the researcher and thus leads to a not totally reliable outcome.

In this research, various networks have been made use of in order to reach the respondents. First of all the network of the commissioning client and the spotters has been used. Secondly, random people in the streets of Amsterdam and Cologne were addressed, with the starting question if they are currently on a city trip or if they have made a city trip within the last two years, to make sure they fit the characteristics. As a third group, the personal network of the researcher has been used, which might have led to the number of people in the age of 23. Concluding, the results cannot be generalized for all city travellers in European cities, but only for a specific group of city travellers and thus show a lack of validity due to a too small sample size, the aforementioned age group and the nationality.

When looking at the collection of quantitative data, spreading the online questionnaire took longer than expected. Due to this fact, a questionnaire in printed version has been developed and carried out in the two aforementioned destinations. Furthermore, some respondents, to be precise 5, did not finish the online questionnaire but left the last 2 to 3 questions blank. This might be due to the fact that the third last question was an open question, so to be filled out by writing a few words or a sentence. This fact might have led to the missing answers. Some respondents even stopped after the first 4 questions, namely 11 of the 226 respondents. Another barrier was the fact that the questionnaire could only be opened once on every Computer, in order to ensure that no respondent could fill out the survey twice. A few respondents mentioned the problem that the browser closed and then were not able to open the questionnaire again; hence they were not able to finish the survey.

An issue with the printed survey was that many respondents were not willing to take their time, especially male respondents. The reason for this is unknown, however might be related to the gender of the researcher and the in general higher willingness of female respondents to help. The questionnaire was in English, which made it a bit difficult for some respondents, even by offering help to translate the questions, the respondents neglected their cooperation. The capability of the researcher to conduct these questionnaires was moderate. Previous research experiences helped to approach the persons in the street, however due to the fact that previous research projects were done in a group and this particular research has been carried out by a single researcher made fairly difficult and time consuming.

Another issue is connected to the content of the survey. In sub question 3, which deals with the hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign needs of tourists, the connection between the theory and the questions in the survey was not established very well. Additionally, the aesthetic needs were not represented in a survey question at all. This resulted in the issue that the outcome of the survey regarding this sub question was not sufficient. In order to overcome this lack of data, an analysis of the content on the website of Spotted by Locals and their Facebook page was conducted to be able to answer this particular sub question and through this find out about the role of the four different needs. Although the answers to this question were not provided by travellers themselves and therefore do not particularly reflect their opinion, looking back, the content analysis was a good choice and gave enough data in order to be able to answer this specific sub question. However, only secondary data instead of primary data has been analysed. A minor mistake has been detected while analysing the data collected through the survey: One question in the printed version includes an answer possibility, which is not included in the online version, thus this answer possibility had to be taken out. The printed survey includes the answer possibility 'Friends and Relatives that are locals' to the question about the level of trust in the various travel information sources by the respondent.

Regarding the interviews carried out with experts in the field of tourism, it can be said that the aim was a number of 10 interviews and 9 have been carried out, so this is fairly sufficient. The difficulty of finding respondents for this research has been overcome by making use of various networks. The network of the researcher has been used as well as the network of the commissioning client. The language skills of the researcher made it possible to conduct interviews in English as well as German thus made a positive contribution to the outcome of the research. On the other hand, experiences about conducting interviews were very limited, so that the researcher was not that critical about the answers the respondent gave. Follow-up questions were asked in order to reveal more about the opinion of the expert, however could have been practiced even more. Moreover, some of the respondents did not understand the concept of local travel information, so that this had to be explained during the interview, which on the other hand shows that this particular city does not acknowledge the trend yet and is not aware of it.

Even though some issues can be encountered in the research process, as well as in the translation from theory to questionnaire, the sub questions have been answered in detail and show a thorough analysis of the collected research data.

4. Results

Hereinafter, the results of this research are being presented and analysed. The outcome of the survey conducted, makes up the first part. Various topics will be looked at in relation to the answers given by the respondents. The next part includes a content analysis of the offer of Spotted by Locals by looking at the various information needs, developed by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998). The last part make up the results of the interviews carried out with the tourism experts involved in information provision. The different answers will be compared in relation to topics that have been established.

4.1.Survey Results

First, the quantitative data collected by making use of a questionnaire will be looked at and analysed in terms of frequencies and relationships between various aspects. Sub questions 1 through 3 will be answered with the help of the outcome of the questionnaire. A sample of the questionnaire can be found in the Addenda (see Addendum I). The frequency tables of the various questions can be found in the Addenda as well (see Addendum II).

4.1.1. Profile of travellers visiting European cities

The survey carried out in this specific research included several questions concerning the profile and the travel behaviour of visitors of European cities, who were addressed with this questionnaire to find out about their needs and travel behaviour when visiting a European city. In total, 226 filled out surveys have been gathered, out of which 215 are valid responses. Some questions have not been answered by all of the respondents. The majority of the questions have been answered by 210 out of the 215 valid responses, so in case the total number of respondents deviates from 210, this will be pointed out.

The group of respondents consists of 34,9 % male and 65,1 % female participants. Most of the 215 respondents were born in 1989, the youngest person is born in 1993 and the oldest in 1942, which is a very wide range in terms of age. In order to be able to look at the travel behaviour of the respondents, age groups have been formed. The first group includes the respondents born in 1942-1961, the second group consists of the respondents born in 1962-1981 and the third age group comprises the respondents born in 1982-1993. More than a quarter of the respondents, representing 27,0 % (N=215), are Germans. The second largest group of respondents is represented by Dutch, with 17,2 % (N=215), followed by Belgians with 6,0 % (N=215). Besides those main nationalities represented in this study, also some unexpected nationalities can be found, for instance one respondent from Andorra, one Chilean and one Zimbabwean. In total, 43 different nationalities are represented in this study. The reason for the high percentage of German respondents can be explained due to the nationality and background of the researcher, as well as the fact that some questionnaires were carried out in Germany, where many travellers were German.

Concerning the education of the respondents, 44,7 % (N=215) indicated that they attain a bachelor degree or are currently following this education. Surprisingly a high number, 31,2 % (N=215), said to hold or currently follow an even higher degree, to be precise a master's degree. Only 3,7 % (N=215) have or follow any other education, which is a very low percentage compared to the other degrees. In order to find out if the educational level can be related to the age of the respondents, the age and the education are displayed in comparison in figure 3. Very evidently, 50,0 % (N=58) of the people in the age group of 1962-1981 hold a master's degree. In the third age group, 1982-1993, 53,1 % (N=147) of the respondents hold a bachelor degree. In the first age group, 1942-1961, all different educations are equally represented. The relationship between the age and the education is very moderate. The result of Phi is consulted, in order to find out how strong this relationship is; the result is Phi=0,468 (0,25-0,5 = moderate relationship), which indicates a very moderate relationship between the age and the level of education. Hence, the younger age group tends to hold a bachelor's degree, compared to the middle age group, which tends to hold a master's degree. The age group born in 1942-1961 includes 10 respondents with each educational degree equally represented.

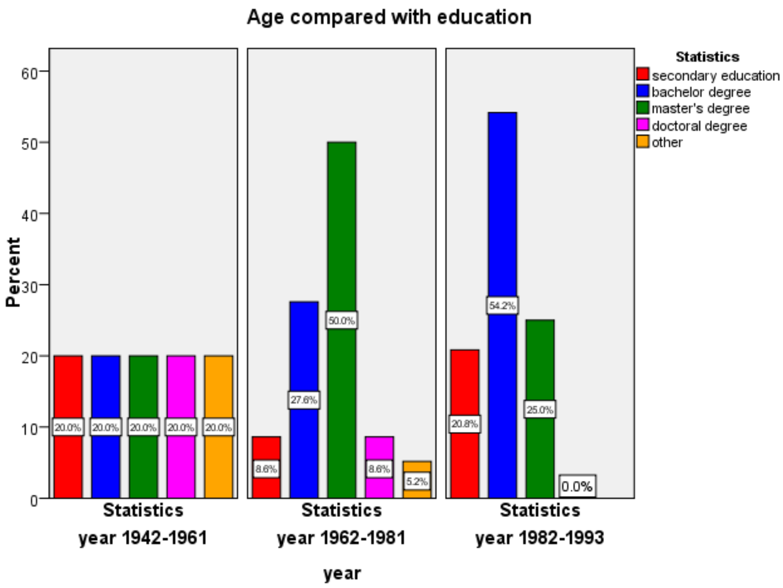


Figure 3: Year of birth in relation to education (N=10, N=58, N=147)

The average city traveller, 50,2 % (N=215), made 2-4 city trips in 2011, which is slightly more than half of the respondents. 8,4 % (N=215) indicated that they made 11 city trips or more. 14,9 % (N=215) of the respondents said they made only 1 city trip in 2011. These results give a clear picture of how frequent the travellers visited European cities in 2011. The result to a question about the travelling party composition on the last city trip of the respondents points out that 37,2 % (N=215) of the respondents travelled with a partner. The same percentage represents the answer possibility 'with friends and relatives'. Both of these answer possibilities have been chosen the most. Only 1,9 % (N=215) stated that they travelled with an organized group, which relates to only 4 responses. Surprisingly, a number of 39 respondents indicated that they travelled alone. This makes up 18,1 % (N=215) of all the answers given. Thus, most of the city travellers went with a partner or with friends and relatives on their last city trip. Interesting is the difference in the answers given in relation to the education of the respondents, which is displayed in figure 4. 18,9 % (N=37) of the respondents with a secondary education indicated that they have been on 1 city trip in 2011. In comparison to this, none of the respondents with a doctoral degree made only 1 city trip. In contrast, 28,6 % (N=7) of this group made 11 or more city trips in 2011. The answer 5-10 city trips in 2011 has most been answered by the group currently following or holding a master's degree. The relationship between education and number of city trips done in 2011 is not very strong, however moderate concluding by the factor Phi, which indicates a relationship of Phi=0,305 (0,25-0,5 = moderate relationship). Hence, the higher the educational level, the more city trips the respondents made in 2011.

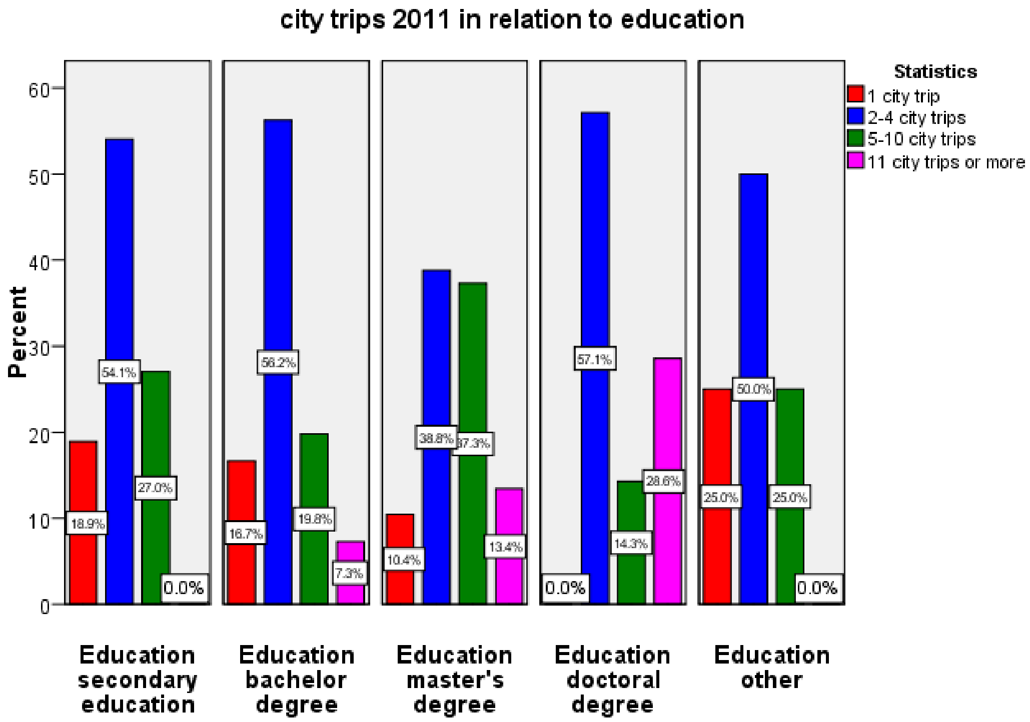


Figure 4: Number of city trips in 2011 in relation to education (N=37, N=96, N=67, N=7, N=8)

The most common answer to the question about the main reason for travelling, is sightseeing/ cultural purposes with a percentage of 68,8 % (N=215). In total, 148 respondents claimed this as being their main reason for travelling on their last city trip. Only 8 of the respondents indicated shopping as being their main reason for travelling, which makes up 3,7 % (N=215). Visiting friends and relatives is the second most chosen reason, with 19,5 % (N=215). The answers given by male and female concerning this question are very equally distributed. 73,3 % (N=75) of the male respondents answered that their main reason for travelling is sightseeing/ cultural purpose as well as 66,4 % (N=140) of the female respondents, who gave the same answer. The relation between the main reason for travelling and the number of city trips made in 2011 has been analysed and can be seen in figure 5. According to the factor Phi, there is a moderate relationship with Phi=0,398. When looking at the second most chosen reason, a big difference between the number of city trips made in 2011 can be seen. 15,6 % (N=32) of the people who made only 1 city trip indicated that their main reason for travelling was shopping. Looking at the respondents who made 5-10 city trips, 26,3 % (N=57) stated that they travelled to visit friends/ relatives. 27,8 % (N=18) of the respondents that made 11 or more city trips in 2011 said to travel for business purposes. It can be seen that very frequent travellers travelled for either sightseeing/ cultural purpose or business purposes.

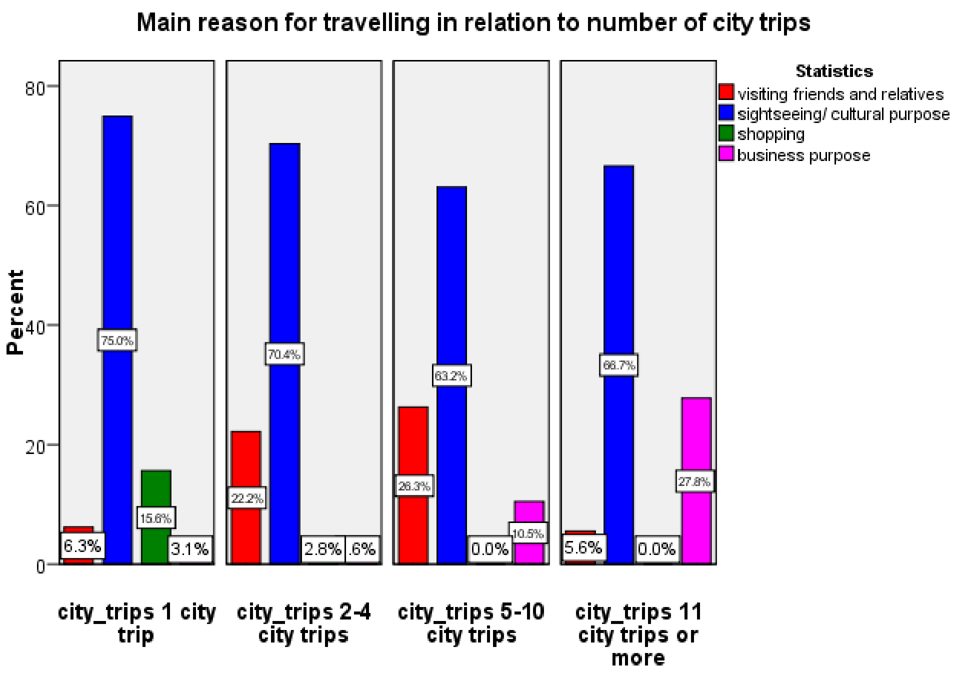


Figure 5: Main reason for travelling in relation to number of city trips (N=32, N=108, N=57, N=18)

Hotel is the most common answer, when indicating which accommodation the respondents stayed in during their last city trip. 36,3 % (N=215) stated that they stayed in a hotel. The second most common answer, with a percentage of 21,4 % (N=215) is the answer possibility 'with friends and relatives'. Ten respondents indicated that they stayed at a different accommodation than the given answer possibilities. Some of the answers given include a monastery, a farm, bed& breakfast, accommodation through Airbnb[1] and a mix of different accommodations. When looking at the relationship between the accommodation in which the respondent stayed and the age, a clear preference of the different age groups can be seen. Most of the respondents born between 1942 and 1961 answered that they stayed in a hotel, 90,0 % (N=10). 48,3 % (N=58) of the respondents in the age group 1962-1981 also stayed in a hotel on their last city trip, with also a significant number of 17,2 % (N=58) staying with friends and relatives. In the third age group, 1982-1993 a big difference can be seen as 27,9 % (N=147) stated that they stayed in a hostel. The same percentage is given to the accommodation hotel and 26,5 % (N=147) stayed with friends and relatives. Also this relationship between the age and the type of accommodation is quite significant, with the factor Phi=0,398, which indicates a moderate relationship between the age of the respondents and the type of accommodation.

109 respondents indicated that they travelled on a low budget, which makes up a total of 50,7 % (N=215). Also a high number of respondents, namely 44,7 % (N=215) stated that they travelled on a medium budget on their last city trip. A very limited number of 10 respondents, 4,7 % (N=215) said that they had travelled on a rather high budget. In order to find out if there is a relationship between the age of the respondents and the travel budget, a cross tabulation has been made in order to analyse the relationship between those two categories. The graph to this cross table can be seen in figure 6. Out of the 10 respondents born between 1942 and 1961, 8 indicated that they travelled on a medium budget and high travel budget has been indicated by 2 of the 10 respondents of this same age group. Compared to this 59,2 % (N=147) of the younger age group, born between 1982 and 1993 stated that they travelled on a low budget. Interesting is now the question if there is a relationship between the age and the travel budget. The Pearson's chi-square test, done in SPSS, shows that there is a relationship between these two categories. Calculating Phi will then indicate how strong the relationship between the age of the respondents and the travel budget is. In this case, Phi shows a result of Phi=0,318, this can be translated as a moderate relationship. Thus, there is a moderate relationship between the age of the respondents and the travel budget they indicated for their last city trip. Hence, the older the respondent, the higher the budget he travelled on.

[1] Airbnb is a community marketplace for unique accommodations, situated in San Francisco, founded in 2008. http://www.airbnb.com/

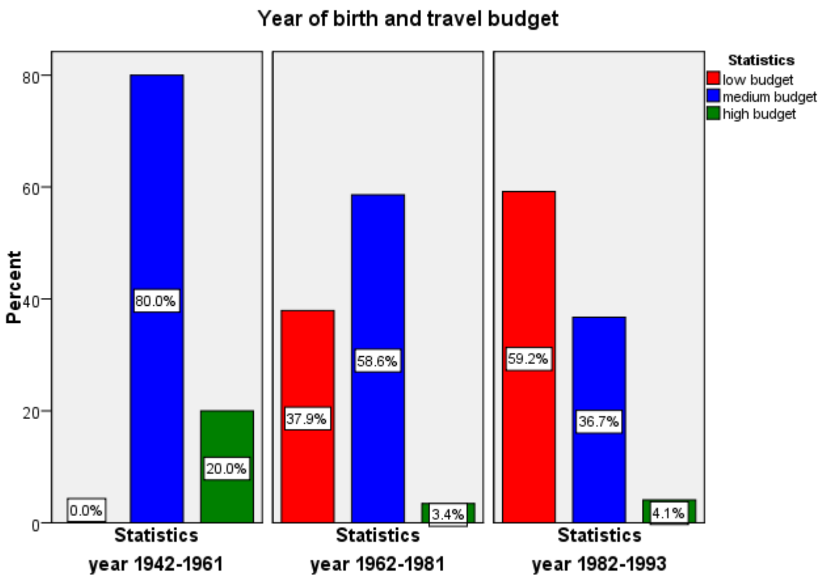


Figure 6: Year of birth in relation to travel budget (N=10; 58; 147)

4.1.2. Decision-making of travellers to European cities

It is not only important to know who the visitor of European cities is and his travel behaviour, but also what influences his decision to make a certain trip. Furthermore, it is interesting to see at which stage he looks for different types of travel information. Regarding the main factor which usually influences the decision of the person to make a certain trip or visit is mainly stated as being the opinion of friends and relatives with 31,6 %. The next most frequently chosen factor is the own socio-economic situation of the respondent. 25,6 % chose this factor as their main influence on their travel decision. Only 7,4 % of the respondents answered this question by stating that limit of time is their main influential factor on the decision. 14 respondents stated that other factors, not mentioned in the survey are influencing them. Architecture, cultural interest, curiosity, history, desire to travel, special event and films include some of the given answers. Comparing males and females in this context, it can be seen that females are, with 34,3 % (N=137), very much influenced by the opinion of friends and relatives in comparison to only 23,6 % (N=73) of the male respondents stated to be influenced by this factor. Another factor that influences the decision made by the female respondents are previous travel experiences, with a percentage of 16,8 % (N=137). 31,5 % (N=73) of the male respondents answered that their own socio-economic situation is most influential to their travel decision as well as limit of time, with a share of 8,2 % (N=73).

The outcome of a multiple response question about which type of information the respondents look for before travelling (table 1), showed that 91,8 % (N=208) of the respondents look for information about destinations before they travel. Very similar is the percentage of respondents looking for information about accommodation before travelling, with 90,9 % (N=208). A number of 21,0 %

(N=208) state that they look for information about gastronomy before their trip. However, it has to be noted that 12,9 % mentioned that they do not look for information about gastronomy at all. All types of information are equally distributed between male and female respondents, except information about gastronomy, where 23,4 % (N=137) of the female respondents state to search for this kind of information before travelling and in contrast only 16,4 % (N=73) of the male respondents gave the same answer. The same goes for information about lifestyle; 31,4 % (N=137) of the female respondents and 16,4 %(N=73) of the male respondents look for information about lifestyle before travelling to a certain destination.

Table 1: Type of information looked for and when (N=210-multiple response question)

	Before	During	After	Not at all
Destinations	191	78	17	5
Accommodation	189	48	3	8
Attractions	122	151	13	6
Transportation	115	147	1	8
Gastronomy	44	168	5	27
Events	94	134	11	32
Lifestyle	55	117	25	65

Not only the type of information the traveller looks for before the trip is interesting, but also the information searched for during the trip is taken into account. This question was also answered by choosing several responses, a multiple response question, thus, the per cent of cases do not add up to 100%. Out of the 210 respondents, 168 stated that they look for information about gastronomy while travelling. A small number, 48 of the respondents look for information about accommodation during their travel. Next, the results of the type of information looked for after travelling will be looked at. Out of all the different types of information that people were looking for after their travel, 33,3 % (N=75) was about lifestyle. 22,7 % (N=75) of the information looked for after travelling was about destinations, which might be due to the preparation for the next trip. Another interesting factor to look at is the types of information that were not searched for at all. 65 of the 210 respondents stated that they did not look for information about lifestyle. Respondents not searching for information about events are represented by a number of 32 respondents. Also a high number of respondents answered to not look for information about gastronomy at all, namely 27.

4.1.3. Functional needs

According to the information need model developed by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), 5 different dimensions define the information needs of travellers. In this chapter, the focus will be on one of those five layers, to be precise, the functional information needs. The need to gather information and be informed about the destination as well as the reduction of uncertainty by collecting information makes up the main part of the functional needs.

When looking at the different sources of travel information that have been used by the respondents, a clear outcome can be seen. 65,6 % (N=212) have used friends and relatives as a source for travel information. 42,0 % (N=212) of the respondents used guidebooks as a source for travel matters. A percentage of 34,0 % (N=212) made use of locals as a source of information in order to close their gap of knowledge. The traditional way for gathering travel information, namely the tourist information office has been approached by 28,3 % (N=212) of the respondents. Weblogs were used by even more respondents, namely by 29,2 % (N=212). A source that has been rarely used for travel information is TV, which has been used only by 1,9 % (N=212) of the respondents. Comparing males and females in terms of information sources used, it can be seen that the result is to a certain extent very similar. 62,3 % (N=138) of the female respondents used friends and relatives for advice. 71,6 % (N=74) of the male respondents used the same source. 44,2 % (N=138) female and 37,8 % (N=74) male respondents answered the question about how they gathered travel information by stating that they used guidebooks for information. Social media, as a source for travel information, has been used by 25,7 % (N=74) of the male respondents and only by 11,6 % (N=138) of the female respondents.

The next step will be to look at the trust that the respondents have in travel information offered by various sources in order to reduce the likelihood of risks while travelling. 37,1 % (N=213) state that they have a high trust in information offered by a tourist information office. Only 8 respondents, 3,8 % (N=213) indicate that they have a low trust in the tourist information office. 50,7 % (N=213) of the respondents have a very high trust in the advice given by friends and relatives, thus even a higher level of trust than in the tourist information office. 1,4 % (N=213) do not trust their friends and relatives when it comes to travel matters. The trust in locals is also very high, with 40,8 % (N=213) indicating a very high level of trust and 34,7 % (N=213) a high level of trust. Very neutral is the level of trust in smartphone apps. 35,7 % (N=213) indicate a neutral trust in those new technologies. 21,1 % (N=213) say that they only have a low level of trust in smartphone apps, however 18,8 % (N=213) of the respondents indicate a high level of trust. Most of the respondents, 40,8 % (N=213) state a high level of trust in guidebooks but also a significant number of respondents, namely 38,5 % (N=213) indicate a neutral opinion about information offered by guidebooks. The level of trust in tour operators is very equally divided over the five scales. 20,2 % (N=213) indicate a very low trust, 25,8 % (N=213) low trust and 20,7 % (N=213) state a high level of trust in the information offered by a tour operator. Only 9 respondents mention a very high level of trust in tour operator as an information source. In weblogs as well as social media and newspapers, most of the respondents indicate to obtain a neutral level of trust. 43,2 % (N=213) indicated a neutral level of trust in weblogs, the same level of trust with a percentage of 40,4 % (N=213) represents newspapers and 43,7 % (N=213) per cent of the respondents mentioned a neutral level of trust in social media. TV also does not seem as the best source for travel information, 34,7 % (N=213) indicate a low level of trust and 33,3 % (N=213) state a neutral level of trust in this source. Only looking at the answers that were given to a very high level of trust (figure 7) shows that 67,5 % (N=160) have a very high trust in information by friends and relatives and 54,5 % (N=160) indicate a very high level of trust in locals.

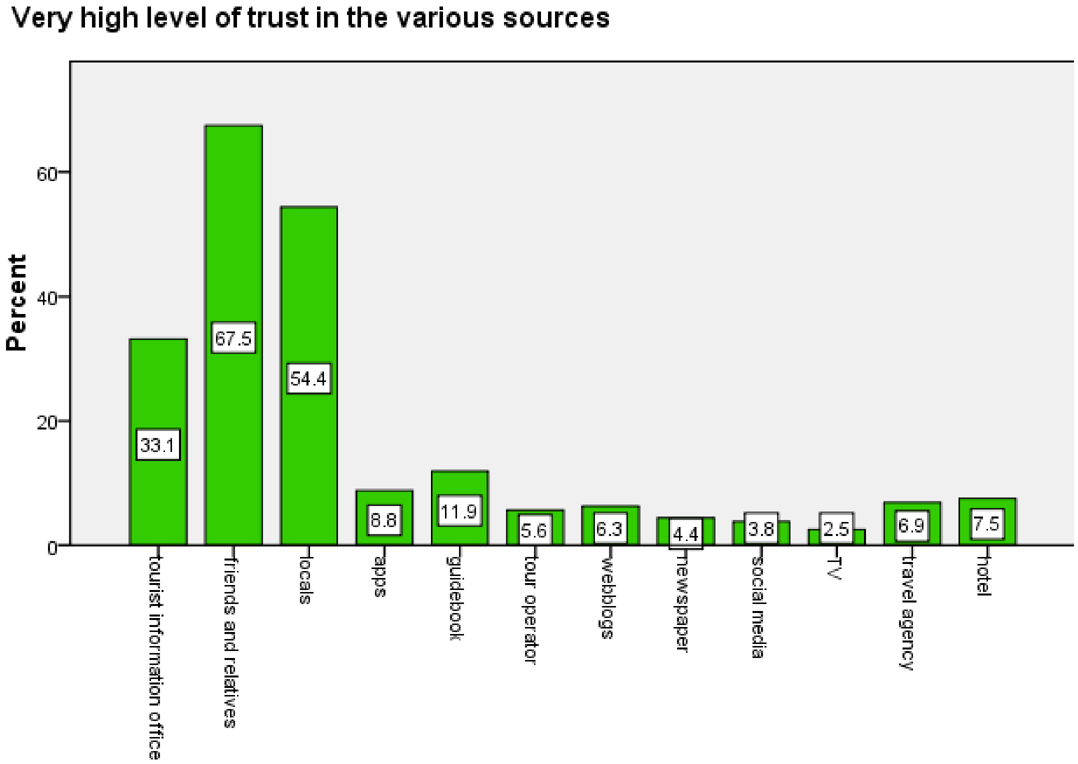


Figure 7: Very high level of trust in the different sources (N=160)

In the following the results of the importance of different information search elements will be looked at. 46,2 % indicate that finding information about events in the destination they are going to visit is important to them. 19,5 % state this as very important and 21,0 % have a neutral opinion towards knowing about events. Concerning the search element to know about a city's highlights, a high percentage of the respondents, 42,9 % say that it is very important to them. 42,4 % indicate that is important and only 2,4 % state that it is very unimportant to them to know about the highlights of a city. Interestingly, only 34,8 % say that it is important to them to find the best deal and 27,6 % state that they have a neutral opinion about this. The mean in this concern is 3,63 (1= very unimportant – 5= very important), which shows a rather neutral result about finding the best deal. When looking at the three different age groups in relation to the importance about finding the best deal, a clear tendency can be seen (figure 8). 55,6 % (N=9) of the respondents in the age group born between 1942 and 1961, state that finding the best deal is unimportant to them and 33,3 % (N=9) have a neutral opinion about this. Looking at the other two age groups, the percentages are spread very equally. Interestingly, 28,6 % (N=56) of the age group 1962-1981 compared to 22,8 % (N=145) of the third age group, 1982-1993 indicate that finding the best deal is very important to them. Thus, the middle aged respondents see the information search element of finding the best deal as more important than the younger group of respondents. According to the Pearson's chi-square test there is a relationship between the year of birth of the respondents and the level of importance of finding the best deal. Phi indicates that the relationship between these two categories is moderate, Phi=0,343.

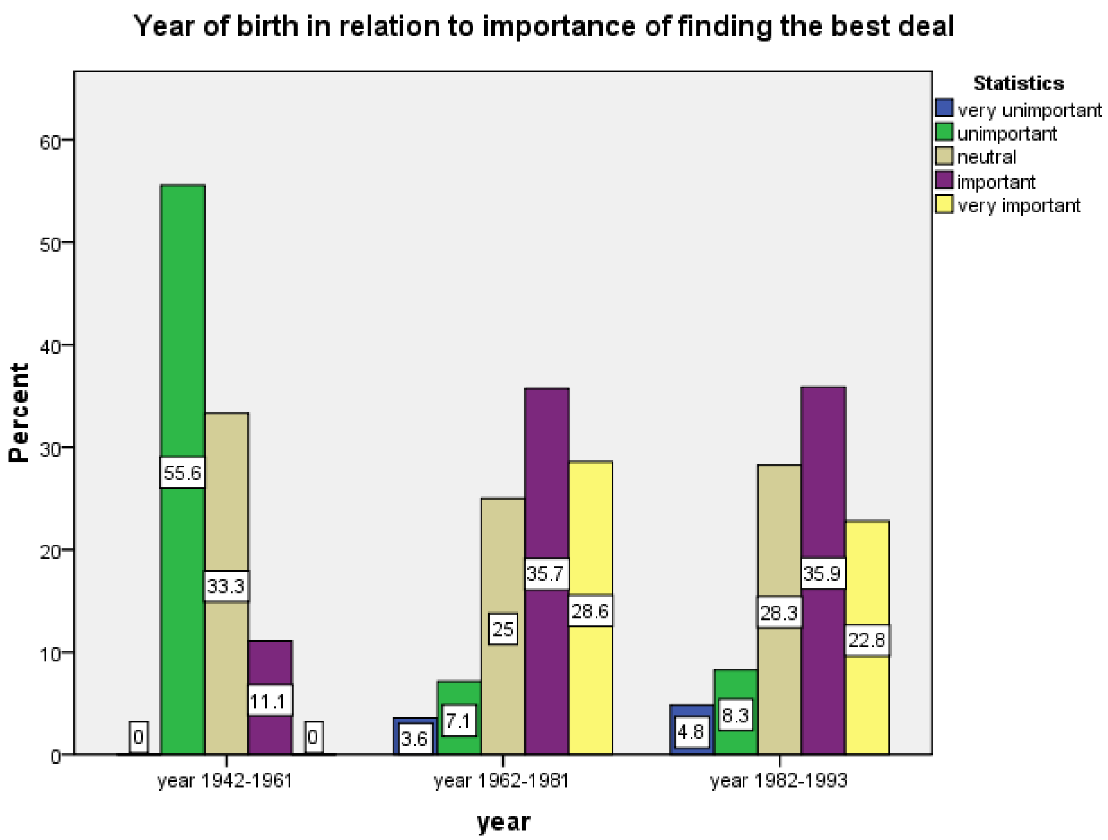


Figure 8: Year of birth in relation to finding the best deal (N=9, N=56, N=145)

Looking at the information search element of finding the best available information, 44,3 % state that it is important to them to locate the best available information. 27,1 % have a neutral opinion about this element and 8,1 % indicate to find the best available information as unimportant for their own search criteria. The answers are quite equally divided by male and female as well as over the three different age groups; no relationship exists in this concern.

4.1.3.1. Local travel information

Concerning local travel information, a number of questions were part of the survey in order to find out about the opinion and usage of this specific type of information by the respondents. 95,7 % claim that they have used local travel information before and 98,6 % state that they would make use of it in the future. The answers to the question, why the respondents had not used local travel information before range from 'didn't know about' to 'rather use google', 'I improvise', 'was prepared well enough' and 'I didn't need to. I had all of the information I needed'. In total 9 respondents did not make use of local travel information before. 3 respondents answered the question about using local travel information in the future with a 'no' and stated the following reasons: 'rather ask a person', 'too long before you find what you're looking for' and 'don't know'.

In order to find out about the **main aspect,** for which local travel information has been consulted, a multiple response question has been used. The main factor is activities for which the respondents have used local travel information, with a percentage of 73,8 %. Out of the 210 respondents, 71,4 % indicated that they used local travel information to inform themselves about gastronomy. Only 32,4 % claim to use information offered by locals about accommodation matters. A high percentage of 63,3 % state that they looked for information about transportation by consulting local travel information.

Knowing what type of information the respondents looked for is important, however the same level of importance should be dedicated to the **source of local travel information** they consulted. In order to find out which sources have been consulted the most, a multiple response question has been used in the survey. Most of the respondents state that they have talked to a local in order to find out about travel information, namely 73,8 %. The second most used source for this matter is guidebooks, namely by 43,3 % of the respondents. 38,1 % of the respondents consulted an online travel blog and 30,0 % a travel forum. Only a small number of 13,3 % claimed that they used a smartphone app to find local travel information. Comparing male and female respondents in this context shows that the answer 'talked to a local' has been given by 72,6 % (N=73) of the male and 74,5 % (N=137) of the female respondents. A big difference can be seen when it comes to the online travel blogs, 46,0 % (N=137) of the female respondents used this source and only 23,3 % (N=73) of the male respondents stated to have used this source for the local travel information. Looking at the percentage of respondents that used smartphone apps, a difference in gender is apparent as well. 19,2 % (N=73) male respondents and only 10,2 % (N=137) female respondents used this source. This result coincides with the trust of males and females in smartphone apps, where 23,0 % (N=213) of the male respondents and 16,5 % (N=213) of the female respondents indicate a high level of trust in this source.

Looking at **the ease** with which the local travel information were found, the majority of the respondents, 64,3 % state that it was easy finding this information. 15,2 % even say it was very easy and a percentage of 20,0 % claim it as being difficult. Exactly one respondent indicates it as being very difficult. Looking at the different answers given by male and female respondents, no strong relationship can be seen. The same counts for the different age groups as well as the education. However, 20,5 % (N=73) of the male respondents and only 12,4 % (N=137) of the female respondents indicated finding local travel as very easy. The answer that it was difficult to find this kind of information has been given by 13,7 % (N=73) of the male respondents and 23,4 % (N=137) of the female respondents. Thus, it can be seen that in general, the male respondents experienced the finding of local travel information easier compared to the majority of the female respondents. However, about 64,3 % (N=210) of both genders announce it as being easy.

Concerning different **information elements** about local travel, a 5-point Likert-scale was used in the survey and can now be looked at in terms of level of importance to the various respondents (see table 3). The first element regarding local travel information points at the **trustworthiness of the content** (see table 2). The majority, 51,0 % of the respondents indicated this factor as being important. 30,5 % of the respondents even indicated trustworthiness of the content as being very important. A number of 10 respondents stated that this element is very unimportant to them. Comparing the answers given about the importance of the trustworthiness of the content of local travel information and the reason for travelling, a moderate relationship can be discovered. Phi in this specific case points out a moderate relationship of Phi=0,364, which means that the respondents travelling for sightseeing/ cultural purpose tend to state an important level of trustworthiness compared to travellers for business purposes that state a very important level of trustworthiness. In comparison to this, people travelling for shopping reasons have a rather neutral opinion about the importance of trustworthiness of the content. The comparison can be seen in table 2. The majority of the respondents, with 47,5 % (N=40), that indicated visiting friends and relatives as their main reason for travelling rate the trustworthiness of the content as important. Even more respondents of the group that indicated sightseeing and cultural purposes as being their main reason for travelling, namely 56,6 % (N=145), state the trustworthiness of the content of local travel information as being important. This might be due to the fact that visitors with sightseeing purposes rely on the information and people visiting friends and relatives are not in need of searching for information. Respondents travelling for shopping, stated their rather neutral opinion about the trustworthiness of the content, namely 37,5 % (N=8). 41,2 % (N=17) of the people travelling for business reasons indicate this information element as being very important to them.

Table 2: Element of Trustworthiness in relation to reason for travelling (N=210)

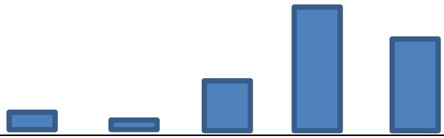
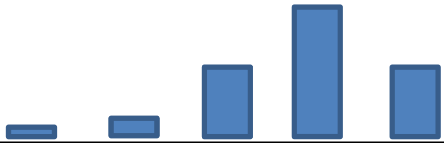
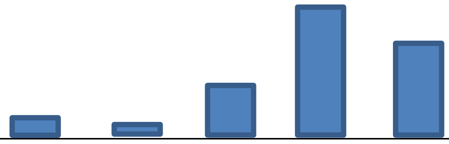
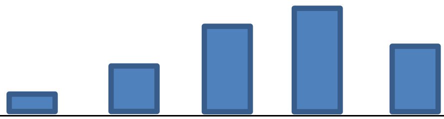
	Visiting friends and relatives	Sightseeing/ cultural purpose	shopping	Business purpose
Very unimportant	7,5 %	3,4 %	0 %	11,8 5
Unimportant	0 %	0,7 %	12,5 %	0 %
Neutral	7,5 %	11,7 %	37,5 %	23,5 %
Important	47,5 %	56,6 %	25,0 %	23,5 %
Very important	37,5 %	27,6 %	25,0 %	41,2 %
Number of respondents	40	145	8	17

Looking at the **accuracy of the content** of local travel information and the level of importance to the respondents, it can be seen that the majority announces it as being important to them, 49,5 %. 21,0 % state that the accuracy of the content is very important and the same percentage reflects the opinion of neutrality towards the accuracy of the content of the respondents.

The **element of honesty** is indicated by 47,1 % as being important and by 33,8 % as being very important when it comes to local travel information. Only 13 of the respondents stated this factor as being unimportant or very unimportant and 13,9 % indicate their neutral opinion about the honesty of the content.

The **element of objectivity** regarding information does not show a clear tendency. 35,7 % state that it is important to them, but also a reasonable number of 31,9 % indicate their neutral opinion about this element. The mean is 3,48, which indicates that this is the precise middle between all scores, in this specific case it lies between neutral, which would be 3,0 and important, which would be 4,0. Thus this is the average level of importance the respondents awarded to objectivity of the content.

Table 3: Level of importance of the various information elements (very unimportant-very important) (N=210)

Trustworthiness	4,8%	1,0%	12,9%	51,0%	30,5%	
Accuracy	3,8%	4,8%	21,0%	49,5%	21,0%	
Honesty	4,8%	1,4%	12,9%	47,1%	33,8%	
Objectivity	3,8%	12,4%	31,9%	35,7%	16,2%	

The question, if people are concerned with the fact that the author of the local travel information or the local they talked to might have **different travel preferences** compared to their own, has been answered with 'neutral' by the majority of the respondents, to be precise 38,6 % of the respondents. 28,1 % state that they agree with this statement and therefore say they are to some extent concerned that the travel preferences might differ. 15 respondents even indicated that they strongly agree, meaning that they are very concerned about this fact. However, a big number of the respondents, with 21,4 %, indicate their disagreement, thus, they are not concerned.

The majority of the respondents announce that they would like to know some **background information** about the person who wrote the content about travel tips, 34,8 %, to be precise, agree with this statement. 27,1 % hold a neutral opinion and 24,8 % disagree to want to know background information of the author of the local travel information. A percentage of 7,1 % even strongly disagrees with this statement. The mean for this statement is 3,08, thus the middle between all the scores can be found in the neutral answer. No apparent relationship between the importance of knowing background information of the author of the content and gender, age or education could be found.

4.1.3.2. Elements that make information by locals important

183 respondents answered the open question ‘What makes information/ tips by locals important to you?’, which was part of the survey carried out with people visiting European cities (see Addendum III for all given answers). In order to be able to look at all the written answers of the respondents, which were mostly small sentences or sometimes single words, they have been sorted into 15 categories. About 44 of the answers addressed the **knowledge of locals** in general terms, which means that they stated things like “they know the city best”, “they know the city better than anyone, because they live there”, “they have the best information”, “their own experience” and “better ways, short cuts, and time saving tips”. Most of these responses given about the general knowledge, address the fact that the locals have better knowledge of their city and know how to get around and find ways that might be time saving. A few times the words “short cuts” have been used by stating that locals know about these and nobody else. Furthermore, many times the word “experience” in relation to the locals’ personal experience and their passing it on to the tourists are mentioned. Besides this, also the fact that locals have more information than anyone else is given as answer to this open question, where every respondent was able to share his opinion about the importance of information by locals.

Another aspect that many respondents mention in the survey is the value of **insider tips**. According to the respondents, locals have better tips about insider information. Answers such as, “it’s from first hand, given by a person who lives in a city” or “they know insider tips or the best ways to get to places”, “they know their way around, great inside knowledge” and “they recommend spots that are popular with locals if asked. This normally translates to the traveller finding the best spot” were given in this regard. Insider tips seem to be very important to the respondents, as many of the respondents mention it in their answers.

Furthermore, a few answers address the **element of difference**. To be precise, the respondents mention that the information by locals is different than by anyone else; TV, guide book, tourist information. According to the answers given, the locals have better information and tips that cannot be found in any book. Some of the answers given are: “It’s different than what most of the travel information/ books tells you”, “[Locals] know places not in a book”, “they know places that tourist information does not know” and “you will get information that the TV or guide book haven’t mentioned.” These answers show the interest of the respondents in information which is different than the ones offered in guide books and especially about places that are not mentioned in a traditional guide book.

Besides this, respondents also mention the fact that locals are able to share information **without a commercial idea** behind it. In most of the cases, they do not rely on making a profit from sending tourists to a certain place. About 11 respondents address this issue of commercial and non-commercial tips. The following statements are an extract of the answers given in the survey: “they are not commercial, therefore closer to the truth”, “they are real and not commercial”, “they don’t fall into the tourist traps”, “they know best, overall not a commercial thought behind it” and “they’re more ‘authentic’ and not ‘bought’, they’re not paid to give good reviews”.

Up-to-date information seems to play an important role as well, many respondents stated in their answers, that the information by locals is up-to-date; “always up to date and they know the best places to eat and the best spots”, “those are up to date and usually true” and “they have up to date information and can suggest places not mentioned in travel guides”.

A few respondents address the fact of **affordable places** that locals give them tips about, such as “cheaper places, more interesting”. Furthermore, in combination with this some respondents also state the fact that through information given by locals they will not fall into a tourist trap: “no tourist traps, the real thing”, “being able not to fall into tourist traps and knowing the lifestyle of locals” and “the places that locals use are not so-called ‘tourist-traps.’”

12 respondents mention the **reliability of the content** and the **accuracy of the information** given by local travel information. According to the respondents, the information and tips given by locals is important due to the fact that it is “reliable”, “valid. – interesting places”, “is relevant because is more accurate, especially relevant places, but still in some respects it is best to research for yourself (restaurants for example)”. This person states a little bit of a concern in information by locals, however is next to a few other respondents the only one. The other respondents address various concerns, such as “depends where I am going to and the reason”, “i need to be able to relate to the person and vice versa”, “if it’s good” and two respondents say that the information offered by locals is “not important”. On the contrary, trustworthiness and honesty are stated by 7 of the respondents as factors that make information by locals important.

About 23 respondents talk about the fact that local travel information is important to them due to the fact that locals can advise **hidden spots** and places that are less visited by tourists, as most of the respondents refer to this issue. Some of the answers include the following statements: “a lot of time off the beaten path information”, “because you get the feeling you know the city more than a tourist”, “enables you to get under the skin of a place rather than follow the tourist masses”, “getting to know insider tips from locals is great to explore destinations off the beaten track”, “getting to know the destination from a different point of view”, “rare stuff is much more interesting than touristy stuff”, “you are able to find out about unique places within a city that are not that touristy. You can experience the local life yourself” and “new and unknown places that nobody knows about”.

One respondent says that tips by locals are important because of “hidden places but the information is hard to find”. This concern has been addressed in the questionnaire as well; the ease with which local tourist information were found and there 64,3 %, of the respondents say that it was easy finding this information.

One of the most used phrases in the answers given by the respondents addresses the **authenticity of information** that locals offer and that with this information it is possible to learn about the real culture of the place and have an authentic experience. These are some of the answers given: “authentic information, can see more interesting things and have good experiences”, “having an authentic, non-commercial experience”, “in the end it helps you know the culture better”, “it is authentic and local inhabitants know their city best”, “it’s more genuine. And I think it’s an important part of the trip: to have contact with the locals”, “more authentic and updated. Not related/ biased by business interests” and “to see the backstage of a destination”. Many more interesting answers could be shared here; however a selection has to be made. The full extent of the answers can be seen in the addenda (addendum III).

Some aspects that are mentioned only by a minority of respondents include **original, unique and personal information**. About these elements, statements such as “original tips”, “see what’s original there, not only touristic things”, “unique tips and places you wouldn’t find in a guide book”, “its personal and I believe you can have an idea when you talk to locals if they would like things which are also of my interest, usually they know the most interesting places or special places, which gives the city the character it has” and “personal touch and accurate knowledge” are made by the respondents.

4.2.Content analysis of the offer by Spotted by Locals

A content analysis has been carried out by looking at the offer of Spotted by Locals in order to answer the third sub question. The content has been analysed in relation to the information needs developed by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998). According to these researchers, five different needs have to be looked at when analysing the information needs of tourists. The first dimension, namely functional needs has been researched by analysing the outcome of the survey in which the functional needs had been incorporated into questions. Five statements were incorporated in the questionnaire that target the needs of innovation, hedonic and sign. In this part, the focus will be on these precise needs. These different information needs will be analysed in terms of the content communicated through blogs on the website of Spotted by Locals. Articles written by spotters as well as blogs published by the company itself about travel trends & news. About 200 spotters are responsible for sharing their experiences and favourite or interesting places in their own city with the reader. By publishing these articles about places or spots, the spotters encountered in their city, they are able to share their experiences and offer tourists the possibility 'to get off the beaten track' and have a local experience. The spotters function as guides and can advise the reader on vacation and travel matters by giving information about a specific spot or topic. Next to some practical information about the place, information about the atmosphere, the people and the uniqueness are being addressed. The function to write a comment on any blog on the website gives the reader the opportunity to react on the content and maybe even share the experience he had with other readers.

4.2.1. Innovation needs

The innovation needs consists of various underlying needs, such as the need of novelty, which looks at the need to find out about new destinations and experiences. Innovation needs also point at the variety of objects of interest of the individuals. The respondents were therefore asked in the survey to state the level of importance to find out about original places that few have travelled to. The result of this 5 point Likert scale question is fairly clear, 34,8 % state that it is important to them and 31,4 % even say that it is very important to them to find out about places that are not very common on the tourist map. Only 10,0 % of the respondents state that it is either unimportant or very unimportant to them to know about original places. This shows how important it is for the respondents to be creative in their choices and their interest in unique and original places that not many tourists visit.

Spotted by Locals covers a number of 41 European cities and offers information and tips about each and every of those cities, thus the reader has the chance to get to know all those cities and choose from the wide range. The various blogs written by spotters advise the reader on many different travel matters and especially focus on communicating hidden or interesting places. The reader gets the opportunity to discover new destinations and explore promising spots in the various European cities. The places that the spotters write about are not the well-known tourist cafés and events but rather interesting, hidden and sometimes curious places. For instance a shop that offers unique glasses, which are made out of vinyl, can be found in the offer (figure 9). The spotter writes about the possibility to "decide on your favourite album and wear it proudly on your nose" (Bienvenu, 2012).

Image by Hélène Bienvenu

Some of the most original glasses in the world are to be found in Budapest! I'm not joking!

Zachary, a talented American-Hungarian designer who's spent part of his childhood in Hungary, came up with the idea of making glasses from vinyl records after some experiments in his Seattle workshop. His father's records collection suffered great damages (!), so it was time for Zach to find some other vinyl providers (today he works hand in hand with musicians). He moved to Hungary later on in 2002 to produce his frames on a greater scale.

In the meantime his brother joined the business. And today the two of them make vinyl frame glasses as well as cinematic glasses (including celluloid films strip mounted in the temples).

These are Budapest latest environmentally friendly fashion accessories! You can pick up the frames you like best, if you go for the cinematic collection, you can even order your glasses after your favorite film. Chaplin, Hitchcock, Renoir… It's all up to you!

And mind you, these glasses have started to come out of the shadows. Elton John ordered a whole bunch of frames and the brothers' business has expanded to more than a few foreign countries.

Figure 9: Orange optika – Tipton glasses – Hype eyewear (Bienvenu, 2012)

The reader also gets to explore new places, for instance the Parc del Laberint, which can be found on the outskirts of the vibrant city Barcelona and is not very crowded and known by tourists. This spot, as described by the author, (Boluda, 2012), is a very silent and relaxing place and the Labyrinth in the park caters for some fun and action while relaxing in this green area. This article about the not much visited park in Barcelona has the power to enchant the reader, by using words like "oasis of peace" and "the combination of silence and birds singing" (Boluda, 2012) and make him wanting to explore this place and escape the busy city life for a while.

Hence, the need of variety can be fulfilled by reading about the different spots and getting excited about the next visit to one of the European cities. The spotters choose places they like and write about them in order to make the reader curious and wanting to explore these spots. By not only giving practical information but also writing in a style that is exciting and fascinating about the atmosphere and the people you might meet when visiting a place, this curiosity can be aroused. For the reader in order to satisfy the need of innovation it is important to inform him about places that few have travelled to in order to show uniqueness and specialty. The reader wants to fulfil his need of curiosity and wants to explore something new and extraordinary. The blogs written by spotters are written about these kinds of unique places, like a restaurant in Zurich, Switzerland, which is called 'Blinde Kuh' (Syrad, 2012). This restaurant, where the waiters are blind is a one of a kind experience. The guests are led inside in a line in order to make sure they will all be seated well. The restaurant itself is pitch-black and makes you use all other senses when eating, accept your eyes. The way of writing about this special place makes the reader very excited and like in a book wants to read till the end, so he would want to visit this place.

Using the information offered by the spotters can furthermore also fulfil the information need of the reader to be original with the choice of the destination. Many decisions to go on holiday are made due to a need for a break and then a destination is chosen according to several criteria made up in the persons' mind. On the contrary, the offer on the website by Spotted by Locals might lead to a different approach to make a decision, thus the reader can be creative in the way he will make his decision. This can happen for instance by being inspired through an article he reads about a specific spot and then decides to visit this specific place and hence, this precise European city. Also, the way of looking for information or making a decision to take part in a certain event while on holiday can be creative. The information about what to do and where to eat and what to see can be taken from the tourist information office that informs the tourists about the city; the traveller is mostly passive in his decisions. In the contrary, he can be very active and look for things he finds interesting and gets curious about himself. He might read about a great experience another traveller had and hopes for the same. The sharing of the spotters helps in this concern and passes on the information about specific spots to the reader, who can get involved and share his thoughts about this spot as well. For instance, in the example, which can be seen in figure 10, two readers share their comments about a restaurant, called TRAM-TRAM in Barcelona.


Hi Hendrik, thanks for taking the time and trouble to post your comment. Glad you enjoyed TRAM-TRAM. When I get the opportunity I'll pass on your comment to the owners. Customer appreciation goes a long way in helping maintain and improve quality. All the best, regards.

Bill Sinclair (Aug 30th, 2010, 1:28 pm) Reply

Found out about this restaurant through this site and I'm so thankful for that. We went for the tasting menu and it was amazing! Very friendly staff, great atmosphere (we choose to sit on the terrace) and amazing food. What else can you ask for.
Would recommend to anyone.

Hendrik (Aug 28th, 2010, 2:44 pm) Reply

very nice, very special and quite tasty!!

Doina Bird (Apr 20th, 2010, 1:49 pm) Reply

Figure 10: TRAM-TRAM – untramelled delight at TRAM-TRAM (Sinclair, 2012)

4.2.2. Hedonic needs

The hedonic needs are another dimension developed next to the functional needs in order to include not only the decision-making but also the experience of pleasure and amusement during the search process (Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998). According to the researchers, an information search-process combines all different senses in order to satisfy the need to fill a lack of information. This dimension of the information need model includes the emotional and experiential part of the search process. In the survey, two questions address the hedonic information needs. The first question points at learning about the local culture and the second question aims at the wish to be informed about the city's daily life (see table 4). The majority of the respondents say that it is very important to them to learn about the local culture, when travelling or searching for information. 38,1 % has answered with very important and 37,6 % answered the question with important. Hence, it can be seen that 75,7 % state it is either important or very important to them to learn about the local culture. To 16,7 % of the respondents this factor is neutral and only 7,6 % of the respondents say that it is either unimportant or very unimportant to them to know about the culture. To be informed about the city's daily life state 38,1 % of the respondents of the questionnaire as important and 21,0 % say that it is very important to them. Unimportant it seems to be to 8,6 % and 1,0 % indicate that it is very unimportant to them to be informed about the daily life of the city.

Table 4: Level of importance to learn about local culture and to know about a city's daily life (N=210)

	Per cent
Very unimportant	1,4
Unimportant	6,2
Neutral	16,7
Important	37,6
Very important	38,1

	Per cent
Very unimportant	1,0
Unimportant	8,6
Neutral	31,4
Important	38,1
Very important	21,0

The hedonic needs address the need to be entertained, thus the pleasure factor, by searching for information compared to the functional needs which address the practical side of the information needs. The reader of the blogs written by the spotters cannot only learn something about a place or a destination but can also be entertained by reading about unique stores in various countries. Looking at a picture of the Café Laundromat in Oslo makes you think this is just a normal café but while reading the article about it, the reader realizes that this is actually a café, including rows of books to enjoy your time while waiting for your laundry to be cleaned (Reitehaug, 2012). Reading this article the reader is being entertained about this unique spot, which is a combination of washing, eating, reading and meeting friends.

Furthermore, the emotional needs, which are part of the hedonic needs, include the need to discover unique cultures. Every culture has something that is different from one's one and the desire to discover these differences is also addressed with the hedonic needs. The art of every culture differs slightly. Finland has its very own glassware brand, which is called Littala and well known all over the world. The old factory can still be visited and the building on its own is being described as worth a visit (Barman, 2012). Next to reading the articles, the visitor of the website can look at the images that represent different habits and traditions of the various European cultures. According to Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) all human senses are involved in the information search, thus hearing, smelling and tasting are involved next to viewing and touching. The reader should be able to hear the sound of the city or a specific place by reading the article written about it. Through reading a blog written about food specialties, it is possible to imagine the taste of something and therefore get excited and be entertained. Trempe, a typical Portuguese restaurant in Lisbon is described as offering traditional food, which is even better than the original food (Carneiro, 2012). The atmosphere in the small traditional venue is described so well that the reader can imagine the sounds and the laughter of the people around him. The charm and cosiness can practically be grasped. Another example can be seen in figure 11, a restaurant in Krakow, where the food must be delicious, according to the writer. The food is described as very delicious and reading about it is mouth-watering.

Image by Anna Wontorczyk

Romantic, mouth-watering, expensive: those are the three words that come to mind when I think of Pimiento.

Steakhouses are still a rarity in Krakow, but what makes Pimiento even more unique is its imported beef. Argentina is known for its superb quality of beef so when you order you stake at Pimiento you know you're getting your money's worth.

My first impression of the restaurant was: stylish. The upstairs was full (of satisfied costumers) so we were led downstairs. The waiter was friendly, helpful and attentive, coming back every few minutes to discreetly check whether we needed anything.

The smell of the food as it was carried down to us was pure torture. We were famished and, without hesitation, dove right in as soon as the waiter put down the tray. We decided to split the 600g "Pimiento Paririllada", a sample tray of all four types of beef that the restaurant offers. A loaded baked potato and a glass of red wine topped off the perfect meal.

As inarticulate as this may sound, mmmmmm mmmmm mmmmmm is probably the best way to describe what my taste buds were feeling.

Details about this spot (Show on map)
Pimiento Argentino Grill | Restaurants (Argentinian) | Pimiento Paririllada PLN 130
ul. Jozefa 26 | Kazimierz | +48124212502
12:00 – 00:00 daily

Figure 11: Pimiento Argentina Grill – Steaks!!! (Wontorczyk, 2012)

Understanding the personality of a community and being informed about the daily life of a city are also part of the hedonic needs by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998). The travellers can read about traditions of the various cultures and especially about daily life, such as bars and cafés that are crowded with locals that take their after-work drink together and chat about daily life. Some articles include information and tips about the local life of the community, such as the blog written about the Zähringer Café in Zurich. This Café offers special food, for instance organic and local products but also vegetarian and vegan meals. The Café holds cultural events and has another special; every worker is part of the executive board, which means that everyone has a saying in what is happening (Rey, 2012). Another example for learning about the culture is a blog written about a bar in Barcelona (figure 12). The article informs the reader about the culture and the background of the name of the bar, which is situated in a rather known area of Barcelona, close to Sagrada Familia. The story told around the bar makes it exciting to visit in order to feel the atmosphere.

Image by Rafael Dujarric

Time goes by and here we are again looking for a cool den of iniquity to celebrate my birthday.

Although the quest of lust and desire was focused in the old town perimeter, a friend of mine told me he was going to play on a Monday night in a tiny bar near the Sagrada Familia, owned by two Czech girls friends of him.

I just went for the gig and then felt in love with the Czech black beers (try the master) and the food, as well as the bohemian atmosphere.

Actually the word Bohemia as we know it nowadays comes from a region in the Czech republic that held a great gipsy population who, when they emigrated to other northern and southern European countries, where called bohemian because of their origin, and the word started to get associated with their carefree, licentious, keen lifestyle.

It is good to know that sometimes when you ask for a beer the girls bar-tending appeal to the Latin chauvinist pride asking you whether you want the cup for kids or the adults one. The kids cup is half a pint (not like the Spanish caña) and the one for the grownups is like a washtub sized!

Figure 12: Pivobar - The heart of bohemia in example dreta (Dujarric, 2012)

4.2.3. Aesthetic needs

The aesthetic information needs represent abstract and subjective emotions, thus they might include real images but also fantasies about a place or an atmosphere. These aesthetic aspects can be found in visual as well as written content, thus pictures but also articles and the way of writing. The spotters always include an image of the spot they write about in order to give the reader an idea about what it looks like and what he can expect. The pictures are always taken by the author of the blog himself, thus he can show his point of view of this specific place and share it with the traveller. By using images, the reader cannot only read about the spot and be entertained and learn about the culture and the local community but can also see it and enjoy beautiful or unique and sometimes exotic pictures. Some travellers might even chose a destination for the variety of pictures and the beautiful panoramic views they have discovered and want to explore these in real life. Furthermore, the fantasizing about a place and the desire of the escape out of daily life can be enhanced by pictures accompanying travel information in order to satisfy aesthetic needs. A series of pictures about the food in various cultures can be seen in figure 13, which shows a shot of the table in Tel

Aviv, where the bill came with a vintage picture (Askayo, 2012). This series doesn't contain a lot of written content, however interesting and extraordinary pictures of tables and the meals in various countries are displayed.

Figure 13: On the table (5) – Vintaging Tel Aviv (Askayo, 2012)

4.2.4. Sign needs

Not only the spotters like to talk about where they like to go and dine or visit a one of a kind attraction, also the readers like doing this and are able to, by posting their comments on the blogs, which are written by the spotters.

The sign needs have been included in the survey respectively in two statements. The first statement deals with the showing to others that one is knowledgeable and the second one addresses the indicating that one is an active traveller, hence both of these statements approach the sign need and therefore the interpersonal aspect of sharing and knowledge transfer. The factor to show others, for instance friends or other readers that one is knowledgeable when it comes to travel matters, is very important only to a small amount of the respondents, namely 4,3 %. 17,1 % state that it is important to them and the biggest percentage, 33,8 % answered with a neutral opinion about showing others that they are knowledgeable. 30,5 % say that it is unimportant and 14,3 % even say that the indicating of knowledge is very unimportant to them. Hence, 78,6 % of the respondents announce that the importance of showing others that they are knowledgeable is either of neutral importance or even less important to them.

Regarding the indication to friends that one is an active traveller, 210 respondents gave an answer to this statement by indicating its level of importance to them. 19,0 % say that it is very unimportant and 29,0 % state indicating to friends that they are an active traveller as unimportant. 31,9 % say they have a neutral opinion about this statement. To 15,2 % of the respondents, indicating that they are an active traveller is important and 4,8 %, which stands for 10 respondents even say that it is very important to them.

As mentioned by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) the importance of recommendations in tourism is obvious and very powerful. Friends, family but also unknown people have the power to market a place positively or negatively by recommending it to others and telling about their experience. The spotters have this power as well. They write about a place using their own words and telling about their personal experience they made. By writing and sharing this information, the spotters advise the reader on travel matters and furthermore, also answer to probably unspoken questions. The articles include practical information for the reader but besides this also answer to question like 'what is the atmosphere like?', 'what can I do there?' and 'what is unique about this place?'. The spotters answer these questions and give their personal opinion, which is subjective and not based on any marketing efforts. The passing on of the information and the sharing of personal, interesting experiences creates a so called "multiplier effect" (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998, p. 562). The information is not only shared with one person but through word-of-mouth the experience of a single person will be distributed to a broad audience, which has an underlying marketing effect for the brand but also for the place, which the spotter wrote about.

Another aspect of the sign needs is the social element. Travellers are looking for an interpersonal experience and through the option of writing a comment on a blog on www.spottedbylocals.com this is made possible. The organization has also created a Facebook page on which tourists may write their ideas, interests, experiences; everything they would like to share. The fact that an interview is done with every spotter also addresses this need. The reader knows who wrote about the place and can inform himself about background information of the author. For instance, the Manchester spotter Gareth describes himself as being a "perpetual dwadler" (Spotted by Locals, 2012). He likes to take pictures and is very interested in art, music and travel. By describing his point of view of Manchester and talking about the local culture, the reader gets an impression of what he is like and what a visit to Manchester will be like. But not only interviews with the spotters are published, also frequently held meetings between the organization and the spotters in the various countries are shared with the reader. The reader actually gets the possibility to be informed about everything that is going on between the company and the spotters. A meeting between the Italian spotters in Rome and Milan is being shared in an article on the website, in order for the reader to read about this experience: “We were lucky to have 3 days of blue skies and sunshine and visited almost 40 of our Rome locals’ amazing favorite spots. Of course we also met our Spotters Annalaura, Franco and Eleonora” (Poll, 2012).

Figure 14: Which European capitals have you visited? (Poll, 2011)

On the Facebook page, people got the opportunity to share with others all the European capitals they have already visited. A huge number of respondents answered this statistics and hence shared with everyone, where they had already travelled to. An extract of the results can be seen in figure 14. Some of the respondents seem to be very active travellers compared to others. The poll is still active on the Spotted by Locals Facebook page and people can indicate their previous travels (Poll, 2011), which many people did. As can be seen in the questionnaire for this specific research that has been conducted with people travelling to European cities, 20,0 % state that it is either important or very important to them to show others that they are a very active travellers.

4.3.Interview Results

Interviews with 9 experts of information provision in the field of tourism have been conducted. (See Addendum IIII) These experts work since at least 3 years in their position and some of the respondents have worked for their city tourism board for more than 10 years; thus they have established experiences and can judge how the tourism market and the information provision in tourism matters have changed. In total, 9 different cities in 9 different countries are included in the results. The interviews are divided into different topics in order to be able to compare the different answers given, by looking at the various topics. 5 topics have been established to get a good overview of what the actions of the tourism boards are and what their opinion is about the local travel market.

COPENHAGEN Open for You	Geneva Tourism & Convention GENÈVE A WORLD OF ITS OWN®
PRAGUEWELCOME.com Prague's official tourist portal	LIVE RĪGA
România explore the Carpathian garden	rotterdam marketing
Vilnius VILNIUS TOURISM	flanders belgium
Köln KölnTourismus	

4.3.1. Type of information and timing of request

The type of information that tourists are interested in and ask or look for in the various cities, is the starting point, when looking at information provision and the specific needs of the visitors. Comparing the 9 different cities, it can be said that tourists mainly ask for the same type of information. Furthermore, most of the tourists gather information on the tourism website of the city respectively, while planning their trip, thus before travelling.

Looking more specifically at the various cities, it can be said that tourists in Copenhagen “mainly ask for the main attractions” (Interview Copenhagen, 2012) as stated by the online director of The Official Convention, Event and Tourism Organisation for the Capital Region of Denmark. Furthermore, the tourists in Copenhagen are interested in current events and festivals. Besides this information, they also want to be informed about practical information, such as transportation, before they arrive.

Compared to this, visitors coming to Geneva mainly do short visits and only stay for 2 to 3 hours; thus they only have the time to visit the main attractions and get to see the city rather on the surface. Due to this time limit, the information is generic for every visitor and only shows the city from one perspective. Because of this, the tourism board of Geneva has recently developed 6 different printed documents, the so called Geneva pocket maps, which reveal certain information as well as the “Geneva amazing experiences” for the different markets, which include the Arabic market, the Chinese market, the US/ UK market, the Russian market, the Swiss/ German market and the French market (Interview Geneva, 2012). These tour guides differ in the information included in the guide in terms of habits, due to the fact that every market has different travel behaviours and different expectations, and some prefer to get more detailed information about history and background than others. With this idea, the visitor should be suggested experiences instead of just the common points of interest, as explained by the online director of Tourism Geneva. In order to enhance this experience, the so called *Geneva Angels*, hired and trained by the tourism information office of Geneva, walk around the city in the summer in order to help tourists in practical information matters, as well as recommendations to places of interest. These about 25 young people are representing the tourist information office throughout the city and should help giving the tourist a good experience. According to the marketing coordinator of Genève Tourisme & Congres, the professionalism of the people representing the tourist information office is very important and “the next step is the meeting between locals and the tourists” (Interview Geneva, 2012). However, the issue according to her is the level of professionalism, which not every local can provide. Due to this fact, the Geneva tourist angels are trained and prepared for their job of providing information, because the image of the city and the tourist information office is at stake.

In comparison to this, tourists coming to Prague mainly “have a special interest in Prague monuments, because Prague is one of the most important cities regarding the [Czech] history”, says the Director of Tourism and Professional Activity of Prague (Interview Prague, 2012). The type of information in Prague also depends on the seasons, as during the summer time tourists rather want to be informed about what’s going on in the city in terms of general events, and during the winter season, the interest is more on cultural events. According to the Director of Tourism and Professional Activity of Prague, years ago, tourists would first ask about accommodation; nowadays they book the accommodation themselves and rather want to be informed about possible activities.

As stated by the director of the Romania National Tourist Office North America, there are two main groups of travellers that contact their office and are looking for information about travel matters. One group has “made up their mind and they really have a strong motivation to go to Romania” (Interview Romania, 2012) and they look mainly for information about logistics, transportation and authentic attractions. The other group consists rather of business travellers or travellers that are touring Europe and happen to be in Romania, wanting to know about the main attractions and sites. The visitors that are planning their trip to Romania get in contact about 18 to one month in advance. The information that is being offered to the tourist depends on his interest and on his preparation. If a tourist is well prepared and has specific questions, he will get information about those specific places that might not be mentioned in a typical tourist guide book. If a tourist is not prepared and only asks about what he or she could do in Romania, then he or she will be suggested the main attractions that are prepared to take high tourist flows compared to some hidden places that might be fragile or simply cannot deal with too many travellers (Interview Romania, 2012). This selection is done, due to the fact that “the local atmosphere should be somehow protected” (Interview Romania, 2012).

In Rotterdam, the tourists ask mainly for the same information as in the other 8 cities that are represented in this research. The visitors want to be informed “about attractions, museums, events, as well as practical information” (Interview Rotterdam, 2012). When planning the trip, most of the tourists will consult the tourism website Rotterdam about travel matters and tips. During their visit, some will either contact the tourist information office or make use of the mobile app offered by the tourist information office.

The same counts for the tourists visiting Vilnius. They mainly ask for information about places to visit, leisure and entertainment, events, Lithuanian cuisine and money exchange” (Interview Vilnius, 2012); thus practical information. While planning the trip some visitors contact the tourist office of Vilnius via e-mail and want to know about places to visit and sightseeing tours. Some tourists send reviews after their trip or leave comments about their positive or negative experience with a specific hotel or restaurant.

Looking at KölnTourismus, which was the only interview carried out in German, the same counts for the type of information the majority of the tourists ask for, namely the main sites and attractions or what the tourist 'should have seen' in that specific city. Many times people come into the tourist information office and ask for insider tips, for instance restaurants. The difficulty is that the tourist information office works together with partners which cannot be disregarded when offering information, thus offering insider tips is rather difficult for the tourist information office in Cologne. The majority of the tourists still come and ask general questions, for example what they could do and see in a few hours in Cologne. Some ask specific questions, for instance about the churches, but that is a minority (Interview Cologne, 2012). Locals from Cologne and the surrounding area usually ask for more specific attractions and specific tours, but international tourists like to know more about the general guided city tours.

According to the Marketing Account Executive from Riga Tourism Development Bureau, the main type of information that tourists are interested in is culture and history, which includes sightseeing objects and museums. Furthermore, they want to be informed about gastronomy, shopping possibilities, souvenirs, and also transportation matters. In addition, excursions in the city and into the country as well as accommodation are important topics (Interview Riga, 2012). As mentioned by almost all the respondents, before travelling to the destination, tourists are interested in how to get there which is also valid for Riga. "Less people are interested in events, more are interested in sightseeing objects" (Interview Riga, 2012), as stated by the Marketing Executive from Riga Tourism. However, due to the fact that Riga will be the Culture Capital of Europe in 2014, the city is expecting more of an interest in culture and cultural events.

An interview conducted with the region Flanders reveals some different information, due to the fact that they are promoting a whole region, compared to the other respondents who are mainly promoting a city. Visitors do mainly look for the same type of information; however, the brand Flanders is not yet well known and therefore the information provided by Tourism Flanders not that much used yet. Furthermore, a difference is that Tourism Flanders does not have tourist information offices specifically like cities do. In addition, the website is divided into different markets and is currently put together in order to make the management and the spreading of the content easier (Interview Flanders, 2012).

4.3.2. Information channels

Visitors coming to Copenhagen mainly use the tourism information website VisitCopenhagen or social media. As soon as the tourist arrives in the city, he or she is interested in information about gastronomy and guided tours as well as information about concerts and exhibitions, as stated by the Online Director of Tourism Copenhagen. The channels that are being used by Copenhagen visitors besides the website are mobile apps for android and iPhone and social media websites, like Facebook, twitter, YouTube and Flickr. The Online Director mentions that five years ago, their main focus was on the website, but now the focus is changing to also other channels, for instance TripAdvisor. “I think the tourists are spreading through a lot of other channels” (Interview Copenhagen 2012).

Mainly the same can be said about visitors to Prague. The main channel is the tourism website; thus the tourists can inform themselves before coming to the city. However, a lot of tourists come and visit one of the five tourist information offices, which are spread out through the city, with one at the airport, one at the railway station and several in the old town/ city centre.

Also tourists looking for information about Romania mainly make use of the tourism website, compared to the mid- nineties, when people used to call a lot in order to receive the relevant information. The website is being updated frequently, using the inquiries the tourists have, and also offering answers to questions tourists have asked in the form of information on their website, so that the reader can easily find the information needed and does not need to contact the tourist office of Romania (Interview Romania, 2012).

The online marketer of Rotterdam Marketing also mentioned friends and relatives as information sources besides the official Rotterdam tourism website, social media, travel guides and the tourist information office (Interview Rotterdam, 2012), thus mainly the same information channels as the other 8 European cities.

The main source of information in Vilnius is also the website, and “more and more tourists are using the online reservation tool for tourism services – hotel booking, tours booking, city card booking” (Interview, Vilnius, 2012). Furthermore, according to the Head of the Visitors Centre and the Head of the Project Division of Vilnius, the use of mobile apps is also considered as a growing source of information.

In Cologne, many visitors make use of the website to find information or use the tool on the website to book a hotel, however many tourists still come into the tourist information office to find out about general city tours or popular sites. Groups usually call in advance, when they are planning their trip, in order to book a hotel (Interview KölnTourismus, 2012). However, also many people call to make a hotel-booking because they want to have a reassurance that the hotel is good and holds its promises. Through the development of the mobile app, many tourists make use of this new technology and sometimes only come into the office in order to ask again about more specific information of a certain attraction. So the app is doing a little bit of groundwork. Furthermore, tourists are more looking for specific highlights instead of the main attractions and everyone knows that the Dome is in Cologne, thus nobody would ask about that. However, when revealing specific, rather hidden places to the tourists, the issue is that KölnTourismus works with partners for activities and sightseeing and these should always be mentioned to the tourists. In addition, one partner cannot be preferred over another one, thus the information that is offered has to be objective, only pros and cons can be laid out according to the expectations of the tourists in order to match his needs.

"Yes, we're very much aware that people get information everywhere and it's just getting more and more splintered, so it's getting more and more difficult to find out where people are finding their information" (Interview Flanders, 2012), says the Online Marketer of Tourism Flanders. According to him, it is important to create awareness about this fact and to develop a strategy which matches with this development and to find better ways to find and reach the right tourists, who are more and more separating into different niches, "based on their passion[;] so that's probably the best way to reach them these days" (Interview Flanders, 2012). Another strategy that Flanders Tourism is making use of is a theme or topic every year, for instance in the shape of events and festivals in 2012, so that all marketing activities can be focused on one topic. Furthermore, the different niche communities are looked at. Then influential people in those groups have to be convinced about the brand, by giving them a good experience when visiting Flanders, in order to make them spread the word to the rest of the community. By doing this, a specific niche market can be addressed by offering very specific products, fitting their needs and expectations.

4.3.3. Decision-making

Looking at the decision-making of tourists and what influences them to do a certain trip or visit is reviews, according to the Online Director of Copenhagen Tourism: "People are very much influenced by reviews" (Interview Copenhagen 2012). These recommendations are not only given by friends and relatives, but also by colleagues, or they might be even read on Tripadvisor or any similar page that offers reviews and experiences from other travellers.

According to the Online Marketer at Tourism Flanders, many visitors 'like' something on Facebook but "it's a bigger step to actually create a review about something. But it [the writing of reviews] is used, I mean Tripadvisor is huge" (Interview Flanders, 2012). However, not many people on the internet talk or leave reviews about Flanders, due to the fact that it is still quite unknown as a brand.

Because of this fact, tourism Flanders is focusing more on reusing the already existing websites, like Tripadvisor, where tourists can share their experiences. Also the tourism board of Copenhagen makes use of Tripadvisor to stay in contact with the visitors. As stated by the Online Director of Copenhagen Tourism, "the tourists are spreading through a lot of other channels and […] at the destination office we need to be where the tourists are" (Interview Copenhagen, 2012). Due to this, Copenhagen is making use of a variety of different channels to reach the tourists.

The tourism board of Geneva is establishing a new website, which should incorporate an interconnected strategy in order to better stay in touch with the tourists. "It will be more user-friendly to leave a message and they [the tourists] will be able to say they 'like' or they 'don't like'" (Interview Geneva, 2012) and this will lead to a list of the top 10 favourite things in Geneva; thus the tourists visiting the website will see what others like and can read their reviews. In addition to the website, also social media will be used more effectively, because right now the Facebook page is only in French, so only accessible for locals or French speaking tourists.

Furthermore, most of the 9 tourism boards state that the use of new technologies, such as smartphones, will increase further and thus make it easier for the tourists to find information before, during and after travelling. They will be able to look at reviews while travelling and "more and more tourists turn to social media for tips from other travellers and friends about what to see and do" (Interview Rotterdam, 2012) according the Online Marketer at Tourism Rotterdam. This development will further on lead to "further fragmentation of how and where tourists will look for travel information" (Interview Rotterdam, 2012).

4.3.4. Use of Social media

Social media is one of the most used channels in order to reach the tourists nowadays. Every tourism board stated that they make use of a variety of social media platforms in order to find out about needs of tourists or see what they liked in the city on their visit and most hopefully stay in contact with the tourists. The main social media tools are Facebook, as well as Tripadvisor, a platform specifically for travel matters.

The Riga tourism board for instance say that they use social media platforms in order to get feedback from tourists, since the feedback form on the website is not used very regularly. Thus they try to track the feedback shared with others on social media to know what people talk about regarding their visit to the capital of Latvia.

The tourism board of Copenhagen makes use of the social website Flickr, where people can upload their photos taken in Copenhagen, which gives a picture of the city to other potential visitors but also other tourists to share what they enjoyed in the city. However, the Online Director also states that "it's actually something we want to practice more […] to keep in contact with the tourists" (Interview Copenhagen, 2012). Furthermore, Tourism Copenhagen uses Facebook a lot, also twitter and YouTube and are trying out Instagram[2], a photo sharing platform at the moment.

Tourism Flanders makes use of social media in order to get people to talk about the brand and its different products that are common for the region. "So, the idea is we don't push content through social media which is always a trap, […] but we try to encourage conversation" (Interview Flanders, 2012), which he also states as being very difficult, due to the fact that the people have to be motivated to talk about the brand or the region.

On the contrary, the director of the Romanian Tourist Office North America states that making use of Facebook is not the right approach, since this is a platform for people to interconnect with friends and "a brand doesn't necessarily have to be everywhere" (Interview Romania, 2012). He also states the problem of the (low) level of qualification of the writers of reviews on Facebook and the question if they are dedicated enough or if the result will lead to a degrading of the image of Romania. Hence, Tripadvisor is a much more used tool by the Romanian Information Office, as well as Expedia and travel blogs, which are better tools in tourism matters. According to the Romania Tourist Information Office North America, a feedback form, send after the trip, also might lead to the reverse, due to the fact that tourists might feel bothered, which is absolutely not their intention to do. They should feel free to give feedback and share experiences if they want to, but should not be bothered with it.

4.3.5. Local travel information

The idea of offering local travel information to tourists through the tourism board is not that well known or implemented yet in many of those 9 cities. Some see the development and the need for this change, but point at the difficulty of implementing this idea. A few cities however, are already quite active and are trying to incorporate the locals and information offered by locals of the city more and more in their marketing activities.

As mentioned by the Online Director of Copenhagen Tourism, the tourists have become more critical towards the information offered and "they want more local information, they want authentic experiences, so they want to know where the locals go" (Interview Copenhagen, 2012). The tourists are not looking for a place where they will bump into many tourists, but they are interested in the places that the Copenhagener would go to eat, shop and be entertained. Cooperating with the organization called downtown that offers a blogging section for local Copenhageners who can write about their daily life and experiences, the tourists get the opportunity to learn about the local culture

[2] Instagram – a photosharing and designing website http://instagr.am/

and establish a connection to the locals. However, the difficulty is, as stated by the Online Director of Tourism Copenhagen, “to keep the bloggers motivated” (Interview Copenhagen, 2012). Due to the low success of this blog, Tourism Copenhagen is now publishing interviews with locals every month, who guide the tourist through their city. In addition to this project, also a celebrity Copenhagen version is being published, in which celebrities talk about their favourite places to go to and with this information guide the tourists through the city. By talking about very specific places, restaurants, shops and activities, the tourists can make use of this information and follow the routes of the celebrities or other local Copenhageners.

The Coordinator of the Marketing Department of Geneva Tourism states that local travel is a general trend and that according to her, many people are trying to find “the ‘new’ thing or the specific [place]” (Interview Geneva, 2012) when travelling. The tourist “expect[s] [a] specific or personalized type of visit” as mentioned by Geneva Tourism. In addition to the interest in specific information, the tourists are also looking for exclusivity, which means they want to find attractions which are not flooded by tourists. Geneva Tourism does not yet cooperate with organizations from the local travel field, however the discussions and investigations have been started, thus it is only a matter of time. The issue is that with everyone who will represent the tourism of Geneva and Geneva as a brand, the tourism image is on stake, thus the selection of the organizations and the level of professionalism has to be sufficient and looked at closely (Interview Geneva, 2012).

In order to get a connection between the tourists and locals in Prague, the tourism board cooperates with some local organizations, for instance an organization that carries out a monthly event on the biggest square in Prague, during which no cars are allowed in the square. Also a cultural program for kids, as well as adults, takes place. During this event, tourists get the chance to mingle with locals and learn about their culture. According to the Director of Tourism and Professional Activity of Tourism Prague, local travel is hopefully growing as this is a great experience for the tourists coming to visit the city, and being able to get in contact with locals. However, as said by her, their influence in this is limited, as the Tourism Board cannot organize the encounter, they can only help. Although tourists are looking for a special experience; a big change cannot be seen in the behaviour of the tourists coming to Prague.

A difference in Riga compared to other European cities is that the city is not that big, “so, the main parts of the city, where usually the locals hang out and tourists, are basically the same, which is the old town or the city centre” (Interview Riga, 2012) as stated by the Marketing Account Executive. Riga does have a strong CouchSurfing community and with this locals offer accommodation to tourists and help them around in the city. This community works by itself, thus the Tourism Board is not interfering in this service.

“Some people use this information [local travel information], some prefer the official tourist information or the official website. The truth is we can get inspired from those websites [local travel websites]” (Interview Romania, 2012) announces the Director of the Romanian Tourist Office North America. By using this kind of information, they are able to offer the most reliable travel information to the tourists. However, the Director states that “once you make this little unknown destination or place widely available, those places are going to lose their hidden status. Everybody will know them; everybody will flag to that particular corner […]” (Interview Romania, 2012). In the long term, the place will not be special anymore and in addition, those hidden places might not be able to deal with a lot of tourist traffic. So, it is very important to look out for a balance, in order to not destroy the character of a place. The tourist that is very interested in the culture and already knows a lot and has specific questions will be informed about more specific places. On the contrary, the tourist that only wants to know the main attractions will be informed about those, mainly through the website.

The head of the Visitors Centre of Vilnius gives an example of a project they promote, which includes guides with travel information, developed by locals. These guides are for free and can be chosen according to one’s personal interests. The travel guides are prepared by www.likealocalguide.com and include gastronomy, tours, accommodation, museums, general information, transportation and information about activities in and around Vilnius. The various spots can be added to a guide and then printed or shared with friends, thus creating a personal, individual map of the city with information offered by locals.

The Tourism Board Flanders makes use of the online tool called Gidsy[3], which is about sharing experiences. “It’s kind of a community where people can upload their own experiences with their own accounts” (Interview Flanders, 2012). People can upload content and share information with others and connect with people of the same interest, for instance a certain kind of music. Tourism Flanders is currently doing research on how they could make use of these tools in order to address the different niches in tourism and the different interest groups. This information shared by locals is considered as being more real, according to the Online Marketer of Tourism Flanders.

However, the difficulty is that the management of most of the Tourism Boards are not aware of this development yet, and also of the necessity to address the tourists personally with fragmented marketing activities. The most important thing is to spend and place your strategy right, take into account those travellers without social media and combine this with the “new world of community” (Interview Flanders, 2012) in order to address the right people with the right strategy and channel. By facilitating the right people with the right tools, their knowledge and experiences will be shared with other people and travellers, the brand can be developed and thus the problem of working

[3] Gidsy – Do something different. Platform to share activities and experiences https://gidsy.com/

against any of the city's partners would not be an issue due to the fact that the locals would provide the information and share their experiences with their community, with people of the same interest group.

5. Conclusion

In order to find out what the role of different types of information needs is in general and specifically local travel information in the decision-making process of visitors to European cities, this specific research has been conducted with people travelling to European cities as well as with experts responsible for information provision in the field of tourism.

5.1. Profile city traveller

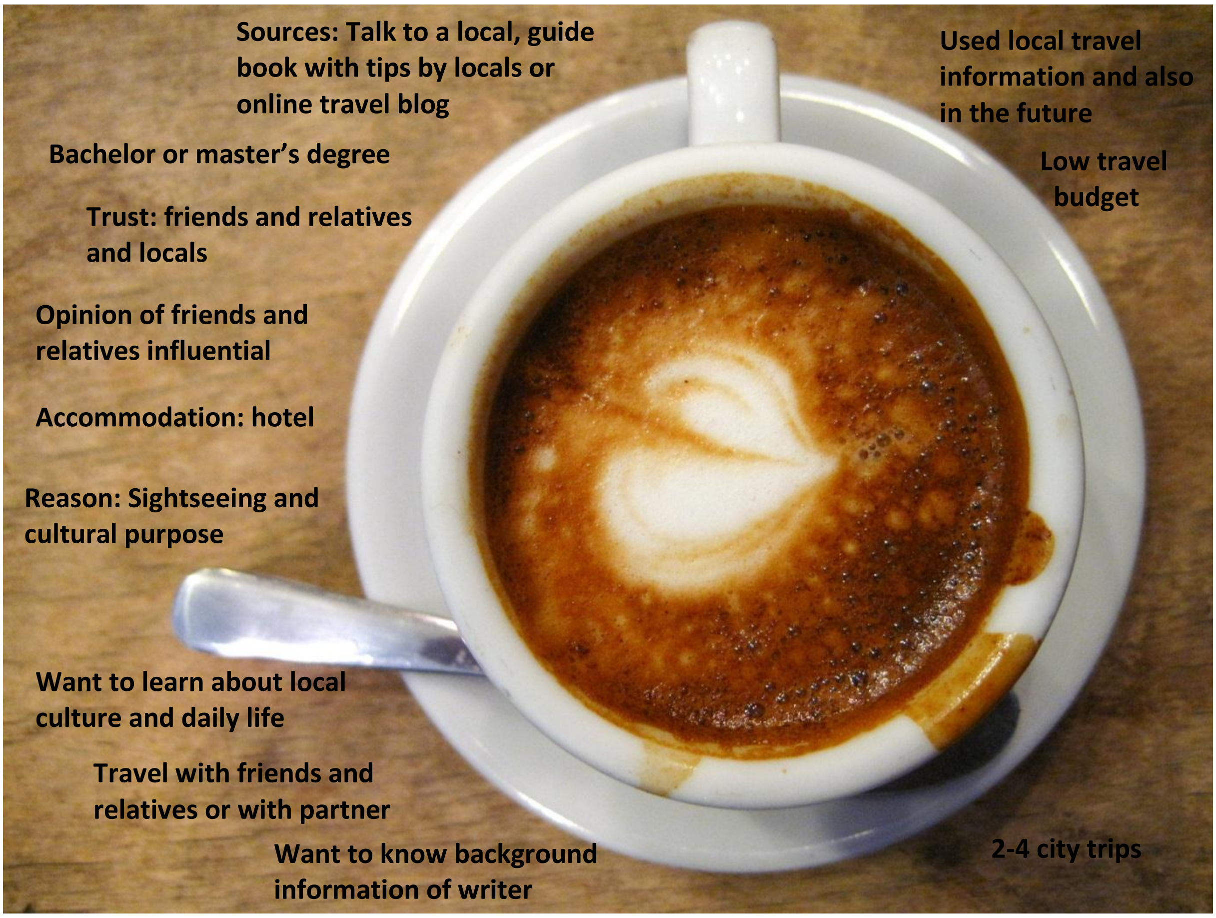


Figure 15: Profile of city traveller (www.espressoyou.com)

The profile of an average traveller to European cities has been established by conducting this research through asking tourists about their travel behaviour, which information sources they prefer and various other questions (figure 15). It has to be taken into account the criteria for a potential respondent of the survey, who was not travelling in big groups but self-organizing the trip to the destination. The respondents have been divided into three different age groups in order to find out about their specific travel behaviour. Most of the respondents hold either a bachelor or master's degree which leads to the conclusion that the average city traveller is well educated. Surprisingly, when looking at the travelling party composition, many respondents indicated that they have travelled alone on their last city trip. This cannot be traced back to trends and developments discussed in this research, however seems to be an important characteristic of the city traveller researched in this specific research. Another indication for the average visitor of European cities is the number of trips he made, namely 2-4 city trips in 2011. These two factors, the number of city trips and the education result in a relationship, thus the higher the education, the more city trips the average city traveller takes. Very clearly can be stated, that the main reason for travelling of the city traveller, is sightseeing and cultural purposes. The most common accommodation under the visitors of European cities is hotel, which has been indicated by the majority of the respondents. The main reason that influences the average visitor of European cities is the opinion of friends and relatives, which coincides with the statement made by the Online Director of Copenhagen Tourism, that reviews by friends or other people are the main influential factor on the decision they make. The type of information the visitors consult before, during and after their travel is also in line with the experiences and impression of the experts in the field of tourism. The main act of gathering information happens before or during the trip. The information that is most looked for before is about destinations as well as accommodation. While travelling, the visitor rather looks for information about gastronomy, attractions and transportation. Information about lifestyle is also a type of information which is rather looked for while travelling. Comparing these results with the outcome of the research conducted by Jani et al. (2011), it can be seen that these are very similar, thus, the traveller tries to reduce risks in an early planning stage and in a later stage is concerned about logistics and itinerary.

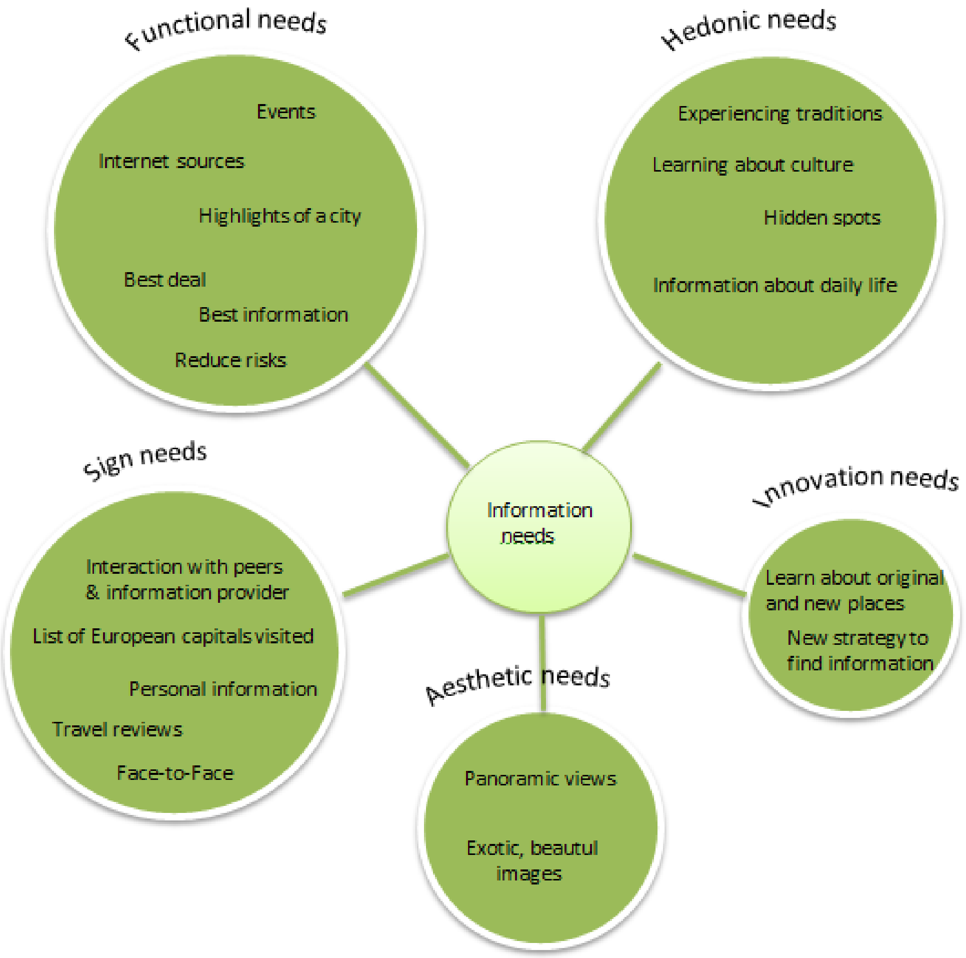


Figure 16: Importance of the different information needs (the bigger the circle, the more important)

5.2. Information needs

The different types of information needs have been looked at closely by making use of the information need model developed by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998). This model consists of 5 different needs and has been described thoroughly in the substantive guidance chapter of this research.

5.2.1. Functional needs

The functional needs have been looked at separately in this research due to the fact that these are the most important according to previous researchers (figure 16). The four other needs were still taken into account because these seem to play an important role next to the functional needs when looking at the needs of tourists, while gathering information. Looking at the travel information sources that were consulted by the visitors of European cities, it can be seen that the main used source is friends and relatives, which is in line with the main factor that influences people to make a certain decision, as stated by the Online Director of Copenhagen Tourism. Besides this source of information, guide books have been consulted for travel matters by many of the respondents.

Against the trend of using new technologies and specifically smartphones and social media for travel information, only a small number made use of weblogs or smartphone apps. This result is very surprising and not as expected according to the trend in the tourism field discussed in a previous chapter of this research. However, as stated by the experts that have been interviewed, most of the travellers make use of the official tourism website or make use of social platforms, such as Tripadvisor, which is being used by most of the interviewed tourism boards and tourist information offices. These online platforms and websites are also part of the trend that has been established in the beginning of this research. The same result about the preferred sources that are being consulted comes back when looking at the level of trust the travellers have in the various sources. The majority have a very high level of trust in the information offered by their friends and relatives. Locals are also very trustworthy when it comes to travel information according to the average European city visitor. Here again it can be seen that only a very small number of people indicate a very high level of trust in smartphone apps and social media, which is not in line with the trend mentioned in a previous chapter of this research. This low trust in smartphone apps might result from the fact that they have only been developed for the public market in 2010. After a few years of experience, this might change as seen already, in some markets smartphone apps are used a lot, such as instant messaging and weather forecast. Moreover, according to some of the experts, tourists do already consult information by using their mobile devices, but then walk into the tourist information office in order to reassure the accuracy of the information or to ask for further information about the specific place they were looking at. This fact supports the low number of trust in apps and the higher trust in tourist information offices. Apparently, the face-to-face contact with information providers seems to play a vital role for the traveller. In line with the trend of the increasing of mobile devices in the tourism field, is the opinion of the experts that are involved in the information provision in the various European cities. According to them it is very important to connect with the tourists and stay in touch with them through social media or other interactive platforms. Additionally, some of them state that the further development of apps and social media will lead to a more fragmented market and therefore brings with it the need to personalize information for the various interest groups. However, this trend of using social media or smartphone apps cannot be seen yet in the use of information by the sample group in this particular research.

5.2.2. Hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign needs

As displayed in figure 16, the functional needs are the most important needs to be looked at, due to the fact that most of the respondents look for information to fulfil those types of needs, such as gathering knowledge and reducing uncertainty about various matters, such as finding a good accommodation or knowing what attractions can be found in the destination, by looking for travel information. However, the other four information needs are also of importance to the traveller. Starting with the most important of the four needs besides functional needs, the sign needs and with these the social interaction between travellers, but also with the providers of travel information plays an important role, when fulfilling these specific needs. Showing others that one is an active traveller is quite important to the respondents and is part of the sign needs. This need is being addressed with the possibility to write comments on the website of Spotted by Locals as well as indicating which European capitals one has visited. This offer is being revealed in the content analysis about the offer of Spotted by Locals in the results chapter. Furthermore, the ever more important role of reviews and their growing influence on the traveller, as announced by some experts, is also part of the sign needs and important to the visitor of European cities.

Knowing and being informed about the local culture is part of the hedonic needs and also very important as indicated by the travellers. This need also includes learning about new cultures and experiencing the different traditions. In the content analysis, it can be seen that these needs are being fulfilled by offering the reader of the information the possibility to indulge in creative written articles about special places. Besides reading information about the places, the reader can learn about the culture and the traditions of the various countries. The innovation needs also play a vital role in the information needs, as travellers feel the urge to find out about new places and destinations, which is being offered on the website and through the offer of the commissioning client. Moreover, finding a new strategy to make a destination choice is also part of this need. Through a variety of possibilities and ever more growing diversity, the traveller has the opportunity to choose for himself what he exactly wants and how he makes the decision. The information offered by locals can be one way of making a choice for a specific destination because the way they present and promote the places are capturing and create travel enthusiasm in the reader. Looking at the aesthetic needs, the results show, even though this need has only been researched by analysing the content of the website and not asking the travellers, that images are very important in order to make an offer attractive. This can be seen as well when looking at the website of the various city tourism boards that use many images in order to present their city and country to the reader.

5.2.3. Local travel information

When looking closer at the functional information needs in relation to local travel information it can be said that almost every city traveller has consulted local travel information in the past and will do this in the future as well. Most of the visitors of European cities made use of local travel information for activities, gastronomy and transportation and stated the finding of this information as easy. The information source, which has been used in order to find out about the local travel information, is mainly talking to a local. In addition many visitors of European cities make use of an online travel blog in order to gather local travel information. Here, the trend of using online information and interactive platforms can be seen. Hence, people looking for general information rather make use of friends and relatives and official guide books, compared to travellers looking for local travel information, who rather consult a local in person or an online travel blog.

Most of the experts stated that they do not incorporate travel information by locals in their information provision yet. The majority of the experts acknowledges the trend as a growing phenomenon; however, due to various reasons do not make use of this type of information yet. One reason for this is that the management of the tourism boards does not currently see the necessity to invest into this service. Another reason is the difficulty of promoting rather hidden and unknown places, where a high flow of tourists might have a negative effect and might ruin the character of this unknown spot and have an impact on the culture in the long run. The positive effects of integrating this information are seen by some of the experts, such as the interaction between locals and tourists and the possible friendships that might arise. Furthermore, most of the experts state that the experience the traveller has during his city trip is essential for him to become a repeater or spread positive feedback and reviews about this specific destination. One way of creating a good experience is by getting in touch with the locals and their culture and experiencing the city from their point of view, as stated by some experts. Another factor is that still a remarkable number of travellers do not make use of mobile devices or online services, thus this group has to be taken into account as well. According to a few experts, this is no issue and the different channels can be incorporated into the marketing strategy and add up to various ways of spreading information for the different travellers. In addition, some people do prefer the professional information sources and rather make use of those, which seems reasonable. Hence, the tourism board has to investigate and decide whether there are more people looking for local travel information and if this would be important to offer in order to fulfil the needs of the majority of the visitors to this specific destination or if it is a minority and not too important yet. Some of the European cities do work together with organizations that offer travel information by locals and state that this is as a special offer they can give to the tourists and to better match their needs and expectations. This information can be a very influential factor in the decision-making process of the traveller, thus has to be looked at in detail. In this specific research, most of the respondents state that the opinion of friends and relatives is most important to them, which is due to the fact that they trust their friends and relatives the most. The important factor is to 'know' the person, offering the information. Spotted by Locals is doing this with all their spotters, which can help to create a certain level of trust in the author of the information and give the reader the opportunity to identify himself with this person. Through this the level of trust can be increased and the traveller would make use of this information.

Looking at the different information elements about local travel information it can be said that to the visitors of European cities, honesty of the content is very important, which refers to the non-commercial argument that many respondents gave in the open question of the survey. Following this element, being able to trust the content as well as the writer is important to the traveller who is consulting local travel information. The element of trust refers to knowing background information of the writer of the information in order to get to know the person a little bit and thus, being able to assess whether the travel preferences and interests might match. The accuracy of the content is just as important as the trustworthiness of the content of this kind of information. Accuracy is being referred to as information, which is up-to-date and the information delivered is correct, for instance such as opening hours and address but also certain events.

Some of the experts state, that it is important to develop personal information for the tourists and through these personalized tips ensure that he will have a good experience and that the offer will fit his needs. This statement can also be seen in terms of offering background information of the author of the travel information, thus knowing some personal details about the person who wrote the article. This fact is in line with the need of the average city traveller to know some background information of the writer of the content as well as with the trend mentioned in a previous chapter of this research regarding the fact that tailor-made travel is not enough anymore but travellers want to experience hidden places and get information from people that know these places best. The content analysis of the offer of Spotted by Locals reveals that background information about each and every spotter are shared with the reader in order to make him aware of the travel preferences and interests of the writer. The reader then is able to judge if these interests match his own and if he might be interested in the same places as this person. This idea of knowing personal background information about a peer traveller can be seen in the trends, as most of the travellers believe their peers more than professional information providers of whom the identity is in most of the cases unknown. The spotters reveal personal information about themselves and share their own interests, which turns them into a peer to other travellers, thus the reader experiences him as a friend and not as an unknown writer of travel information.

6. Recommendations

In this part of the research report recommendations will be given to the commissioning client, namely Spotted by Locals, about how the results of this research can be used and implemented into the business in order to improve the service offered. Moreover, recommendations will be given to the city tourism boards in order for them to better fit the needs of the travellers.

6.1.Recommendations for Commissioning Client

Various recommendations can be given to the commissioning client, which are described more in detail hereinafter in order for Spotted by Locals to improve their service and offer to the city traveller.

6.1.1. Follow-up research

Due to the fact that in the reflection chapter, some issues in terms of sample size have been encountered, further research could help to overcome this problem of missing data. Moreover, further research is essential due to the gap in the sample size, which is most importantly not big enough and secondly does not consist of an equal balance between male and female, as well as the age and the nationality is not very balanced. The research should be spread out over a wider variety of nationalities as well as different age groups. The attempt to do this has shown that it is not as easy implemented as thought to be. Spreading of a survey has some difficulties, thus the respondents have to be reached through various channels and addressed in various languages. Even though an incentive was given for filling out the questionnaire (a free city guide offered by the commissioning client), not enough people were willing to participate. Furthermore, the questionnaire has not been filled out completely by a number of respondents due to the length, which resulted in missing scores. Hence, when doing further research, the length of the survey should be looked at critically.

Moreover, a better result can be obtained, when the respondents are addressed personally, which could be done by addressing various communities or interest groups with a certain topic that could be interesting for them. A specific survey-topic could help by increasing responses by promoting this particular topic to a certain group that might be interested in this and through this way make them motivated to fill out the questionnaire. For instance, when doing further research into the various needs besides the functional aspect, a topic that could be addressed would be learning about cultures and the daily life of a community. This topic would be interesting to a certain interest group, in this case cultural travellers or people working in the sector of cultural tourism. A specific online forum could be chosen and by promoting this topic, the people in this specific community might feel connected to the research topic and thus fill out the survey. The other need which is very important according to this research are the sign needs, therefore also those should be addressed in more detail. An example of a questionnaire for this follow-up research can be seen in addendum II. The age can be indicated in age groups, which makes it easier when looking at the scores later. In question 4 the importance of the various information needs is being ranked in order to see which needs have which level of importance to the respondents. Questions 5-8 address information about the local culture and what is important to the reader in this concern. These questions represent the hedonic needs of the information need model. Questions 9-14 deal with the need to share information and experiences and social interaction, thus the sign needs in more detail. This sample questionnaire can be used in order to find out in more detail about the needs of the travellers and users of local travel information, concentrating on the outcome of this particular research.

6.1.2. Social interaction

As seen in the results of this research, the information source that the visitors of European cities trust the most, are their friends and relatives. By doing a content analysis of the offer by Spotted by Locals it can be concluded that by publishing background information of the writer of the information, a certain trust is created and the reader can feel a connection and interest in a specific person and make use of this person's information. The reader gets the feeling that he can trust the person and the author turns into a peer, which is very important to the travellers. This personal information about the writer seems to be very important to the traveller, thus in order to improve the offer of the commissioning client, this has to be kept on a high level. The reader wants to feel the connection and wants to be personal addressed when reading information about a certain topic. Furthermore, the research results show that reviews are the most influential on the decision-making of the travellers, thus it is very important to include these in the offer. Travellers want to read from others what they think about a certain place and want to know what the person's experiences are. In order to include this even more in the offer by the commissioning client, a section could be created, where interaction is encouraged and people are asked specifically to tell something about their experiences with a specific place. The possibility to leave a comment about a certain article already exists on the commissioning client's website, however is not used that much. According to the Online Marketer of Tourism Flanders, reviews or comments take a much bigger effort than clicking a 'like' or 'dislike'-button. This could be a way of showing which spots are the favourite spots of other travellers, however it has the negative side that only clicking the 'like'-button doesn't reveal anything about the specific experience the traveller had and thus missing out on a lot of valuable information. Therefore, with the follow-up questionnaire the willingness of the readers and travellers should be examined and supporting interaction is also an important action. When the traveller is asked, 'what did you think about this place?', for instance on Facebook he is more likely to react then when there are hundreds of articles and he might leave a comment but probably won't. The personal way is much more effective. One example of Copenhagen shows the opportunity to share pictures with the world and travellers interested in Copenhagen (figure 17).

Figure 17: Facebook Copenhagen, example of interaction with travellers (Facebook Copenhagen)

6.1.3. Type of information

Moreover, it can be seen from the results of this research, which type of information is important at which stage of the travel process for the traveller. While planning the trip, information about the destination as well as accommodation is the most important information type. During the trip, information about gastronomy as well as attractions and transportation are very important to the travellers. After travelling some travellers consult information about lifestyle. Knowing this, the offer can be adjusted perfectly to the needs of the travellers visiting European cities. Consequently, the information offered on the website should be addressing travel matters that are important before the actual trip because people tend to use the internet in order to inform themselves. While travelling, many tourists make use of smartphone apps or consult the tourist information office in the particular city. These information sources should be used in order to offer and spread information about gastronomy, attractions and transportation, thus travel matters that travellers look for while travelling. Consequently, a smartphone app should point out special, hidden places that few people visit and keep in mind to offer information about dining matters, original attractions and transportation matters. The logistic matters are part of the functional needs, which as can be seen in the results of this research report are the most important needs to be satisfied. Thus, information should be offered that includes practical information for the reader to make use of.

6.1.4. Knowledge about culture

However, the hedonic needs also play a very important role and should not be left aside. The travellers to European cities are very much interested in learning about the local culture and the daily life. Most importantly, this interest fits with the vision of the commissioning client, mentioned earlier in this research report, to create a better understanding of different cultures by travelling the local way. Translating this into a specific recommendation; information about the local culture and the daily life of the inhabitants should be offered. The various city guides offered by the commissioning client do include some information about the culture in the blogs written by the spotters; however this contains usually a few lines only. This information about the culture and their daily life should be incorporated more in order to match the needs and wishes of the traveller. Some blogs are written about cultural events or traditions, however are mostly not included in the city guides. With the follow-up research it can be determined which aspects of local culture are the most interesting to travellers and what they would like to read about. It can be said already, that various topics should be included into this description of the culture and the lifestyle of the locals, such as the atmosphere in the city, habits of locals, like the typical Italian morning caffè, standing at the bar. In addition, some traditions, such as Koninginnedag, this is celebrated each year in the Netherlands by each and every Dutch local, especially on a boat on one of the many rivers in the city of Amsterdam. Moreover, information about the locals, such as the love for camping by the Dutch is interesting to know.

6.2.Recommendations for Tourism Boards

As can be seen from the results of this research, local travel information has been used by almost every respondent of the survey conducted and in addition travellers are interested in using this type of information in the future. The importance about local travel information is that the traveller is able to trust this kind of information due to the fact that he knows who the writer of this information is, a local who knows the city best. This makes it trustworthy to him because the writer feels to him like a friend and friends are the most trusted source of information. The peer-to-peer phenomenon has been detected in a previous chapter as an important trend in the market. For the traveller visiting European cities, it is very important to consult non-commercial information, hence information without the idea of increasing sales of a particular place. Moreover, the interest in hidden spots and places, where not many tourists go is significant and continuously growing. This is a very important point that should be considered in order to fulfil the tourists' needs and match his interest. Through this, a special and deeper experience can be created for the traveller and he will certainly spread the word about this specific destination and maybe even turn into a repeater.

Consequently, when it comes to destination marketing and information provision, the personalized and trusted information has to be considered carefully when attempting to provide the tourist with a great travel experience. Notably, the ability to trust the information and knowing who the writer is is not important to each and every city traveller; however this specific group of travellers, researched in this research report and with it the trend has to be acknowledged and implemented. This group will only continue to grow due to more opportunities and the ever more growing need for trustworthy information due to overwhelmingly mass of travel information.

Furthermore, it is important for all tourism businesses of one destination to work together in order to create a special experience for the traveller and most importantly create a cohesive and distinctive image of the city. This can be achieved by working with an organization that offers local travel information, such as the commissioning client. This cooperation could either be on a promotion basis; promoting the offer of local travel information to visitors of the city or deeper, through integrating the offer by the local travel organization into products. For instance, a guided tour could be created, using the tips by locals, or a program like the Berlin greeters[4], who show tourists around and present the city from their point of view, which is the local way, can be established. This fragmented offer can lead, in the long term, to the spreading of tourists throughout districts that might not have been on the tourist map before. As has been established in a previous chapter of this research report, this is a current issue in some European cities. Travellers will explore other parts of the city, when making use of local travel information that include spots outside of the main tourist

[4] http://www.berlin-greeter.org/en Berlin Greeter- member of the global greeter network.

areas, therefore is also beneficial for the local residents of the city and in economic terms for the less visited districts.

Moreover, the influence of the opinion of friends and relatives as well as travel reviews seems to be indispensable. Hence, in order to pull the traveller to a specific destination, this important influence has to be considered. Trustworthiness of the information source and content is very important to the European city traveller. The most trustworthy source is mainly friends and relatives due to the fact that the traveller knows their background and personality. The same effect can be created through revealing personal information of the writer of the content, which is done for instance by the commissioning client. Besides this, the sharing of reviews and experiences is very important to the tourists, thus an interactive website can help to encourage communication and interaction of the tourists and finally increase brand awareness and brand loyalty, if the traveller is able to trust the information offered by this specific city brand. This interaction can be created in various ways, for instance by offering the possibility to share experiences in a blog on the website. Furthermore, interaction can be created, as some European cities do, by offering the possibility to create one's personal travel map of the city, which can be printed or shared with friends, as shows this example of Visit Copenhagen (see figure 18). The main importance is to give the traveller the opportunity to feel that he is having an exclusive experience that is personal, as well as a deep experience and not only experiencing the culture on the surface, but from a different perspective, the local perspective.

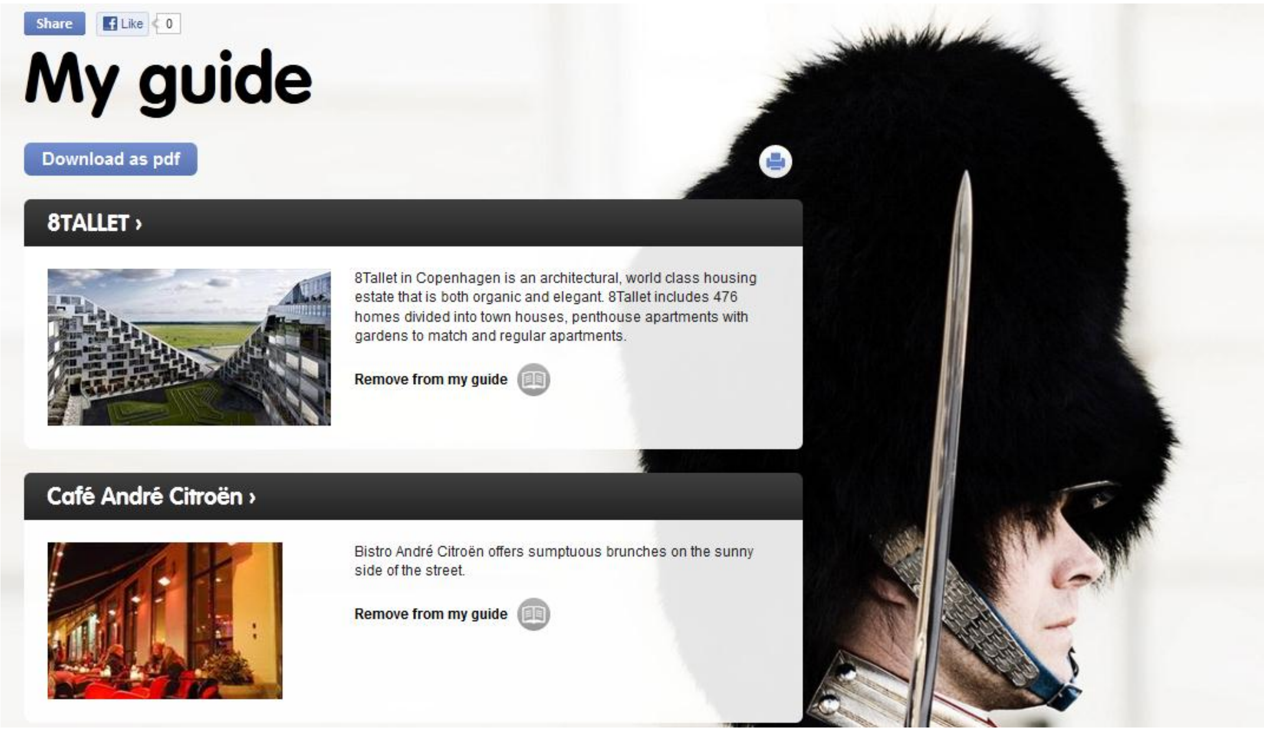


Figure 18: My Guide created on www.visitcopenhagen.com

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Figures

Figure 1: Promotion on front page, Spotted by Locals. http://www.spottedbylocals.com/

Figure 2: **Vogt,C. & Fesenmaier, D.R. (1998)**. Expanding the functional tourism information search model: incorporating aesthetic, hedonic, innovation and sign dimensions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 25(3), 551-579 http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160738398000103

Figure 9: **Bienvenu, H. (Mar 21st 2012).** *Orange optika – Tipton glasses – Hype eyewear*. Blog post on www.spottedbylocals.com. http://www.spottedbylocals.com/budapest/orange-optika-tipton-glasses/ visited on 11.06.2012 17:26

Figure 10: **Sinclair, B. (June 11th, 2012)**. *TRAM-TRAM – Untramelled delight at TRAM-TRAM*. Blog post on www.spottedbylocals.com. http://www.spottedbylocals.com/barcelona/tram-tram/ visited on 16.06.2012 17:51

Figure 11: **Wontorczyk, A. (June 1st, 2012).** *Pimiento Argentino Grill – Steaks!!!* Blog post on www.spottedbylocals.com. http://www.spottedbylocals.com/krakow/pimiento-argentino-grill/ visited on 16.06.2012 18:30

Figure 12: **Dujarric, R. (June 8th, 2012).** *Pivobar – The heart of bohemia in example dreta.* Blog post on www.spottedbylocals.com. http://www.spottedbylocals.com/barcelona/pivobar/ visited on 15.06.2012 07:32

Figure 13: **Askayo, S. (May 15th, 2012).** *On the table (5) – Vintaging Tel Aviv*. Picture on spottedbylocals.com. http://www.spottedbylocals.com/blog/on-the-table-5-vintaging-tel-aviv/ visited on 11.06.2012 22.59

Figure 14: **Poll, B. van (August, 3rd, 2011).** *Which European capitals have you visited?* Post on www.spottedbylocals.com. http://www.spottedbylocals.com/blog/which-european-capitals-have-you-visited/ visited on 12.06.2012 13:56

Figure 15: **expressoyou**. http://expressoyou.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Macchiato.expressoyou.jpeg visited on 19.06.2012 22:25

Figure 16: **The importance of the different information needs**. Information need model by Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) adjusted by researcher.

Figure 17: **Facebook Visit Copenhagen**. http://www.facebook.com/VisitCopenhagen?ref=ts visited on 20.06.2012 13:00

Figure 18: **My Guide** created on www.visitcopenhagen.com visited on 20.06.2012 22:19

Addenda

Questionnaire sample

Questionnaire

Local Travel Information

I am a student at University of applied sciences Amsterdam/Diemen and studying Tourism Management. Currently I am doing research into the needs and wishes of travellers regarding travel information and specifically information offered by locals.

Filling in the questionnaire will not take longer than 10 minutes but will be a huge contribution to my research! **Please think about your last city trip to a European city with at least one night spent in the city**. The questionnaire is anonymous!

Personal information

1) Year of birth ________________

2) Gender ☐ male ☐ female

3) Nationality ________________________

4) What is your highest or current education? ☐ Secondary education

☐ Bachelor degree ☐ Master’s degree ☐ Doctoral Degree ☐ Other ____________________

General information

5) How many city trips did you make in 2011?
   - o 1 city trip
   - o 2-4 city trips
   - o 5-10 city trips
   - o 11 city trips or more

6) On your last city trip, did you travel
   - o alone
   - o with a partner
   - o with friends/ relatives
   - o with school class
   - o with colleagues
   - o with an organized group

7) What was your <u>main</u> reason for travelling? *(only one answer possible)*

☐ Visiting friends and relatives ☐ Sightseeing/ Cultural purpose
☐ Shopping ☐ Business purposes

8) In which type of accommodation did you stay?

☐ Hotel ☐ Hostel ☐ Rented apartment ☐ Couchsurfing
☐ With friends/ relatives ☐ Campsite ☐ Other ______________________

9) On what kind of budget did you travel?

☐ low budget ☐ medium budget ☐ high budget

Information gathering

10) Please rate your level of trust in the following sources of travel information. *(1=low,5=high)*

Information source	**Level of trust? (1-5)**
Tourist information office	(1 2 3 4 5)
Friends and relatives	(1 2 3 4 5)
Friends and relatives that are locals	(1 2 3 4 5)
Locals	(1 2 3 4 5)
Apps for smartphones	(1 2 3 4 5)
Guide book	(1 2 3 4 5)
Tour operator	(1 2 3 4 5)
Weblogs	(1 2 3 4 5)
Newspaper	(1 2 3 4 5)
Social media	(1 2 3 4 5)
TV	(1 2 3 4 5)
Travel Agency	(1 2 3 4 5)
Hotel	(1 2 3 4 5)

11) How did you gather travel information for your last city trip? *(multiple answers possible)*

☐ Tourist information office ☐ Locals ☐ Weblogs ☐ Apps for smartphones
☐ Friends and relatives ☐ Guide book ☐ Newspaper ☐ TV
☐ Friends and relatives that are locals ☐ Tour operator ☐ Social media
☐ Hotel ☐ Travel Agency

12) How important are the following elements for you when you're searching for travel information? (*1=very unimportant*, *5=very important)*

Information search elements	**Importance (1-5)**
Find information about events	(1 2 3 4 5)
Know about a city's highlights	(1 2 3 4 5)
Find the best deal	(1 2 3 4 5)
Find the best available information	(1 2 3 4 5)
Find out about original places that few have travelled to	(1 2 3 4 5)
Learn about the local culture	(1 2 3 4 5)
Be informed of the city's daily life	(1 2 3 4 5)
Be able to show others that I am knowledgeable	(1 2 3 4 5)
Indicate to friends that I am an active traveller	(1 2 3 4 5)

Decision-making

13) What is the main factor that usually influences your decision to make a certain trip/ visit?

- o Travel literature or advertising material
- o Opinion of friends and relatives
- o Own socio-economic situation
- o Previous travel experience
- o Limit of time
- o Other ____________________

14) What kind of information did you look for and when? (Before, during or after your trip)
(make a cross in the appropriate field, multiple answers possible)

	Before	During	After	Not at all
Destinations				
Accommodation				
Attractions				
Transportation				
Gastronomy				
Events				
Lifestyle				

Information by locals

15) Did you ever use local travel information?

- o Yes
- o No. Why not? ____________________

16) Would you consider using local travel information in the future?

- o Yes
- o No. Why not? ____________________

17) Did you use local travel information for any of the following aspects? (*multiple answers possible)*

☐ Accommodation ☐ Transportation ☐ Activities
☐ Lifestyle (art, fashion, culture..) ☐ Gastronomy (café, restaurant, bar)
☐ None

18) How did you gather local travel information?

☐ Talked to a local ☐ Social media ☐ Guide book with tips by locals
☐ Travel forum ☐ Online travel blog ☐ TV ☐ Smartphone apps

19) Please rate the ease with which you found the local travel information.

☐ Very easy ☐ Easy ☐ Difficult ☐ Very Difficult

20) What makes information/ tips by locals important to you?

---

21) Rate the following elements about local travel information. (*1=very unimportant, 5=very important)*

<u>Information elements</u>	**<u>Importance (1-5)</u>**
Trustworthiness of the content	(1 2 3 4 5)
Accuracy of the content	(1 2 3 4 5)
Honesty of the content	(1 2 3 4 5)
Objectivity of the content	(1 2 3 4 5)

22) How do you feel about the following elements? (*1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree)*

<u>Information search elements</u>	**<u>Importance (1-5)</u>**
I am concerned that the travel preferences of the author/ local might be different to mine	(1 2 3 4 5)
I want to know some background information about the person who wrote the content	(1 2 3 4 5)

Thank you for taking your time and filling out this questionnaire!

You have made a huge contribution to my research.

This research has been carried out for www.Spottedbylocals.com

In case of any questions, please contact me - annika.roesch@online.de

Questionnaire sample for follow-up research

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. AGE ☐ 20-30 ☐ 30-40 ☐ 40-50

2. GENDER ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE

3. NATIONALITY ☐

4. RANGE THE FOLLOWING REASONS WHY YOU LOOK FOR INFORMATION (FILL IN A NUMBER FROM 1-5, 1 BEING MOST IMPORTANT)

- TO BE INFORMED ABOUT ALL POSSIBILITIES THE DESTINATION OFFERS ☐
- TO FIND NEW PLACES, EXOTIC AND NEW EXPERIENCES ☐
- TO BE ENTERTAINED AND LEARN ABOUT CULTURE AND COMMUNITY ☐
- LOOK AT IMAGES AND FANTASIZE ABOUT A PLACE ☐
- SHARE INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS ☐

CULTURAL INFORMATION

5. WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU WANT TO LEARN/ KNOW ABOUT THE LOCAL CULTURE?

☐ about their traditions ☐ about habits ☐ about the atmosphere
☐ about local food ☐ about history

6. WHAT WERE YOUR 3 BEST EXPERIENCES WITH TRAVEL INFORMATION?

1.
2.
3.

7. WHAT WERE YOUR 3 WORST EXPERIENCES WITH TRAVEL INFORMATION?

1.
2.
3.

8. WHAT WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING ABOUT THE PERSON WRITING ABOUT THE INFORMATION?

1.
2.
3.

MOBILE DEVICES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

9. HAVE YOU USED SMARTPHONE APPS FOR TRAVEL MATTERS?

☐ YES ☐ NO

10. WHICH APP(S) DID YOU USE?

☐ ☐ ☐

11. WHAT WERE YOU LOOKING FOR WHEN USING YOUR APP?

☐ ATTRACTIONS ☐ EVENTS ☐ GASTRONOMY ☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ ACCOMMODATION ☐ HISTORY ☐ LOCAL CULTURE ☐ REVIEWS

12. Did you write a review about your travel experiences?

☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Do you like sharing your experiences?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Do you like sharing your experiences with other travellers and how would you do it?

☐ 'Like'-button ☐ Write a comment ☐ Talk to other travellers

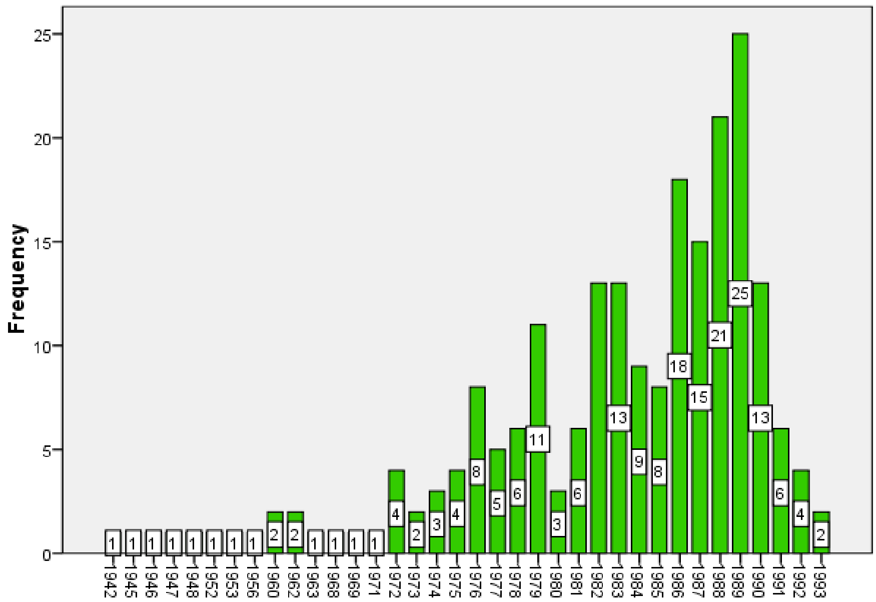
☐ Write an article

Graphs and Tables

Year of birth

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1942-1961	10	4,7	4,7	4,7
	1962-1981	58	27,0	27,0	31,6
	1982-1993	147	68,4	68,4	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Year of birth



Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	75	34,9	34,9	34,9
	female	140	65,1	65,1	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Nationality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	American	5	2,3	2,3	2,3
	Andorra	1	,5	,5	2,8
	Australian	2	,9	,9	3,7
	Austrian	6	2,8	2,8	6,5
	Belgian	13	6,0	6,0	12,6
	Brazilian	1	,5	,5	13,0
	British	7	3,3	3,3	16,3
	Bulgarian	4	1,9	1,9	18,1
	Canadian	1	,5	,5	18,6
	Chilean	1	,5	,5	19,1
	Colombian	1	,5	,5	19,5
	Czech	2	,9	,9	20,5
	Danish	2	,9	,9	21,4
	Dutch	37	17,2	17,2	38,6
	English	1	,5	,5	39,1
	Finnish	3	1,4	1,4	40,5
	French	4	1,9	1,9	42,3
	french/ spanish	1	,5	,5	42,8
	German	58	27,0	27,0	69,8
	German/ America	2	,9	,9	70,7
	Greek	1	,5	,5	71,2
	Indish	3	1,4	1,4	72,6
	Irish	1	,5	,5	73,0
	Italian	11	5,1	5,1	78,1
	Latvian	2	,9	,9	79,1
	Lithuanian	1	,5	,5	79,5
	Luxembourgish	2	,9	,9	80,5
	Macedonian	2	,9	,9	81,4
	Mexican	2	,9	,9	82,3
	Norwegian	2	,9	,9	83,3
	Polish	4	1,9	1,9	85,1

	Portuguese	2	,9	,9	86,0
	Romanian	5	2,3	2,3	88,4
	Russian	3	1,4	1,4	89,8
	Scottish	1	,5	,5	90,2
	Serbian	2	,9	,9	91,2
	Slovenian	1	,5	,5	91,6
	South African	4	1,9	1,9	93,5
	Spanish	6	2,8	2,8	96,3
	Swedish	2	,9	,9	97,2
	Swiss	3	1,4	1,4	98,6
	Turkish	2	,9	,9	99,5
	Zimbabwean	1	,5	,5	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Level of education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	secondary education	37	17,2	17,2	17,2
	bachelor degree	96	44,7	44,7	61,9
	master's degree	67	31,2	31,2	93,0
	doctoral degree	7	3,3	3,3	96,3
	other	8	3,7	3,7	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Number of city trips 2011

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 city trip	32	14,9	14,9	14,9
	2-4 city trips	108	50,2	50,2	65,1
	5-10 city trips	57	26,5	26,5	91,6
	11 city trips or more	18	8,4	8,4	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

City trips in relation to education Crosstabulation

			Education					Total
			secondary education	bachelor degree	master's degree	doctoral degree	other	
city_trips	1 city trip	Count	7	16	7	0	2	32
		% within Education	18,9%	16,7%	10,4%	,0%	25,0%	14,9%
		% of Total	3,3%	7,4%	3,3%	,0%	,9%	14,9%
	2-4 city trips	Count	20	54	26	4	4	108
		% within Education	54,1%	56,3%	38,8%	57,1%	50,0%	50,2%
		% of Total	9,3%	25,1%	12,1%	1,9%	1,9%	50,2%
	5-10 city trips	Count	10	19	25	1	2	57
		% within Education	27,0%	19,8%	37,3%	14,3%	25,0%	26,5%
		% of Total	4,7%	8,8%	11,6%	,5%	,9%	26,5%
	11 city trips or more	Count	0	7	9	2	0	18
		% within Education	,0%	7,3%	13,4%	28,6%	,0%	8,4%
		% of Total	,0%	3,3%	4,2%	,9%	,0%	8,4%
Total		Count	37	96	67	7	8	215
		% within Education	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	17,2%	44,7%	31,2%	3,3%	3,7%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20,047[a]	12	,066
Likelihood Ratio	23,205	12	,026
Linear-by-Linear Association	4,587	1	,032
N of Valid Cases	215		

a. 9 cells (45,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,59.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,305	,066
	Cramer's V	,176	,066
N of Valid Cases		215	

Travel party composition

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	alone	39	18,1	18,1	18,1
	with a partner	80	37,2	37,2	55,3
	with friends/ relatives	80	37,2	37,2	92,6
	with school class	7	3,3	3,3	95,8
	with colleagues	5	2,3	2,3	98,1
	with an organized group	4	1,9	1,9	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Reason for travelling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	visiting friends and relatives	42	19,5	19,5	19,5
	sightseeing/ cultural purpose	148	68,8	68,8	88,4
	shopping	8	3,7	3,7	92,1
	business purpose	17	7,9	7,9	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Reason for travelling in relation to Gender Crosstabulation

			Gender		
			male	female	Total
reason_for_travelling	visiting friends and relatives	Count	13	29	42
		% within Gender	17,3%	20,7%	19,5%
		% of Total	6,0%	13,5%	19,5%
	sightseeing/ cultural purpose	Count	55	93	148
		% within Gender	73,3%	66,4%	68,8%
		% of Total	25,6%	43,3%	68,8%
	shopping	Count	2	6	8
		% within Gender	2,7%	4,3%	3,7%
		% of Total	,9%	2,8%	3,7%
	business purpose	Count	5	12	17
		% within Gender	6,7%	8,6%	7,9%
		% of Total	2,3%	5,6%	7,9%
Total		Count	75	140	215
		% within Gender	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	34,9%	65,1%	100,0%

Reason for travelling in relation to city trips Crosstabulation

			city_trips				Total
			1 city trip	2-4 city trips	5-10 city trips	11 city trips or more	
reason_for_travelling	visiting friends and relatives	Count	2	24	15	1	42
		% within city_trips	6,3%	22,2%	26,3%	5,6%	19,5%
		% of Total	,9%	11,2%	7,0%	,5%	19,5%
	sightseeing/ cultural purpose	Count	24	76	36	12	148
		% within city_trips	75,0%	70,4%	63,2%	66,7%	68,8%
		% of Total	11,2%	35,3%	16,7%	5,6%	68,8%
	shopping	Count	5	3	0	0	8
		% within city_trips	15,6%	2,8%	,0%	,0%	3,7%
		% of Total	2,3%	1,4%	,0%	,0%	3,7%
	business purpose	Count	1	5	6	5	17
		% within city_trips	3,1%	4,6%	10,5%	27,8%	7,9%
		% of Total	,5%	2,3%	2,8%	2,3%	7,9%
Total		Count	32	108	57	18	215
		% within city_trips	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	14,9%	50,2%	26,5%	8,4%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34,037[a]	9	,000
Likelihood Ratio	29,932	9	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,262	1	,261
N of Valid Cases	215		

a. 8 cells (50,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,67.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,398	,000
	Cramer's V	,230	,000
N of Valid Cases		215	

Stayed in which accommodation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	hotel	78	36,3	36,3	36,3
	hostel	46	21,4	21,4	57,7
	rented appartment	14	6,5	6,5	64,2
	couchsurfing	10	4,7	4,7	68,8
	with friends/ relatives	49	22,8	22,8	91,6
	campsite	8	3,7	3,7	95,3
	other	10	4,7	4,7	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Travel budget

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	low budget	109	50,7	50,7	50,7
	medium budget	96	44,7	44,7	95,3
	high budget	10	4,7	4,7	100,0
	Total	215	100,0	100,0	

Trust Tourist Information Office

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	8	3,7	3,8	3,8
	low	20	9,3	9,4	13,1
	neutral	53	24,7	24,9	38,0
	high	79	36,7	37,1	75,1
	very high	53	24,7	24,9	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust friends and relatives

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	3	1,4	1,4	1,4
	low	7	3,3	3,3	4,7
	neutral	23	10,7	10,8	15,5
	high	72	33,5	33,8	49,3
	very high	108	50,2	50,7	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust locals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	1	,5	,5	,5
	low	13	6,0	6,1	6,6
	neutral	38	17,7	17,8	24,4
	high	74	34,4	34,7	59,2
	very high	87	40,5	40,8	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust Apps

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	38	17,7	17,8	17,8
	low	45	20,9	21,1	39,0
	neutral	76	35,3	35,7	74,6
	high	40	18,6	18,8	93,4
	very high	14	6,5	6,6	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust guide book

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	8	3,7	3,8	3,8
	low	17	7,9	8,0	11,7
	neutral	82	38,1	38,5	50,2
	high	87	40,5	40,8	91,1
	very high	19	8,8	8,9	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust Tour Operator

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	43	20,0	20,2	20,2
	low	55	25,6	25,8	46,0
	neutral	62	28,8	29,1	75,1
	high	44	20,5	20,7	95,8
	very high	9	4,2	4,2	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust Weblogs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	17	7,9	8,0	8,0
	low	42	19,5	19,7	27,7
	neutral	92	42,8	43,2	70,9
	high	52	24,2	24,4	95,3
	very high	10	4,7	4,7	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust Newspaper

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	23	10,7	10,8	10,8
	low	52	24,2	24,4	35,2
	neutral	86	40,0	40,4	75,6
	high	45	20,9	21,1	96,7
	very high	7	3,3	3,3	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust Social Media

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	26	12,1	12,2	12,2
	low	45	20,9	21,1	33,3
	neutral	93	43,3	43,7	77,0
	high	43	20,0	20,2	97,2
	very high	6	2,8	2,8	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust TV

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	44	20,5	20,7	20,7
	low	74	34,4	34,7	55,4
	neutral	71	33,0	33,3	88,7
	high	20	9,3	9,4	98,1
	very high	4	1,9	1,9	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust Travel Agency

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	47	21,9	22,1	22,1
	low	55	25,6	25,8	47,9
	neutral	60	27,9	28,2	76,1
	high	40	18,6	18,8	94,8
	very high	11	5,1	5,2	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Trust hotel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	31	14,4	14,6	14,6
	low	46	21,4	21,6	36,2
	neutral	76	35,3	35,7	71,8
	high	48	22,3	22,5	94,4
	very high	12	5,6	5,6	100,0
	Total	213	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,9		
Total		215	100,0		

Used which information source Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$gather_source[a]	friends and relatives	139	21,7%	65,6%
	friends and relatives that are locals	81	12,6%	38,2%
	tourist information office	60	9,3%	28,3%
	locals	72	11,2%	34,0%
	smartphone apps	27	4,2%	12,7%
	guidebook	89	13,9%	42,0%
	tour operator	10	1,6%	4,7%
	webblogs	62	9,7%	29,2%
	newspaper	13	2,0%	6,1%
	social media	35	5,5%	16,5%
	tv	4	,6%	1,9%
	travel agency	11	1,7%	5,2%
	hotel	39	6,1%	18,4%
Total		642	100,0%	302,8%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information source in relation to Gender Crosstabulation

			Gender		Total
			male	female	
$gather_info[a]	tourist information office	Count	26	34	60
		% within Gender	35,1%	24,6%	
		% of Total	12,3%	16,0%	28,3%
	friends and relatives	Count	53	86	139
		% within Gender	71,6%	62,3%	
		% of Total	25,0%	40,6%	65,6%
	friends and relatives that are locals	Count	28	53	81
		% within Gender	37,8%	38,4%	
		% of Total	13,2%	25,0%	38,2%
	locals	Count	25	47	72
		% within Gender	33,8%	34,1%	
		% of Total	11,8%	22,2%	34,0%

	smartphone apps	Count	14	13	27
		% within Gender	18,9%	9,4%	
		% of Total	6,6%	6,1%	12,7%
	guidebook	Count	28	61	89
		% within Gender	37,8%	44,2%	
		% of Total	13,2%	28,8%	42,0%
	tour operator	Count	4	6	10
		% within Gender	5,4%	4,3%	
		% of Total	1,9%	2,8%	4,7%
	webblogs	Count	15	47	62
		% within Gender	20,3%	34,1%	
		% of Total	7,1%	22,2%	29,2%
	newspaper	Count	5	8	13
		% within Gender	6,8%	5,8%	
		% of Total	2,4%	3,8%	6,1%
	social media	Count	19	16	35
		% within Gender	25,7%	11,6%	
		% of Total	9,0%	7,5%	16,5%
	tv	Count	3	1	4
		% within Gender	4,1%	,7%	
		% of Total	1,4%	,5%	1,9%
	travel agency	Count	4	7	11
		% within Gender	5,4%	5,1%	
		% of Total	1,9%	3,3%	5,2%
	hotel	Count	17	22	39
		% within Gender	23,0%	15,9%	
		% of Total	8,0%	10,4%	18,4%
Total		Count	74	138	212
		% of Total	34,9%	65,1%	100,0%

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Importance to know about events

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	5	2,3	2,4	2,4
	unimportant	23	10,7	11,0	13,3
	neutral	44	20,5	21,0	34,3
	important	97	45,1	46,2	80,5
	very important	41	19,1	19,5	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance to know about highlights

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	5	2,3	2,4	2,4
	unimportant	7	3,3	3,3	5,7
	neutral	19	8,8	9,0	14,8
	important	89	41,4	42,4	57,1
	very important	90	41,9	42,9	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance to find the best deal

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	9	4,2	4,3	4,3
	unimportant	21	9,8	10,0	14,3
	neutral	58	27,0	27,6	41,9
	important	73	34,0	34,8	76,7
	very important	49	22,8	23,3	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance of finding the best deal in relation to age Crosstabulation

			year			Total
			1942-1961	1962-1981	1982-1993	
important_deal	very unimportant	Count	0	2	7	9
		% within year	,0%	3,6%	4,8%	4,3%
		% of Total	,0%	1,0%	3,3%	4,3%
	unimportant	Count	5	4	12	21
		% within year	55,6%	7,1%	8,3%	10,0%
		% of Total	2,4%	1,9%	5,7%	10,0%
	neutral	Count	3	14	41	58
		% within year	33,3%	25,0%	28,3%	27,6%
		% of Total	1,4%	6,7%	19,5%	27,6%
	important	Count	1	20	52	73
		% within year	11,1%	35,7%	35,9%	34,8%
		% of Total	,5%	9,5%	24,8%	34,8%
	very important	Count	0	16	33	49
		% within year	,0%	28,6%	22,8%	23,3%
		% of Total	,0%	7,6%	15,7%	23,3%
Total		Count	9	56	145	210
		% within year	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	4,3%	26,7%	69,0%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24,678[a]	8	,002
Likelihood Ratio	17,993	8	,021
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,442	1	,230
N of Valid Cases	210		

a. 6 cells (40,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,39.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,343	,002
	Cramer's V	,242	,002
N of Valid Cases		210	

Importance to find the best info

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	2	,9	1,0	1,0
	unimportant	17	7,9	8,1	9,0
	neutral	57	26,5	27,1	36,2
	important	93	43,3	44,3	80,5
	very important	41	19,1	19,5	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance to find original places

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	7	3,3	3,3	3,3
	unimportant	14	6,5	6,7	10,0
	neutral	50	23,3	23,8	33,8
	important	73	34,0	34,8	68,6
	very important	66	30,7	31,4	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance to learn about local culture

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	3	1,4	1,4	1,4
	unimportant	13	6,0	6,2	7,6
	neutral	35	16,3	16,7	24,3
	important	79	36,7	37,6	61,9
	very important	80	37,2	38,1	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance to learn about the local daily life

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	2	,9	1,0	1,0
	unimportant	18	8,4	8,6	9,5
	neutral	66	30,7	31,4	41,0
	important	80	37,2	38,1	79,0
	very important	44	20,5	21,0	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance to show to be konwledgeable

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	30	14,0	14,3	14,3
	unimportant	64	29,8	30,5	44,8
	neutral	71	33,0	33,8	78,6
	important	36	16,7	17,1	95,7
	very important	9	4,2	4,3	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Importance to indicate to be an active traveller

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	40	18,6	19,0	19,0
	unimportant	61	28,4	29,0	48,1
	neutral	67	31,2	31,9	80,0
	important	32	14,9	15,2	95,2
	very important	10	4,7	4,8	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Influences on the decision

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	travel literature or advertising material	24	11,2	11,4	11,4
	opinion of friends and relatives	68	31,6	32,4	43,8
	own socio-economic situation	55	25,6	26,2	70,0
	previous travel experience	33	15,3	15,7	85,7
	limit of time	16	7,4	7,6	93,3
	other	14	6,5	6,7	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

influences in relation to gender Crosstabulation

			Gender		Total
			male	female	
influences	travel literature or advertising material	Count	8	16	24
		% within Gender	11,0%	11,7%	11,4%
		% of Total	3,8%	7,6%	11,4%
	opinion of friends and relatives	Count	21	47	68
		% within Gender	28,8%	34,3%	32,4%
		% of Total	10,0%	22,4%	32,4%
	own socio-economic situation	Count	23	32	55
		% within Gender	31,5%	23,4%	26,2%
		% of Total	11,0%	15,2%	26,2%
	previous travel experience	Count	10	23	33
		% within Gender	13,7%	16,8%	15,7%
		% of Total	4,8%	11,0%	15,7%
	limit of time	Count	6	10	16
		% within Gender	8,2%	7,3%	7,6%
		% of Total	2,9%	4,8%	7,6%
	other	Count	5	9	14
		% within Gender	6,8%	6,6%	6,7%
		% of Total	2,4%	4,3%	6,7%
Total		Count	73	137	210
		% within Gender	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	34,8%	65,2%	100,0%

Information about destination Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$destination_when[a]	destionation before	191	65,6%	91,0%
	destination during	78	26,8%	37,1%
	destination after	17	5,8%	8,1%
	destination not	5	1,7%	2,4%
Total		291	100,0%	138,6%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about accommodation Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$accommodation_when[a]	accommodation before	189	76,2%	90,0%
	accommodation during	48	19,4%	22,9%
	accommodation after	3	1,2%	1,4%
	accommodation not	8	3,2%	3,8%
Total		248	100,0%	118,1%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about attractions Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$attractions_when[a]	attractions before	122	41,8%	58,1%
	attractions during	151	51,7%	71,9%
	attractions after	13	4,5%	6,2%
	attractions no	6	2,1%	2,9%
Total		292	100,0%	139,0%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about transportation Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$transportation_when[a]	transportation before	115	42,4%	54,8%
	transportation during	147	54,2%	70,0%
	transportation after	1	,4%	,5%
	transportation not	8	3,0%	3,8%
Total		271	100,0%	129,0%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about gastronomy Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$gastronomy_when[a]	gastronomy before	44	18,0%	21,0%
	gastronoy during	168	68,9%	80,0%
	gastronomy after	5	2,0%	2,4%
	gastronomy not	27	11,1%	12,9%
Total		244	100,0%	116,2%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about gastronomy when in relation to gender Crosstabulation

			Gender		Total
			male	female	
$gastronomy_when[a]	gastronomy before	Count	12	32	44
		% within Gender	16,4%	23,4%	
		% of Total	5,7%	15,2%	21,0%
	gastronoy during	Count	58	110	168
		% within Gender	79,5%	80,3%	
		% of Total	27,6%	52,4%	80,0%
	gastronomy after	Count	1	4	5
		% within Gender	1,4%	2,9%	
		% of Total	,5%	1,9%	2,4%
	gastronomy not	Count	11	16	27
		% within Gender	15,1%	11,7%	
		% of Total	5,2%	7,6%	12,9%
Total		Count	73	137	210
		% of Total	34,8%	65,2%	100,0%

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about events Frequencies

		Responses N	Responses Percent	Percent of Cases
$events_when[a]	events before	94	34,7%	44,8%
	events during	134	49,4%	63,8%
	events after	11	4,1%	5,2%
	events not	32	11,8%	15,2%
Total		271	100,0%	129,0%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about lifestyle Frequencies

		Responses N	Responses Percent	Percent of Cases
$lifestyle_when[a]	lifestyle before	55	20,9%	26,2%
	lifestyle during	118	44,9%	56,2%
	lifestyle after	25	9,5%	11,9%
	lifestyle not	65	24,7%	31,0%
Total		263	100,0%	125,2%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Information about lifestyle when in relation to gender Crosstabulation

			Gender		Total
			male	female	
$lifestyle_when[a]	lifestyle before	Count	12	43	55
		% within Gender	16,4%	31,4%	
		% of Total	5,7%	20,5%	26,2%
	lifestyle during	Count	41	77	118
		% within Gender	56,2%	56,2%	
		% of Total	19,5%	36,7%	56,2%
	lifestyle after	Count	7	18	25
		% within Gender	9,6%	13,1%	
		% of Total	3,3%	8,6%	11,9%
	lifestyle not	Count	28	37	65
		% within Gender	38,4%	27,0%	
		% of Total	13,3%	17,6%	31,0%
Total		Count	73	137	210
		% of Total	34,8%	65,2%	100,0%

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Used local travel information before

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	201	93,5	95,7	95,7
	no. why not?	9	4,2	4,3	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Use local travel information in the future

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	207	96,3	98,6	98,6
	no. why not?	3	1,4	1,4	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Local travel information type Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$lti_gather[a]	lti_accommodation	68	11,1%	32,4%
	lti_transportation	133	21,6%	63,3%
	lti_activities	155	25,2%	73,8%
	lti_lifestyle	104	16,9%	49,5%
	lti_gastronomy	150	24,4%	71,4%
	lti_none	5	,8%	2,4%
Total		615	100,0%	292,9%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Local travel information sources Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
$lti_source[a]	local	155	32,3%	73,8%
	socialmedia	61	12,7%	29,0%
	guidebook	91	19,0%	43,3%
	travelforum	63	13,1%	30,0%
	blog	80	16,7%	38,1%
	tv	2	,4%	1,0%
	app	28	5,8%	13,3%
Total		480	100,0%	228,6%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Local travel sources in relation to gender Crosstabulation

			Gender		Total
			male	female	
$local_travel_sources[a]	local	Count	53	102	155
		% within Gender	72,6%	74,5%	
		% of Total	25,2%	48,6%	73,8%
	socialmedia	Count	24	37	61
		% within Gender	32,9%	27,0%	
		% of Total	11,4%	17,6%	29,0%
	guidebook	Count	30	61	91
		% within Gender	41,1%	44,5%	
		% of Total	14,3%	29,0%	43,3%
	travelforum	Count	17	46	63
		% within Gender	23,3%	33,6%	
		% of Total	8,1%	21,9%	30,0%
	blog	Count	17	63	80
		% within Gender	23,3%	46,0%	
		% of Total	8,1%	30,0%	38,1%
	tv	Count	0	2	2
		% within Gender	,0%	1,5%	
		% of Total	,0%	1,0%	1,0%
	app	Count	14	14	28
		% within Gender	19,2%	10,2%	
		% of Total	6,7%	6,7%	13,3%
Total		Count	73	137	210
		% of Total	34,8%	65,2%	100,0%

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Ease to find local travel information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very easy	32	14,9	15,2	15,2
	easy	135	62,8	64,3	79,5
	difficult	42	19,5	20,0	99,5
	very difficult	1	,5	,5	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Ease to find local travel information in relation to gender Crosstabulation

			Gender		Total
			male	female	
ease_lti	very easy	Count	15	17	32
		% within Gender	20,5%	12,4%	15,2%
		% of Total	7,1%	8,1%	15,2%
	easy	Count	48	87	135
		% within Gender	65,8%	63,5%	64,3%
		% of Total	22,9%	41,4%	64,3%
	difficult	Count	10	32	42
		% within Gender	13,7%	23,4%	20,0%
		% of Total	4,8%	15,2%	20,0%
	very difficult	Count	0	1	1
		% within Gender	,0%	,7%	,5%
		% of Total	,0%	,5%	,5%
Total		Count	73	137	210
		% within Gender	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	34,8%	65,2%	100,0%

elements_trustworthiness

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	10	4,7	4,8	4,8
	unimportant	2	,9	1,0	5,7
	neutral	27	12,6	12,9	18,6
	important	107	49,8	51,0	69,5
	very important	64	29,8	30,5	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Elements trustworthiness in relation to reason for travelling Crosstabulation

			reason_for_travelling				
			visiting friends and relatives	sightseeing/ cultural purpose	shopping	business purpose	Total
elements_trustworthiness	very unimportant	Count	3	5	0	2	10
		% within reason_for_travelling	7,5%	3,4%	,0%	11,8%	4,8%
		% of Total	1,4%	2,4%	,0%	1,0%	4,8%
	unimportant	Count	0	1	1	0	2
		% within reason_for_travelling	,0%	,7%	12,5%	,0%	1,0%
		% of Total	,0%	,5%	,5%	,0%	1,0%
	neutral	Count	3	17	3	4	27
		% within reason_for_travelling	7,5%	11,7%	37,5%	23,5%	12,9%
		% of Total	1,4%	8,1%	1,4%	1,9%	12,9%
	important	Count	19	82	2	4	107
		% within reason_for_travelling	47,5%	56,6%	25,0%	23,5%	51,0%
		% of Total	9,0%	39,0%	1,0%	1,9%	51,0%
	very important	Count	15	40	2	7	64
		% within reason_for_travelling	37,5%	27,6%	25,0%	41,2%	30,5%
		% of Total	7,1%	19,0%	1,0%	3,3%	30,5%
Total		Count	40	145	8	17	210
		% within reason_for_travelling	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	19,0%	69,0%	3,8%	8,1%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27,773[a]	12	,006
Likelihood Ratio	19,582	12	,075
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,380	1	,240
N of Valid Cases	210		

a. 11 cells (55,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,08.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,364	,006
	Cramer's V	,210	,006
N of Valid Cases		210	

elements_accuracy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	8	3,7	3,8	3,8
	unimportant	10	4,7	4,8	8,6
	neutral	44	20,5	21,0	29,5
	important	104	48,4	49,5	79,0
	very important	44	20,5	21,0	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

elements_honesty

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	10	4,7	4,8	4,8
	unimportant	3	1,4	1,4	6,2
	neutral	27	12,6	12,9	19,0
	important	99	46,0	47,1	66,2
	very important	71	33,0	33,8	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

elements_objectivity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very unimportant	8	3,7	3,8	3,8
	unimportant	26	12,1	12,4	16,2
	neutral	67	31,2	31,9	48,1
	important	75	34,9	35,7	83,8
	very important	34	15,8	16,2	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Statement about the concern of different preferences

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	10	4,7	4,8	4,8
	disagree	45	20,9	21,4	26,2
	neutral	81	37,7	38,6	64,8
	agree	59	27,4	28,1	92,9
	strongly agree	15	7,0	7,1	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Statement about background information of the local

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	15	7,0	7,1	7,1
	disagree	52	24,2	24,8	31,9
	neutral	57	26,5	27,1	59,0
	agree	73	34,0	34,8	93,8
	strongly agree	13	6,0	6,2	100,0
	Total	210	97,7	100,0	
Missing	System	5	2,3		
Total		215	100,0		

Answers to open question in Questionnaire

Knowledge

they know their environment better than anyone else...

better ways, short cuts, and time saving tips

Easy, saves time, best source of information

experiences in their counowtry, know how

expert local knowledge

good information

Know how to get around and where is good to eat

Locals usually know good places to visit, transport info, etc.

often can give information that you can't get elsewhere

The assumption that they know the best about their city.

The fact that they have first-hand information about what's going on

The information is normally correct and if you need to get somewhere fast they can normally give tips and short cuts to places.

Their knowledge

their own experience

Their point of view

They are interesting to talk to and they have most information.

They give me more information

They have knowledge not locals dont have.

They have the best information

They kn0ow the destination

they know best

They know best

They know best their city, culture, environement and are so able to give the most updated information.

They know best, and they want to represent their country/their religion.

They know better about the city than I do.

They know more than anyone else who doesn't live there.

they know the city

They know the city best

They know the city better than anyone, because they live there

They know the destination the best.

They know the destionation

they know the place

They know the place better than any other place

They know their place best

they know there place most

They live in that specific city, so they have more experience. However, their experience might be biased, so it is important to have several sources.

they should know best

They would know best because they live there.

They're able to give you special advices to travel to.

Where can I go, what can I visit, what it's important...
Due to the fact that locals really live in that place, I think that they must have really good recommendations.
Locals know their city best

Insider tips

insider knowledge, tips about events
Insider tips
insiders´ tips
It's from the first hand, given by a person who lives in a city
They know all the things about the city and the beautiful places one would not find otherwise.
They know insider tips or the best ways to get to places
They know more about their country than travel agents from anotherr country. They can give you in-depth information about activities, local life, etc
they know the best places to be. The less usual
They know the city best and have insider information.
They know the culture and can tell about daily life. You get to know more than tourist attractions.
They know the good spots and the highlights which not everyone knows. They are mostly up to date.
They know their way around, great inside knowledge
They recommend spots that are popular with locals if asked. This normally translates to the traveller finding the best spot.
Things they tell me must be typical for the place.

Different source/ different information

It's different than what most of the travel information/books tells you
Know places not in a book.
they know places and many things that aren't in guide books
They know places that tourist information does not know.
Diversity of information, finding spots that I can't find in guidebooks etc.
YOU DISCOVER PLACES THAT YOU NOT FIND IN BOOKS
you will get information that the tv or guide book haven't mentioned.

Noncommercial tips

they are not commercial, therefore closer to the truth
They are not influenced by other factors such as commissions and are more knowledgeable.
They are real and not commercial
They don't fall into the tourist traps
They know best what is going on and will not recommend anything they do not like themselves just to make money
they know best, overall not a commercial thought behind it
they know what they are talking about. they are independent.
they're more 'authentic' and not "bought", they're not paid to give good reviews
They've experienced themselves and they have nothing to profit by giving dishonest advice
We often find the same informations from differents kinds of books before travel, especially when going to other country

No commercial interest so better results

Up-to-date

always up to date and they know the best places to eat and the best spots

They are always up to date

those are up to date and usually true

Relevance, up to date.

up to date info

up to date, stuff not in books

up-to-date // not the tourist traps

They have up to date information and can suggest places not mentioned in travel guides

Affordable/ tourist traps

Because I know that those places are their part of the everyday life of the locals, which assures some kind of quality and affordability (which is important when you travel on a low budget). The places that locals use are not so-called "tourist-traps."

Being able not to fall into tourist traps and knowing the lifestyle of locals

cheaper places, more interesting

i hate turist traps

no tourist traps, the real thing!

Helpful

are helpfull to get to know the city

Because help to visit the city

Reliable/ accurate

Accurate, current, personal, already 'tested' tips are the best.

because they are reliable

In theory it should be more reliable than a book written by someone who was just traveling there.

It's more reliable, because i believe that the locals don't have any profit on supporting their country.

reliable

reliable source

reliable

the accuracy

They are accurate

tips from locals are the most reliable and often the most useful

valid.   interesting places

Is relevant because is more accurate, especially relevant places, but still in some respects it is best to research for yourself (restaurats, for example).

Trustworthy/ honest

it's true!

it's trustworthy

Their honesty

Thrustworthiness
trustable
trustfull
trustworthy

Hidden spots/ less tourists
a lot of time off the beaten path information
because you get the feeling you know the city more than a tourist
Better food, less tourists
Enables you to get under the skin of a place rather than follow the tourist masses
get off the beaten track
Getting to know insider tips from locals is great to explore destinations off the beaten track
getting to know the destination from a different point of view
Hidden places but the information is hard to find
hidden treasures
information about places off-the-beaten track.
Insider tips. Best information. Hidden spots
It is better to have local, honest information about places that are less touristy than relying on guide books alone and having to share your holiday with hundreds of other tourists!
new and unknown places that nobody knows about
Opportunity to discover places / spots which are not known yet as touristical and thus can be very interesting and pleasant to visit.
rare stuff is much more interesting than touristy stuff
their enthusiasm about certain places (that makes you believe it's really worth it) and that it's not packed with a lot of tourists what makes the vibe nicer of a certain place
they go off the beaten track
They help to know the real city, those parts of it where turists don't easily go cause they are not advertised.
Through them you have the possibility to get to know a city from the gives perspective of a local. Ot at least you can try it. And you get to know about nice, little, mostly hidden shops, cafes, places that you probably wouldn´t have found yourself.
you are able to find out about unique places within a city that are not that touristy You can experience the local life yourself

Authentic/ culture
Authenticity, finding spots that tourist normally don't find.
Authentic information, can see more interesting things and have good experiences
authenticity
authenticity actuality compatibility with my travel interests, my budget and the time I have for visiting a place
authenticity, validity
because they can show the real city
Because they live their and I always want to experience the local life.
because they really know about it, they know the off track places and things to do. the real life of the city.
Culture
Having an authentic, non-commercial experience.

In the end it helps you know the culture better
It gives you information about authenticity of places and people.
It is authentic and local inhabitants know their city best
It is told by those who know more about a location. It is more real. it gives you the feeling not to be a tourist, but to be part of the local community in a way. 'experience the real city'
It's a great chance to get to know local lifestyle and culture by using up-to-date insider's tips
it's more authentic
It's more genuine. And I think it's an important part of the trip: to have contact with the locals
lifestyle - get to know the culture
more authentic and updated. not related/biased by business interests.
real experience
See local places
the possibility to see how the others actually live
their actuality, insight
They convey the local aspect and spirit of the place.
To gain an insight into how people live and what they do.
To see the backstage of a destination
To understand the lifestyle
They know their own culture best and therefore can represent authentic culture
It gives you the chance to see the real city, instead of the one that is designed for tourtis
Interested about the country I'm in and want to experience more and pass on information to others

Other reason
Depends where I am going to and the reason
I need to be able to relate to the person and vica versa
if its good
interesting
it's the best source of info
mostly great;)
never used them before
No idea what to write here.
Not being disappointed by average experiences or dinners.
not important
not too important
safe journey
The pleasure the locals had with participating on an event in the city.
Trip becomes more enjoyable
they are current

Original
original tips
originality
originality, 'hidden' ti
see what's original there, not only touristic things

Unique

Unique tips and places you wouldn't find in a Guide Book.

Unique, special places, not visited by many other tourists. Local culture and insider tips by locals

Personal

It's up to date comparing to guidebooks and I can relate to the written text, which is more personal

Its personal and I believe you can have an idea when you talk to locals if they would like things which are also of my interest.usually they know the most interesting places or special places, which gives the city the character it has

personal experience

Personal touch and accurate knowledge

Interview sample

1. Which position do you attain at Bern Tourismus and for how long have you been working for Bern Tourismus?
2. What kind of information are tourists mostly looking/ asking for?
3. At which stage do they ask for what kind of information? (before, during or after their visit)
4. Where do the travellers look for the information, which channels do they use to gather information?
5. Are there any changes in the information use of travellers regarding the type of information and the channel over the course of the last 5 years?
6. Are you expecting any other changes within the next coming years?
7. Have you heard about local travel and local travel information? Do tourists in Bern ask about it? (Definition local travel: Tips and information offered by locals)
8. What is your opinion about this market; is it growing?
9. Do you see a potential in this market/ trend? Also for Bern?
10. What are you doing about this trend?
11. Do you involve in any way locals in the tourism business in Bern? If yes, in what way?

12. Do you work with any partners/ organizations from the field of local travel?
13. Would you consider working with organizations from the field of local travel in the future? In what way?

Transcribed Interviews

Decision-making and when
Information channels
Type of information
Social media
Contact with tourists
Local information, authentic experiences
Difficulties
Examples they do
Further change in type and channel
Work with local companies/ organizations

Online director – The Official Event and Tourism Organisation for the Capital Region of Denmark, Copenhagen www.visitcopenhagen.com

If you could tell me first of all again your position, you're online direct, that's correct, right?

Yes, yes!

Ok. And since when do you work for the tourism office in Copenhagen?

You mean for how long?

Yes

6,5 years.

Ah ok, that's great, ok.

Quite some time.

Yes, indeed. So first I would like to know what exactly the tourists usually ask for and what kind of information they want to know.

Well, it really depends whether they are at home, planning their trip or if they are already here. And, when they are at home, when they are researching on the website or on social media, they mainly ask for the main attractions. Like they want to know what's the major sites and the attractions in the city and then they ask what's going on, like if there are any events going on. We can see that from our statistics on our website. You know what they are searching for and what pages they are visiting. And then they ask about practical information, like transport, like how to get from the airport to the hotel you know like how much is the train ticket or the bus ticket. So costs, like practical information.

Yeah, ok and that's mainly before, like when they plan their trip?

Yes yes. When they are here, I know from my colleagues from the tourist information, they want to go on sightseeing tours, so that they ask a lot about tours. Like guided tours, and then they ask a lot about where to eat, like everybody's gonna eat so they ask about restaurants, bars and also about what's going on in the city, if there are any concerts or exhibitions.

Ok, and do, are there also tourists asking after their visit, like I've been there, what exactly was that? Or something like this, like after travel.

Oehm, no, not really. I mean, you get some people who go easily book a hotel or bed and breakfast through our website and come back and review but..we ask them to that so some of them will give reviews and we see sometimes, we use the social website flickr and so some will upload their fotos to flickr and you know when they come home and then we you know what sort of fotographs were taken and what they did in Copenhagen. But it's actually something we want to practice more, you know to keep in contact with the tourists. It doesn't really happen that much now. I think they might go to, maybe they go to tripadvisor. Places like that. Like regional sites.

Yeah, yeah true. And, which channels do your tourists usually use. Now you mentioned the website…

We have a website, we have a mobile app for android and iphone and then we have, use facebook a lot. And we have twitter and youtube and flickr. So those four are the like the main, the four major social platforms that we're using. And then at the moment we're trying out instagram, the photosharing page. So fairly new we're only doing it for a couple of months. Facebook is by far the biggest one. Actually when tourists have been to Copenhagen, when they come home they sign up for Copenhagen on facebook for to keep in touch but they are not ask us anything they only want to stay in touch with Copenhagen.

That's also quite a good feedback to see if they are interested.

They are very good ambassadors for you know spreading the word spreading information about, where you can eat in Copenhagen.

Have you seen over the last 5 years any specific changes in the information use or in the type of information the travellers use or the channel.

I mean the channels have definitely changed. We've been doing facebook since 2008 and the others like twitter and flickr have come later. So the social media has definitely changed the way we look at what channels we're using. I think five years ago we only used that website that was the main channel we were concentrating on. But now there's so many, there's tripadvisor as well which we're quite active on. I think the tourists are spreading through a lot of other channels and you know at the destination office we need to be where the tourists are so the channels have definitely changed a lot. I think the type of information, I don't think that's changed that much. I think they're more critical and maybe, yeah maybe, they want, there's currently, that they want more local information, they want authentic experiences, so they want to know where the locals go. We get that question a lot. So, they don't want to go to some tourist restaurant. They want to know where we go to eat, so what do you recommend. So they like recommendations from local Copenhageners. I think we all do once we travel. So I think maybe that has changed a little bit. So they are looking for more authentic local information.

And are you able to give these information to tourists? Are you able to share these information with the tourists?

Yes, yes, definitely.

So, yes exactly, I was going to ask that question about the local information. If tourists ask for it and you said tourists actually come a lot and ask for this and also probably insider tips and hidden spots and you said you realize an interest in this market, a growing interest, indeed. In this case do you also work with partners, actually that work in this kind of area, in this travel market?

We work with Tripadvissor, travel, I don't know if you know it. But they have a travel forum, with they have their so called destination experts which are people from in our case Copenhagen or people who travel to Copenhagen a lot and they are those active on Tripadisor, so they become destination experts. And we also feel we are destination experts, so we use Tripadvisor a lot and we even have it incorporated on our website. As well as active in the forum, so asking or replying to questions that ask the tourists in the forum. And we do corporate with some local websites and organizations here in Copenhagen. There is a company called downtown which is, they are more like, you know, like they do GPOs for people every day, for locals. But they also have like a blogging section, so they ask for Copenhageners to blog on their website so with that corporation with them we actually use some of their blogs on our website. But there wasn't actually a great success, not that people didn't read it but it was very hard to keep the bloggers motivated. So the information that they could provide wasn't very good. So, what we're doing right now is we're doing every month we interview with the local Copenhagener to a guide to their city. And we're trying to find different types of people, so we find like young people, older people, people with kids, male and female, different age ranges and stuff like that. So that' what we're doing at the moment, as well as we're doing a celebrity Copenhagen. So we do interviews with famous Copenhageners to guide the tourists through their city.

And they tell something about their own interests, about their own experiences?

They tell you know, very specific what places they go to, what attractions they like and what events they might like, what restaurants they eat at what shops they buy their dress and shoes and places like that. So it's not just an interview, an article about Copenhagen in general, but it's very specific, so it's very specific places, go to this shop, go to that restaurant, go to that bar, have that drink. We try to keep it very quick so tourists can actually go to this place and see.

Yeah ok, that sounds great, a good idea. So, that's actually a lot you do about this trend, that's called local, tourists interested in local people, in local, hidden ideas, in spots. Would you, do you think there's going to be another huge change or if this market is growing that there's more potential to do?

Yeah I think, I don't know if it's growing more, I think it's really big as it is now and what really makes you decide where to go on holiday or a city break, is reviews, I think they're really big in that, people are very much influenced by reviews. And not just like it can be where your friends have been or colleagues or family members or someone you know professionally, you know, but it's also places that people will recommend to you oh I was here, that was really good, people were very nice, there were some cool things to see. I think we're very much influenced by that and we choose to which destination to go to so it could be at home where everybody could also be. So, we go on TripAdvisor and we read like 5 to 10 good reviews of a hotel a restaurant or even a destination and I think that will, that influences us to decide on where to go. So, I think that's growing, Tourist organizations, you know everyone in the tourism industry is very dependent on getting good reviews. You know, so again, that's what determines whether people will come or not.

Coordinator of the marketing department – Genève Tourisme & Congres
www.geneve-tourisme.ch

First of all, if you could tell me again your position at Geneva Tourism board?

I'm coordinator and I'm working in the marketing department of Geneva tourism.

And for how long have you worked there?

Now for 3,5 years.

And I would first like to know, according to your experiences, what do tourists usually ask for, what kind of information do they want to know?

Ok, here in Geneva, most of the visitors are coming to the welcome and information desk at Geneva tourism, what we call excursionist, it's people who stay only a few hours in Geneva. So, what they ask the main question is what can I do during for 2 or 3 hours. And then, we have, we can propose them our top 10, let's say like that, point of interests and which is generic for everyone but what we just developed and we launched it last week is specific or segmented tool. We elaborated a list of Geneva amazing experiences, which are proposed to our visitors by segmented markets. So, what does that mean? We have developed 6 different printed documents, which are called Geneva pocket maps and in each type of map we have specific suggestions oriented by market. So, our 6 Geneva pocket map are segmented for the Arabic market, the Chinese market, the US and UK market, the Russian market and we have also a map for Swiss-German-people and the local people. So, what we have decided to propose to our visitor is that kind of segmented document with the top 10s and the Geneva amazing experiences, which is different from one map to the other.

Can you say like in general what is the main difference between these different markets, between these different maps?

Well, the habits, what every market has a style of travelling let's say, or expectations. They have different expectations depending on their cultural background but also on the level of knowledge of the city. For example, Chinese people, for most of them it's their first travel to Switzerland and therefore to Geneva. So, the Chinese Geneva pocket map is presenting Geneva really on the general, well it's not really, the good term, but on the basic one, but it's really what you should see in Geneva when you absolutely don't know the city. Another example, the Russian map, more Russian people know the destination, at least the ones that come to Geneva and here we oriented our information more on excellence, on the excellent service provided in Geneva.

And how did you, did you do a survey about the different markets or how did you know which market is interested in which information?

Well, we have our internal knowledge, let's say like that. We have, there are collaborators who are specifically dedicated to promoting Geneva on the foreign market, they go and meet tourist professionals all around the world, so we have some profile market. Let's say like that. But we also contacted people from the Hotels in Geneva, the concierge; they usually know very well what this type of tourist likes or the other one likes and what they expect. So, and we also contacted our guide.

And if the tourist comes to ask for the information, in general, do they usually ask before they come to Geneva, so when they plan their trip or when they are already in Geneva?

Well, here at the welcome and information desk, we receive some e-mails or even some letters, but yes, we receive some requests on information, on publications. But I think now with the website, tourists are more aware of what's going on with the websites.

So, you think most of the tourists use the website instead of contacting the tourist office?

I guess more and more. Here in Geneva, we are completely revisiting our website. We will have a new one by beginning of fall and it's getting a very important communication tool, that's for sure, especially for tourist issues.

What will be one of the major improvements will be the online selling.

So, like online booking?

Yes, online bookings, for hotels and the Geneva pass, which is a city card that will be possible to buy through the website. There are lots of new opportunities.

And do you also make use of channels for the information like social media?

Yes, that will be. We already have our pages on Facebook and twitter. But with the new website there will be a complete new strategy, which will be a connection between the website and social networks.

And you feel that tourists are using these social media?

Well, for the moment ours is only in French. So, the comments we receive and the exchanges we have are more oriented with local people, because it's in French and of course most of our visitors are non-French speaking people. So, for the moment it's rather, let's say not very known.

And that will also change when the new website is launched?

Yes! That's for sure! We will develop a complete interconnected strategy.

And do you also get tourists asking after their trip or giving feedback or some kind of communication after their travel?

I don't think so, no not for the moment. But with the new website, we will have a section I mean people will be able to leave messages. For the moment you can send specific e-mails, some people are doing it. But they don't leave messages regarding the destination, only on specific points. But with the new websites, it will be more user-friendly to leave a message and they will be able to say they like or they don't like and afterwards we will have a top 10 of what visitors like and didn't like.

And have you seen within the last 5 years a big change of the information use, so of the sources the tourists use and the type they ask for?

Well, I would say that we. Most of the people here already in Geneva, it's people who are here for a few hours. At least the ones that come to the welcome and information desk. Not all the visitors are coming to the information desk. As we have a lot of, not VIP but people with a lot of money they go to the 5 star hostels and this kind of things and most of them don't come to the tourist office. So, otherwise people who are coming only for a few hours. What they ask is what can I do in a 2 or 3 hours? That question I don't think has changed a lot in the last 5 years. But what we now want to propose is this personalized personal information, more oriented on inside information, I give you a good advice. We know that you like to be answered specifically. We really stop giving just general information, you go there and there and there and that's it. We personalized the information and we try to suggest more experiences than just points of interest to visit.

And as you developed this idea, how did you come up with this idea, did you experience that tourists were asking more for these experiences instead of the top 10 basic attractions?

Yes, well it's not only in Geneva, its everywhere, it's a general trend. I think. I'm sure you do too, I do it when I go to a city, I always try to find the 'new' thing or the specific I would love it because it corresponds me. So, it's a general trend and also the development of city break concept is at the source of this kind of new attitude, I would say. You want to feel the city, you want to live the city. You expect specific or personalized type of visit. So, it's why the Geneva pocket map has been elaborated. And here also in Geneva during the summer we have the Geneva tourist angels who are young people about 25 this year, I guess, we started last year and this year they are there again and they answer questions of the tourist but on the street, on the spot and they just walk in the street. Well they are supposed to go to the tourists and ask them if they need anything, well they are not supposed to wait for people to ask them. So, again it's a very personal way of providing information. So, it's the same trend.

And are you expecting any other changes within the next coming years or do you think this trend is growing?

Yes, that's for sure, this trend is growing. You, like I said me or you, I'm sure we have the same reflex and what you try to get when we visit the city. Ok, I visit this incredible city and I found exciting things to do just by myself and nobody has seen it. The exclusivity, I think the visitors are looking for exclusivity and not only in terms of excellent services but also in terms of specific things to live.

And have you heard before about local travel? So I mean what you explained with the Geneva tourist angels, the local travel, so in terms of that locals provide the tourist with information about their own city, that is exactly the concept of the Geneva tourist angels, or do I understand that wrong?

Well, it's kind of, but it's not exactly the same. Because I see what you mean in Paris they have the greeters. The greeters are really, local people, everyone who is interested in receiving, in transmitting information. Here the Geneva tourist angels are young people hired by Geneva tourism and conventions and they are have specific clothes and they work only during the day and they are everywhere in the city. Actually, they do exactly the same kind of services what we do at the tourist office, the information and welcome desk but on the spot. So, they are like professional, tourist, professional information provider. The greeters, they are not professional.

And, do you think it is important that they are professionals that they have the knowledge to pass on to the tourists?

Yes, that's for sure for the tourist angels. They are trained and they are also trained to help to leave a good image of the city with their how do they talk, how do they present, what do they answer, how they are behaving themselves. I think yes, this is very important. When you meet a greeter, it's different because you are not expecting to have a professional in front of you. And the tourist office image is not in, at least not directly linked.

And so when you think about the market of local travel, so information offered by locals? Is there anything like this you do in Geneva or do you include any locals in the business like this?

For the moment not, but I know it's on the way.

So, do you think this will be an important thing to do?

Yes, absolutely! Again, visitors who stay more than 2 hours or even those who stay only for 2 or 3 hours they ask more and more those kind of meetings and not just between, because the greeters or the locals, they will share an experience with them and maybe they will become friends. When you have the Geneva tourist angels or the professionals, at the tourist office, I mean its professional service, so you are not expecting to suddenly meet for or live your life experience, it's different.

So, you don't work with partners or organizations from the field of local travel yet?

Not yet, we are on discussion and we are elaborating a concept, but not yet. It's not implemented yet.

In the pocket map, the list of the suggestions, those Geneva amazing experiences, there are 8 by pocket map we try to have a good balance between cultural bridge, between the target market and Geneva, because here in Geneva, it's an international city. You can find history aspects or cultural aspects or social aspects of almost every country, so what we're trying to share with the user of the map is to show them that here in Geneva, you can find something of your country, of your nationality. So, that's one part of the suggestion and the other part is more what you like to do what the visitor like to do, ok we have a proposal for you. It's a balance between reasons to come to Geneva, because we propose you what you like and those cultural bridges between your country and the market. So, it's really in the way of proposing specific experiences. And yes, you're right the next step is the meeting between locals and the tourists, that's for sure.

The difficulty is to get a sufficient level of professionalism, let's say of welcoming the visitors. Because not everybody can be a greeter and especially when it's a program organized by the tourist office, the image of the tourist office is challenged. So it sounds easy to implement but it isn't. Because if the visitor doesn't get a good experience, then the image will be negative.

Director of Tourism and Professional Activity – Prague Tourism Board
www.praguewelcome.cz

First of all I would like to know if you could tell me again your position at Tourism Prague?

I'm working as director of tourism and professional activity.

And since when?

So, I'm here at Prague tourism since 1998 and in this position since 2008.

If you could tell me first in general, if tourists come to tourists what do they want to know, what kind of information do they want to know?

We can count that all information regarding the tourists which means they have special interest in Prague monuments because Prague is one of the most important cities regarding the history and Prague monuments are very nice so it's the first interest and kind of information.

And if they are informed about the monuments, what would be the next thing they would ask about?

They are interested in restaurants and about culture, possibilities in the city and it depends also on which season we are talking about because some seasons are more like, they would like to know more about culture and during summer season it's more about what's happened in the city and in winter about culture events.

So, the seasons in winter and summer you realize a big difference in what tourists ask for?

Yes!

And at which stage do tourists ask for the information, so when they are still at home and planning their trip or when they are already in Prague?

The both, because we have a very nice website so they can be informed before arriving but we also have in the city 5 information centres, so they are looking for tourist information coming to Prague too. We have one at Prague airport and another one tourist information centre at Prague main railway station we have another one which is in the middle of the city on the most important square in the old town so we have really more, they have more possibility and they have a good opportunity to speak, to ask directly in the city.

And are there are also people that send an e-mail before they come or maybe call?

No, not calling. The first one is the possibility to inform themselves on our website, the second one by e-mail. And a lot of tourists asking here in Prague on our tourist board but very, the interest to come to Prague is very limited.

Do you also make use of social media?

Yes, sometimes.

Which one do you use?

I'm speaking about Facebook of course.

And do you realize that tourists make use of this website?

At the moment, I don't have idea. I don't have the opportunity to have special figures about it but we know that they are using it.

And did you realize a change in the use of information? In the kind, in the type and in the way they ask for it, so through the website or in person? So, you think there is a change that tourists ask for different kind of information than 5 years ago.

Sure, sure. I think that they are, so today or something the first question might be, the interest in location today they all book the accommodation or a lot of them book it of course in internet way and maybe it's not the first interest regarding hotels or different possibilities to be accommodated they have ask a lot of information about activities.

Do you think there is going to be more of a change in this?

Mhm, I don't know. That's a little bit difficult to answer. I'm sure that with the new possibilities or with new technological possibilities, I'm sure that this interest will be a change in the future. But really, I don't know.

Yes, it's difficult to answer. Did you hear about local travel information so information offered by locals?

Sure, yes, we have different activities. We are working together with usage for example. We are working together with some other companies or not companies organizations how to categorize there are some social activities of the inhabitants.

Could you give me one example, for instance about this?

Yes, for example we are cooperating with organism for square, which is the second biggest square in the city and there is the special organism founded by the inhabitants from this part of the metropolis and they are looking to prepare ones a month special event they won't allow cars on the square and they are looking for to prepare some program for kids for adults and cultures etc.

And this you event happens ones a year.

No, ones a month.

And do you see that tourists come to ask for these kinds of information, about these kinds of events.

Yeah, we looking to inform them through our website of course, because we have daily updated information here, so they have the possibility to be good informed before.

And do you see in this trend of involving locals in the tourism, do you see a growing market, a growing interest in this?

I hope so, because I think that's for tourists coming to the city this should be very interesting if they can be in contact with the inhabitants.

So, if you think this is a growing market and you are working with organizations, local organizations, so you also say you want to do this in the future?

I don't know, maybe. We can't really influence this, it is not possible, it should be the inhabitants activity, you know, we can recommend, we cannot organize it.

So, you see that there is a difficulty.

No, I'm speaking that we can't really be here for to influence this activity. We can help but not organize it.

Ok, and you are also trying to communicate these events to the tourists.

Of course, we are doing it.

So, you also work with locals in the tourism business that you include locals. Could you give me one other example for this?

But I did, just now.

Yes, the organization in the square and there are also locals involved.

Yes.

I talked to many other cities and also to tourists to see what the tourists are looking for and if they are interested to get in contact with the locals and I talked to cities what they do about this and if they are interested and that is interesting to see the perspective of the cities and the tourists.

But it's our topic, I mean Prague tourist board has to prepare information and also some brochures, etc.

And you also have these?

Of course, we are communicating with also travel agency and. If you are speaking about travel agents, I don't know. But if you are speaking about local travels in like tourists to Check Republic, we are doing the both. We are working with tourists from all countries but also with tourists coming from the Check Republic.

I was more looking for the tourists coming from somewhere, from all over the world coming to the Check Republic and looking for let's say, hidden spots and to have a local experience so to taste the local food.

Of course they are interested and they are doing it also. They are asking for Czech restaurants, they are asking for Czech special for and they are asking for Czech beer and you have also check souvenirs they are asking for what they can have like souvenir from Prague. It's difficult, imagine you are coming to another country you are also interested for special things for this country.

So, to learn about the country as well. Yes, that is indeed something that tourists look for and in my opinion this is growing that tourists… I was just saying that tourists are more and more interested in learning about the culture and yeah experiencing the local culture.

They would like to have a special experience. I don't see in the last 5 years a changing in this kind of activity. I cannot say that there is a special interest in Czech culture than before, no I can't see a big difference.

And do you see that tourists from different cultures look for different things. So, for example European tourists compared to American tourists or Asian tourists.

I think it depends on how much time they spend. If they are coming with a group they only have 3 hours for example in the city of course it is different, they can't have free time and do what they would like to do. If you are individuals coming to the city of course they have a big interest and it is completely different the experience with this kind of tourists and individuals are different comparing with groups.

I understand, that makes a big difference.

Marketing Account Executive - Riga Tourism Development Bureau
www.liveriga.lv

If you could tell me your Position at Riga Tourism Development Bureau?

I am Marketing Account Executive

And for how long have you worked there?

Since Foundation of the Riga Tourism Development Bureau, which is the autumn of 2009

What kind of information do the tourists usually ask for or look for when they come to Riga?

First of all, according to the data, the data of our tourist information centres, the one category which is the most frequently asked question are practical side. Just getting around the city, transportation fares, and possibilities to buy transport tickets, just for the regular public transport, information about hotels, information about possibilities to get from Riga to other cities, but that is also something that is related to the transportation. So this is the first category. If you give me a second, then I can open a document, where I can see the statistics a bit better .While I am looking you could tell me maybe one more time the topic of your thesis? I remember you wrote me, but…

Yes, well, I am researching the needs and wishes of tourists visiting European cities in terms of information and what they are looking for, what they are interested in and on the other hand I am also asking experts like you to see what the cities offer and how they see the development and what people look for and I am also interested in the market or trend, as some cities see it, of local travel. So, information provision by locals.

So. Ok, the things that I told you first were the practical information that is all together the biggest part, but to see it a little bit separately then these are the data for the year 2011. We usually get the data done monthly about the information and about the interest to get the picture of the whole year. So, the first topic is culture and history. It is divided basically in sight seeing objects and main sightseeing objects and museums. Then all kinds of services, which would be restaurants, shopping, possibilities to buy souvenirs, information about banks mainly it's about money and currency exchange and postal offices. All the information about transport is the third category. So, then the next is information is about Latvia. The whole country, other cities to see, and other main attractions that are not only in Riga, but outside. The next category is excursions, which are both possibilities to book group excursions, when you book a seat for you on a bus it is an organized excursion, it includes as well the sightseeing hop on hop off bus, and also individual excursions that you can also book. Let's say you buy only a guided tour where you can be only you on this tour. Basically it's guide services, that is also included in this. Then the next area is events. That are concerts, exhibitions, theatres, opera and not only what is going on, but also opportunities to buy the tickets, because a lot of people, who come to the tourist information centre they choose to buy the tickets to the event they are interested already there in the tourist information centre. If it is possible, of course. The next topic is accommodation. So, it is also information about different kinds of hotels. A lot of tourist, who come into the tourist information centres, who haven't booked their accommodation yet. They are looking mostly for hostels. A big category of those are the so called backpack travellers. For a break for several days. They don't have anything booked, so they come to the tourist information centre and they are interested in accommodation. Next topic is Spa and Recreation. So also people are looking for both. Day Spas, different places of where to get different kinds of procedures and also looking for resorts. Then, another category is travelling by bicycle. That is bike rent, bike routes, all that kind of things. Then another one is. We have divided bike tourism separately, because there are a lot enquiries about that. But the next category is sports and active recreation. So that is basically anything else. That is boats, horse riding, anything like that. Then another category which is, let's say surprisingly low, but still it is entertainment. But that is explained by the fact that mostly young people are interested in this topic and they manage quite well on the internet. So they don't need to use the tourist information centre services as much as other groups and travellers. And then the last category is the so called first-aid. People need either to contact the police or some medical attention. Basically that's some kind of problem solving. These are the categories that are recorded in our tourism information centres.

And do you know, like the people that you have mentioned now, these are all tourists coming to the office, right?

Yes

And are there also tourists that ask even before they even come to Riga about information?

It is really hard for us to track it, because people who are looking for information mostly do that on the internet. So they check our website. What we see from the statistics is that before coming to the city people are mostly looking for information of how to get here, which means information about the airport and direct flights and how to get from the airport to the centre. Then of course about things to see and things to do. Less people are interested in events, more are interested in sight seeing objects, history of the city, also some kind of shopping possibilities and restaurants and things like that. And then the rest of the parts depend on the person's interests, but sometimes people who have contacted the tourism information centre before coming to the city. We provide this possibility. You can do it via Skype or email. They have mostly been interested in transportation issues like how long does it take to come from the airport to the city and things like that.

And I saw on the website, there is also a possibility to give feedback. Is that also a thing that tourists do or is that the minority?

That's the minority. Filling out the feedback form: we don't receive a lot of those, but we do and we try to track this are the information that people write on twitter or on Facebook about Riga. But these feedback forms are not that popular.

So this means that you also use social media as form of communication tools?

Yes. We use Facebook as form of promoting different things and twitter is also for promotion activities, but also services and online tourist information centre, because if we track that somebody mentioned that he or she is coming to Riga, then we ask them a question from our twitter account if we could be of some kind of help and maybe suggest something and then if they have any questions they can ask us on twitter. So we use it basically as an online information tool.

Yeh, that's nice. If you give them information or if you ask them to help you give them personal information like to personalize and to help them on specific requests?

Yes, we do. We have specific requests we reply to them because we have both on twitter and Facebook we often receive specific request and of course we reply to those. There is not a lot of them. If people have specific request they choose to contact us via email, but sometimes, yes, we do get requests on social media.

So, if I just summarize this, people using. The channels they use are mostly the website, or email or come to the tourist information office

Those kind of people, who come to the city. The number of tourists, we don't have very precise statistics, but it will be approximately 25% of all tourists visit the information centres.

Do you recognize any changes in the information use over the last five years? So, either in the channel or in the type of information?

I would say, it is hard for me to say in terms of five years, because our office is working for only three years and we are managing the tourist information centres for only a year. A little bit more than a year now. Before that the tourist information centres were managed by a different organization, but mainly the big categories of the topics that I told you about before, they haven't changed. So, it is still the same, but as we can see from our website, which has been functioning for three years already, also the categories that I told you people are mostly interested in, those haven't changed. If we are talking about the five years' time, there are some things that of course have changed, but that's because of development of technologies and everything, so, we have less questions about currency exchange or how much cash to bring, because a lot of people are used to using ATMs or paying with credit cards. Also we have less questions about internet connections or phone connections. All these practical things, because they have been made just easier.

Are you expecting any changes in the next coming years?

I think that still the main questions and the main topics will not change. Especially for people who are coming to Riga for the first time they will still be mostly interested in sightseeing, history, restaurants and shopping and all these things. But since Riga is going to be the culture capital of Europe in 2014, we are expecting more interest during that time about cultural events. But that is because we are going to be the culture capital of Europe, which is why this interest is going to grow. Also we have more and more visitors coming in our winter season, which means more information about sports and active recreation possibilities in winter and also about the events. We have them a lot now, but that is going to increase. These would be the main topics for the next two years.

Have you heard about the market of local travel or let's say the information offered by locals?

Information offered by locals or information asked by locals?

Information offered by locals. Insider tips by locals about Riga. Or do you realize that tourists ask for this information?

It's hard to track of course these kinds of activities, but what maybe we, in Riga we don't now have this let's say culture of locals being as guides and as helpers very developed. Let's say, like in other cities where there are special tours done by local people and they are free of charge and they do it basically, because they (the locals) just want to. We don't have a culture like this unfortunately, but I think it slowly is developing, because a lot of people are, not a lot but there are always people who are always willing to offer their advice full mind, help with some suggestions and stuff like that, but if you meet them on the streets people are usually very helpful. What is also, let's say, maybe different in Riga than in some other cities is that the city is not that big. So, the main parts of the city, where usually the locals hang out and tourists, are basically the same, which is the old town and the city centre, maybe there are some specific restaurant or clubs or bars where you wouldn't find so many travellers, but it's not like that that in Riga you need to find a local person, but that's because that is going to be the only one who can show you the best places and the rest is only for tourists. It is not like that in Riga. It is a mix of tourists and locals.

But you think, you said, that the locals might not be interested in this? Is that your feeling a bit?

No, I don't think they are not interested, but we have a quite strong couch-surfing community, which is locals helping foreigners getting around and with their accommodation. It's just that it's not let's say, we could have more of these. Not that it is a problem in Riga city.

So, when you mention the couch-surfing do you as the tourism board somehow work with this type of accommodation?

No. Because it is a community, it works by itself. It doesn't require any involvement of that state or the city.

Do you work with any partners or organizations that are focusing on local travel or special local offers?

We are working closely with National Tourism Agency that is responsible for promoting Latvia as destination and they are also focusing on insight travel, locals traveling around and they are also focusing on helping locals developing their tourism projects and their offers and products and everything like that. So, we are very close partners with them. And also we have some partner cities that are outside Riga that we work with. Several of those.

Cities in Latvia?

Cities in Latvia, yes. So we also support all kinds of their activities like you know tourist information centres promote other cities. Basically that's the commercial part.

Director of Romanian tourist office North America - Romania National Tourist Office – North America www.romaniatourism.com

First of all if you could tell me again your position?

Ok, I'm the director of the Romanian tourist office North America.

For how long have you worked there?

I've been here since April, 1994, so about 18 years.

Ah ok, wow. 18 years, so you have quite some experience already.

My first assignment was in Amsterdam and I'm a good friend with the former director of the Netherlands board of tourism, Mr Conrad van Tiggelen, he is now in Den Haag.

Well, let me ask first of all what do you think due to your experiences, what do tourists usually ask for, what kind of information do they want to know if they want to travel to Romania?

Well my own feeling is that there are two main categories of travellers who are contacting us. Those who made up their mind and they really have a strong motivation to go to Romania and they are looking for information about logistics, accommodation, transportation, maybe authentic attractions they might not know about. And there are people who are in Central or Eastern Europe and they can allocate a few days for their visit to Romania or business travellers, so people in transit who are in Hungaria and they are asking about attractions, how to reach a city or a town. So there are those who are self-motivated or responding to our marketing efforts and there are those who have happen to have this opportunity to include Romania in their visit to Europe.

And do you see that there's a big difference in what kind of information they want to have, what kind of information they are looking for?

Well again, those who already know about Romania and they are very motivated, they are looking mostly for information about logistics, unique accommodations, attractions this kind of information. The other ones don't know much about Romania and they need suggestions for like itineraries, they need to learn about the main attractions and so on.

Ok, so more general information.

Yes, so, some are well prepared for their visit and they want to make most of their visit and really want to see how Romania is like so to add Romania to many of the destinations they have already visited or they will visit.

And at which stage do the tourists ask for what kind of information, so before their travel, during the travel or after the travel?

I'm not sure if I understood your question. What information we're asking from them?

What kind of information do they ask for at which stage?

Well, most of them contact us anywhere from 18 to 1 month in advance. They mostly contact us when they plan to go when they prepare their trip. We try to get feedback from them and some of them are just getting back to us and let us know about their experiences, but most of them do contact us way before they travel to Romania.

And where do they usually look for the information, so which channels do they use? You say they contact you and how?

Ok, basically in mid-90th we were getting lots of phone calls, lots of them, the phone was ringing all day long. Now we're getting more and more visits to our website, we're getting inquiries by e-mail. So, mail and phone became quite rare. I'm not saying they are not existent but e-mail and internet became the main source of information for travel.

Are you also connected to any social media, do you make use of them?

Well, I'm not a fan of Facebook, we use twitter a little bit and blogs and TripAdvisor have in my view much more than effect than Facebook. There is this Facebook excitement of many tourist offices about using Facebook. By what again, my own feeling is that some people use Facebook to communicate with friends, family not necessarily to get information to get inspiration about tourist attractions and so on. Facebook is not able to compete against TripAdvisor against Expedia, against convention of Europe, Facebook is for a different purpose. The short answer is that using blogs and twitter, we don't see Facebook as a major communication channel. Two days ago I saw a study by e-marketer there was indicated that probably less than 15% of Facebook users are clicking on the links to answer postings on the Facebook pages.

So you don't really see the need in using Facebook as a marketing channel?

Well, Facebook is for the people to speak amongst themselves, a brand doesn't necessarily have to be everywhere. Give the people a little bit of freedom and don't intervene in every single communication they have. Facebook is kind of inner circle which becomes larger in time. But basically, on Facebook you have to thank people, using them as agents, as promoters of a destination maybe a good idea but you don't know how qualified they are and how dedicated they are and you don't want to get the reverse.

I would also like to know if you see within the last 5 years a change of the type of information the tourists ask for or the channel they use. You said nowadays there are lots of e-mails coming in instead of years ago phone calls, but do you also see a change in the type of information they ask for?

Well, the change in the type of information comes with the events or the crisis or something new that's going on with the destination. Basically, the less inquiries you get at the tourist office should be a good sign if the traffic doesn't go down. So if people will contact you less, that means that you're very successful with other communication channels. With brochures, advertising campaigns and so on. So, I don't see a huge switch from the type of information people were asking for 10 years ago than now.

Are you expecting any changes within the next coming years?

Well again, not much will change about the attraction itself, the infrastructure can change, the services offered by a destination can change and so on. Again we have to be proactive with the public about the information and not make them ask us about this information. If they find out about a particular attraction or method from Facebook or friends they might want to double check with us. It could be unrealistic to say I'm going to forecast the demand for information for a certain type of information for the next 5 to 10 years. All information people might need should be available but 2 or 3 inquiries about things we never thought of might not be there. What we are doing basically when we get inquiries about something we don't have featured in our website we immediately update and develop the content of the website with this type of information that we were asked about. In my view part of our website should be the answers to the questions we got in the last 10, 15 or 20 years. So, parts of the website should be developed, the content should be developed with inputs from the travellers and based on the questions we're getting from the traveller.

And you get feedback via e-mail or if people give feedback how do they do it?

Usually we're getting it by e-mail or phone or in person. We were thinking of posting an online questionnaire or sending out a questionnaire to people we provide the information to, but we don't really want to bother people with too many communication.

Have you heard about local travel information, so information offered by locals themselves? So if they give tips about hidden spots or insider tips?

Yes, yes the trend that is growing. I know about a few websites, one of them is called spotted by locals. Again, some people use this information, some prefer the official tourist information or the official website. The truth is we can get inspired from those websites. So again our goal is to provide as much reliable information as you can. So, sometimes we get those comments that we, I wouldn't call it partnership but cooperation with a few people in Bucharest in Sibiu, in Brasov who are really providing us with lots of information about local events, new local attractions, hotels, restaurants and so on. But again, it comes to asking ourselves, how many sources of information a traveller might be willing to use. And if the tourist office or our website is among the top 3 or 5 sources of information a traveller would use when they go to Romania, that's a good sign. What I'm trying to say is that it's very unlikely, that people will dedicate days and days to find information online or to use 20 sources of information, when they can just send an e-mail to the tourist office, the local tourist office or the national tourist office and ask the question they might have. Second, not every single traveller has lots of time and is such a curious person that they want to find all the hidden places in a city. And once you make this little known destinations or place widely available, those places are going to lose their hidden status. Everybody will know them, everybody will flag to that particular corner of Amsterdam, or that particular bar or café and so on. So, we really have to keep a balance and make sure that we are not directing too much traffic to a destination who might not have the capacity to get that much traffic.

So, you are in contact also with locals?

Yes, we do have, we are working with the blog called "Bucharest daily photo" (http://www.bucharestdailyphoto.com/), we work with people who specialize in architecture and design, we work with people who know gastronomy and wines and so on.

And they are all locals from Romania?

Yes, yes. And actually one of our best partnerships is with the marketing director of the Rembrandt hotel in Bucharest, which is owned by a Dutch and they also have a café called café Klein. They are one of our best partners and if you go to our website under Bucharest you will see a banner, from one of our few banners we have from our website to a hotel.

So, you said now about the trend which is growing, about to get local information that you are trying to keep a balance, is there anything else you would consider doing about this trend?

Well again, we are using as many local information sources as possible, we want to take advantage of them, we want to partner with them. But again, we want to make sure we are not going to destroy the character the, if such a quiet place, we don't want to send 200 people a day to that very place. So we want to match it with the profile of the traveller, with the travel habits and the occasion and so on. Quite a few travel writers come to us and they want authentic and they want know about attractions knows about. If nobody knows about them, they are not attractions, no? It is kind of difficult to come up every month, every year with 20, 30, 40 new attractions. You can come up with a few new restaurants, hotels and so on but again the local atmosphere should be somehow protected.

So you want to protect also the locals and their culture and tradition. Yeah, I think that's also a big problem nowadays, tourists want to see authentic places and hidden spots but on the other hand it's very important to protect them.

Yes, basically if we speak with somebody and we realize that they did their homework and they know a lot about the destination already and they have a very strong interest in architecture or local wines or something like that we are going to send them to those places where we know they can appreciate them and they can enjoy. If you have the traveller who just want to say I like to see as much as I can in two hours, visit Amsterdam in 3 hours we just point them to the main attractions where they can take a picture where they have enough infrastructure to accommodate them.

So, you make the selection and see who should have more information and who should visit the general sites?

They select themselves by the type of information and the type of questions they ask us. So it's basically, what we're basically trying to do is matching the traveller with the type of attractions we believe they would enjoy or they would be interested in.

Which position do you attain at Rotterdam marketing and for how long have you been working for Rotterdam marketing?

Online Marketer for almost 3 years

What kind of information are tourists mostly looking or asking for?

Tourist information about attractions, museums, events as well as practical information (how to get to Rotterdam, public transport, weather etc.)

At which stage do they ask for what kind of information? (before, during or after their visit)

Depends on which channel. Before the visit some tourists will go online to look for general information and tips. During the visit some would either visit the tourist information office or use the mobile app.

Where do the travellers look for the information, which channels do they use to gather information?

Depends on the person: via friends/family, travel guides (online and print), websites, social media, mobile app, tourist information office

Are there any changes in the information use of travellers regarding the type of information and the channel over the course of the last 5 years?

Many tourists now own a Smartphone and are more accustomed to using mobile apps, which offers a lot of new and handy features (map, gps). Also, more and more tourists turn to social media for tips from other travellers and friends about what to see and do. Moreover, they are looking for unique experiences in addition to touristic must-sees.

Are you expecting any other changes within the next coming years?

Further fragmentation on how and where tourists will look for travel information due to more websites and apps. More focus on online/mobile as well as real-time & user generated content.

Have you heard about local travel and local travel information? Do tourists in Rotterdam ask about it? (Definition local travel: Tips and information offered by locals)

Yes, I know Spotted by locals. When they want this kind of information, they will not come to us since we are the official tourist information office.

What is your opinion about this market; is it growing?

Depends on how you define market. Some tourists will value this local information enough to pay for it. I think many tourists will be reluctant to pay for these tips, because social media (like Tripadvisor) will provide relevant tips as well. There is a market for tour guides that take tourists through the city, offering local information during the tour. In Berlin they took it one step further. Tourists can book a local experience, where a local shows you around and joins you during your visit.

Do you see a potential in this market/ trend? Also for Rotterdam?

See above. There is a growing demand for information that is perceived as less 'touristic'. That also goes for some of type of travellers that come to Rotterdam.

What are you doing about this trend?

We might integrate user generated content (including by locals and via social media) to our website.

Do you involve in any way locals in the tourism business in Rotterdam? If yes, in what way?

Yes, in the way that many of us live in Rotterdam as locals and know the city personally. We often recommend locations and events that we visit and love ourselves.

Do you work with any partners/ organizations from the field of local travel?

No

Would you consider working with organizations from the field of local travel in the future? In what way?

Don't know yet.

Head of Visitors Centre and Head of Project Division – Vilnius Tourist Office
www.vilnius-tourism.lt/en

Which position do you attain at the Vilnius tourist office and for how long have you been working for the Vilnius tourist office?

Danguole Kamarauskaite, Head of the Visitors Centre and Vilma Daubariene, Head of the Project Division, 10 and 9 years

What kind of information are tourists mostly looking/ asking for?

Tourist publications about Vilnius, places to visit, leisure and entertainment, events, Lithuanian cuisine, money exchange

At which stage do they ask for what kind of information? (before, during or after their visit)

Before - by e-mails, about places to visit, hotels, arrival, sightseeing tours. Sometimes by phone. During the visit – at Vilnius Tourist Information Centres, the questions are mentioned by the Nr.2. After – only sometimes, by e-mail, if they have comments about the hotels, restaurants and etc.

Where do the travelers look for the information, which channels do they use to gather information?

We could forecast – the main source of the information is internet.

Are there any changes in the information use of travellers regarding the type of information and the channel over the course of the last 5 years?

More and more tourists are using the reservation for tourism services – hotel booking, tours booking, city card booking.

Are you expecting any other changes within the next coming years?

Growing of mobile internet and the mobile tourism products (apps)

Have you heard about local travel and local travel information? Do tourists in Vilnius ask about it? (Definition local travel: Tips and information offered by locals)

Yes, of course. Sometimes they are asking for local tips.

What is your opinion about this market; is it growing?

It is hard to see very clear position of this market. Not so big number of questions from tourists

Do you see a potential in this market/ trend? Also for Vilnius?

Maybe. There are so many information and most of tourist still wants to use traditional channels

What are you doing about this trend?

We offer free maps with the tips of the local, we advise to visit not so popular but interesting places. The map is prepared by www.likealocalguide.com , the information inside:

13 cool sites in and around the Old Town, Cafes, Restaurants, Budget Meals, Pubs, Bars and Lounges Clubs, Shoping, Sleeping, Tours and Fun, Alternative (various places of interest), Museums, general infomation about the city, Transportation, Top Events, Small dictionary.

Do you involve in any way locals in the tourism business in Vilnius? If yes, in what way?

Not directly, through the organizations.
Tourism Division of City Municipality implemented the pilot project related to the local travelling (the author of travel blog from Japan were invited to visit Vilnius and after the visit publish the impressions)

Do you work with any partners/ organizations from the field of local travel?

Yes, the mentioned maps, information about free tours, organized by the locals.

Would you consider working with organizations from the field of local travel in the future and in what way?

Yes, it depends on the content.

Online marketer - Tourism Flanders www.visitflanders.co.uk

Since when do you work for Tourism Flanders?

Since 2005, so almost 7 years.

If you could tell me first of all again your position at Flanders tourism board?

I do information management and conversation management, so it brings together all the information, touristic information, streams coming from different partners, that could be cities or provinces, as well as partners that are focused on specific content types like events or attractions and then we bring it together and we distribute it to our own websites and hopefully in the future more to different other websites. So that's one part and the other part is conversation management, which is new and related to social media of course, we're a bit understaffed on that section because it takes quite some time for management to realize how important it is and to actually acknowledge it in terms of getting more people on the staff. But there the idea is that, we want to have people who talk as much as possible about Flanders and the different products or sections and subsections and what Flanders stands for like Belgium beer and chocolate and art cities and stuff like that. So the idea is we don't push content through social media which is always the trap that most marketers and also we take but we try to encourage conversation, which is difficult.

But I saw, I don't know if you use it on all the different country pages but I looked at the one for Germany and I saw you have this people- fan, so Flanders-fans can write about their experience, right?

Yeah, no we don't have it on all the websites. But that's a thing maybe I don't need to elaborate too much. The German side is ok, I don't spend too much time on it because we're trying to bring all the different market websites together and I'm now focusing on the new system that already contains 5 of the 12 market websites and it makes it easier for us to manage content and to share it more easily with the market. I don't know exactly all the details of what our German market is doing. But another website, we try to, for example include reviews of TripAdivsor and try to focus more on working with existing systems that allow people to give comments and share experiences rather than building it ourselves in our own system. It's just a matter of efficiency.

Ok, I understand. But you have the feeling that visitors use these services a lot so actually leave experiences or tell about, start talking about Flanders, as you said?

Yes, and no. Yes, in general people are using that, but of course it's always a small percentage of people, as you know, who actually create and contribute to go further than just saying I like or giving a short comment. It's a bigger step to actually create a review about something. But yes it's used, I mean TripAdvisor is huge and there is lots of other review sites or even on a travel agent there is a section that work. And no in the sense that Flanders is a brand that is still quite unknown, we are a region, it would be easier for us to promote Belgium, for example. In that sense we're starting a bit from scratch and building up a brand, so people are not really, they are talking about different products, about hotels, attractions and cities but less about Flanders in general. It's not sensible for us to set up sections or microsites or whatever, where people can share stories about Flanders. We need to reuse the different things that we're good in. So in that sense it's working.

And have you also realized a change in this, so let's also say the other channels to get information about Flanders that I don't know, 5 years ago to now?

Yes, but it's also in terms of mindset. For us, probably 5 years ago we thought our website was the only place people we're coming to find information, later on we started realizing, that we're probably just a small percentage of the section where people were finding information so we need to focus more on creating that awareness and making sure that our information of other information also found elsewhere. So, yes we're very much aware that people get information everywhere and it's just getting more and more splintered, so it's getting more and more difficult to find out where people are finding their information, it's getting more and more difficult to reach them.

And so you think this is also continuing to, the tourist will have more and more possibilities to find information, is that, do you see this as a potential or rather as a threat?

Ok, good question. It's definitely exciting, that's a fact. I think, that it's not really a threat we just have to adapt to it but that's of course the difficult part. I strongly believe in the fact that people are getting more into niches, based on their passion so that's probably the best way to reach them these days, which suites fine with the fact that our brand also consists of different passionate communities, let's say it in that way. So in some way if we, we decided to focus every year on two or three main themes or topics, so for example for this year its festivals and modern art, because of course it's based on things that are happening in Flanders, there's quite a few modern art happenings or exhibitions right now, so it's good to focus on that because it always has to be, every marketing activity has to be connected to a real product that they can find. But in terms of reaching the people, it's really good if you can focus all activities on one theme. And for example related to music festivals there is quite a big community or different communities of people that are really passionate about music and some of them are really passionate just about music festivals and others that are really passionate about let's say metal music for example. That's an example of a passionate community. So in that sense it's getting more easier for us to find or, we just have to go and look for what are the different communities and find people within those communities that are important, that have a lot of influence. It's really easy to find those people in the sense that you have tools like cloud or social mansion or it's really easy to find the blogs that have a lot of followers and if we can reach them and invite them to our country and give them good experiences then they will talk to the people who are just listening but who are also passionate about it so in that sense it's really exciting and it's also more about networking so you really have to connect to all those people and build a network around you and make sure that the people within these communities connect to each other and maybe through you so they always have a connection because of you and then they can relate more to your product. So, I definitely like it more than it used to be. You used to be able to just push messages and hope that as much people as possible were understanding them now or hearing them and now you can just start conversations, it's nicer I think, it's more real.

If I go from this topic… Have you heard about local travel? So that you, I mean you are trying to encourage lot of interaction and real talking about a topic. If you, Local travel, in terms of locals providing information. Is this a topic that is relevant in Flanders, so do you relate to this topic?

Oh yeah, definitely. You also know the social local mobile ID, the SoLoMo, that is kind of a password these days in local travel. Yeah, we strongly believe in that, in that sense that it actually influences some of the decisions we take concerning specific information gathering and distribution for example and guided tours. There is the traditional approach, that some of our colleagues came up with, was.

Well let me just first say that people are not online are not looking for guided tours, we did a bit of research on that. Nobody is looking explicitly for to find a guided tour, nobody is really interested in that. So, people are more interested in experiences, right? So, one option for us could and that is the traditional approach, to find all the official guides and organizations that do guided tours and insert them in the database and make sure they have everything that they have to offer that is inserted in our database and then we can upload it to our website and push it to our readers. That's quite IT intense, so we have to develop stuff and it's also very work intense if we have to connect to all these people and all that. And now there is this tool, I don't know if you have heard of it, it's a Dutch tool called Gidsy. It's a bit like, well it's really an online kind of thing. It kind of relates to Airbnb but then it's really about experiences. It's kind of a community where people can upload their own experiences with their own accounts. I know quite a bit of about good places or good pubs to hang out if you want to hear music, and see really interesting music and stuff like that, so I could enter that site and say that I want to share experiences on music in Ghent for example and I can even charge for that If I want to. So, it's not really for free but I can also do it for free if I want to. So, I can go into this site and upload my content and then connect to people who are coming to Ghent. So, there is quite a bit of different, you have the Airbnb, Couchsurfing, local crowd thing and then you have this Gidsy and we really want to find out if we can set up campaigns with these partners like that so that more people upload interesting stuff and experiences they can share. Of course, Airbnb is a bit difficult for us because we are also giving licenses to accommodations so it's a bit tuff to work with an illegal party like Airbnb. But we are really interested in that. But the idea of gypsy and local experiences that's really good, but we haven't really done anything, but were looking into how we can do that.

So, you think it's very important to actually offer these possibilities to visitors that come into the area?

Yes, and again because it's more real. Nobody wants to go on a boring tour with a guy that is doing the same thing for 10 years. It's more interesting to go and find out about street art, again if you're into street art and then you can find somebody who does that so you can really go into the niches you don't have to explain on the general level. You can really focus on what you're interested in. But the problem in the tourism Flanders is that we're about 150 people working on different aspects of tourism and there is only a few that actually believe this approach, so we still have a long way to go.

I had interviews with quite a few cities and I think Flanders was the only region I talked to, if I'm not mistaken but almost everywhere they said that they realize that they have to do something but it's still really in the beginning that people see the need to do it but it's difficult to actually implement it.

Ok, I guess so. For example the idea of using the local crowed and moving away from saving your own content. I haven't heard that in any of the cities really. Have you talked to cities in Flanders or Belgium?

No, I haven't.

For example I was talking to Mechelen last week and they are really going into the direction of saving all the content in their database and trying to create as much mobile apps as possible themselves. I think, it's also, it's not bad or anything but you really, the more you spend time on this the less time you can spend on trying to find creative solutions and also for us this is a problem, I acknowledge that. I realize that some of the cities aren't really ready to move away from that.

Yes, I experienced that as well. On the other hand, I also talked to some northern cities, for instance Copenhagen and Oslo, they're I think a bit further in this development. They acknowledge the trend and actually doing a lot about it now.

They're mostly like Sweden and Norway and Denmark, they really have a good approach, they are really modern, they are good examples for us.

That was also very interesting for me to actually see the difference between some cities that are very behind, if I can say it like this. For example in Germany there are a few cities that believe in this or have the rules that if tourists come to ask about insider tips of specific things they would like to see instead of the top 10 attractions. They are actually not allowed to give these information because they have to think about their partners they are working with, which I guess every city has those partners. But they say we are not allowed.

Yeah, but in some point it still stands and that's also what a lot of cities tell us and also our own tourist office, where the tourist come. What they are saying is that there are still a lot of people who are not part of any social networks or any so you still, so you still have to acknowledge that and that's a part where also tourist office has an important role but on the other hand you can also combine that with the new things because within this new world of community you don't really have to do it yourself, you just have to facilitate. So, it's a matter of how you spend it right, you don't have to answer every question on TripAdvisor yourself or on Gidsy you just have to make sure that the right people and there is a lot of people who do that are, motivated to do it more and help them to see maybe there is a guy in Ghent who knows a lot about street art and who wants to share it he just doesn't know how to go to that tool. And that's where government is still, is not taking sites or is not working against any partner, well probably there is always a partner that you can find that will be mad about something but that's probably a way to move forward with that.

Als erstes wüsste ich gerne, wonach die Touristen am meisten kommen und fragen hier generell, also zum Beispiel wenns nun geht um Transport oder wonach die am meisten fragen,

Ja am meisten interessieren die sich für Sehenswürdigkeiten… oder was sie schon gesehen haben müssen, das ist hier auch eine berühmte Frage.

Woher kommen die meisten Touristen?

Ja das sind jetzt so die schriftlichen Sachen, das ist eher ein Gefühl, das kann ich jetzt so nicht sagen…, also das müsste man nochmal nachlesen. Also die Statistik kann ich Ihnen gleich nochmal ausdrucken, aber die meisten, soweit ich hoffentlich richtig liege, also außer Deutschland? Die meisten sind schon deutsch, das guck ich aber gleich nochmal nach!

Also am meisten wird gefragt nach Sehenswürdigkeiten? Und kommt es auch schon mal vor, dass leute nach insider tipps eher fragen?

Immer! Ja, eigentlich schon, also die meisten, die wollen schon insider tipps. Nicht immer, aber meistens. Die fragen nach insider tipps, restaurants und so

Haben die dann ganz spezielle Fragen? Spezifische Fragen oder einfach generell?

Eigentlich eher generell, ja. Also was ist das wichtigste, oder die sagen dann, wie lange sie hier sind, und was man in der Zeit sehen kann und das ist dann die Mehrheit, die eher allgemein fragt. Und dann gibt es natürlich auch Leute, die speziell fragen, öhm, dann zum Beispiel bestimmte Kirchenfragen, aber das ist eher selten, dass die diese Fragen stellen.

Was ist ungefähr der Zeitpunkt, also wenn die meisten Touristen, die kommen einfach hierhin und fragen? Sind sie dann schon hier oder gibt es auch schon mal öfter Leute, die fragen, bevor sie hierher kommen?

Ja nicht immer, also sie sind dann meistens, würd ich mal sagen, ältere Leute, die uns fragen wollen. Die rufen entweder an oder wenn das für Gruppen natürlich ist, dann melden die sich auch hier vorher an, wenn die eine Stadtführung wollen oder im Gruppengang etwas besichtigen wollen, muss man das vorher anmelden. Gruppen rufen dann auch vorher an oder schreiben eine e-Mail. Also wenn sie irgendwelche Hotelreservierungen machen, machen sie dann natürlich im Vorhinein telefonisch, oder eben über andere Möglichkeiten.

Was sind meistgenutzte channel, also Gruppen rufen dann ja an oder schreiben e-Mails…?

Also vom Gefühl her, da gibt es jetzt keine Statistiken, würde ich sagen, dass die meisten persönlich kommen immer noch. Mail und Telefon, also e-Mail ist mehr in letzter Zeit, aber das ist auch auf einen langen Zeitraum, also e-Mail ist in acht Jahren wahrscheinlich etwas mehr geworden, aber nicht zwangsläufig, jetzt in kurzer Zeit, das es mehr ist. Das kann ich so vom Gefühl her nicht sagen, weil ich denke, die meisten kommen dann doch noch persönlich.

Wenn es zum Beispiel um Hotelbuchungen geht, findet das meist über die Website statt oder rufen die Leute dann eher an?

Mmh, schwierig zu sagen… Ich glaube die meisten rufen an, also würde ich jetzt mal auch vom Gefühl her schon sagen, weil wir sehen nicht, …wir können nicht eine Übersicht sehen, oder sonst wohl eher telefonisch, weil die meisten dann doch noch mal wissen wollen, ob wir das Hotel kennen und solche Dinge.

Also noch mehr Informationen?

Genau.

Ja und zum Thema, ob es in den letzten 5 Jahren eben dann Veränderungen gab, sagten Sie jetzt schon, wahrscheinlich mehr per e-Mail…

Ja aber das auf einen längeren Zeitraum. Weil das e-Mail-Zeitalter ist ja schon länger her, kann man jetzt nicht sagen, ob da nochmal ne Veränderung war, vielleicht ja, weil viele jetzt ein iPhone haben, da ist man schneller am e-Mails-Schreiben, als anders.

Bezüglich der Apps; werden die hier genutzt?

Mmh, genutzt, das kann ich nicht sagen, muss der Kollege Ihnen beantworten, also gefragt wird danach sehr selten. die Frage, ob es eine App gibt stellt keiner, und auch auf der Internetseite wird sie hier vorgestellt, Köln Guide-App, also mit Stadtrellay.

Sind die Apps kostenlos oder..?

Muss ich mal oben nachfragen. Die gibt es als iPhone und Android App.

Was denken Sie bezüglich der Richtung von Apps zum Beispiel, ob es da eine Veränderung geben wird in den nächsten Jahren und dass dann weniger Leute reinkommen?

Ja, klar. Ich glaube schon, dass wir durch die App, äh, dass es schon weniger geworden ist, also durch die Nutzung der App, aber trotzdem, also selbst mit iPhone kommen viele noch rein, oder haben schon irgendwas rausgesucht, aber wollen sich nochmal genauer informieren. Oder wollen noch genauere Info haben. Ich glaube, die App leistet ein bisschen Vorarbeit, aber trotzdem kommen noch viele Leute, die nochmal genauer nachfragen, also ich glaube nicht, dass es weniger wird.

Haben Sie schon mal generell über den Local Travel Markt gehört, also, dass es mehr Informationen von den Einwohnern geben soll oder dass mehr Touristen daran interessiert sind? Haben Sie da in Köln schon Erfahrungen gemacht?

Einwohner?

Also dass Einwohner Reiseinformationen den Touristen bieten sozusagen. Also keine Informationen von professionellen Reiseleitern, sondern von Einwohnern.

Ich glaube, dass die Reise… also die Autoren mit den Einheimischen sprechen, oft findet man Szenecafés dadrin stehen wo auch viele Einheimische hingehen. Ich glaube, dass die sich da vorher informieren und dann selber ausprobieren.

Gibt es denn auch schon mal Touristen, die fragen, was, zum Beispiel, als Einwohner von Köln was würden Sie empfehlen?

Ja, das fragen Sie oft.

Also besteht schon das Interesse der Touristen an wirklich ganz spezifischen Infos?

Ja, das geht halt ein bisschen weg, weil die Leute wissen ja auch schon, dass hier der Dom steht. Sie wollen natürlich schon besondere Highlights entlocken und man muss das halt auf den galanten Weg machen, weil wie schon gesagt, man darf prinzipiell niemanden der Partner bevorzugen oder ausschließen und deshalb muss man da eben versuchen, neutral zu bleiben, und trotzdem erfragen, was genau der Kunde will und dann das richtige finden.

Denken Sie, dass das in Zukunft noch mehr wird, also dass die Leute noch mehr von den typischen Highlights wie Dom weggehen und noch mehr wollen?

Ja. Also ganz spezielle Führungen, da gibt es ja auch immer mehr spezielle, wie der Nachtwächter, oder Nachtführung oder zu bestimmtem Themen, also die klassischen Sachen sind natürlich immer noch gefragt, aber…

Gibt es irgendwelche Auswirkungen für KölnTourismus und muss man da nochmal darauf achten, dass die Partner nicht vernachlässigt werden? Gibt es da irgendeine Veränderung? Wenn Touristen immer mehr und mehr fragen nach besonderen Sachen?

Ja das ist klar, wenn mich jemand fragt, gibt es eine Führung zur, die Nachtwächterführung… also wir haben eine spezielle Kriminalführung, zum Beispiel, aber wenn jetzt jemand nach etwas fragt, was wir nicht bieten, sondern nur ein bestimmter Anbieter hat, dann können wir das natürlich sagen, weil, das ist nur wenn ganz oft die Frage nach generellen Stadtführungen kommt und wir haben 2 Partner die das anbieten, natürlich kann man das entsprechend für die Ansprüche nach den Vor und Nachteilen abwägen. Das kann man naütrlich rauslesen aber bei so speziellen Angeboten muss man dann natürlich vorsichtig damit umgehen. Aber wenn die Kunden ganz spezielle Fragen haben dann können wir das natürlich sagen ansonsten muss man damit vorsichtig umgehen.

Sie arbeiten generell mit Partnern hier aus Köln? Sind das lokale Betriebe oder…? Das heißt, zum Beispiel die Stadtführungen, sind das auch Partner, die hier ansässig in Köln sind, also sozusagen von hier dann, die auch Hintergrundwissen dann haben.

Ja, das ist schon so, die Stadtführungsfirmen, die sind schon aus Köln alle. Aber wir bieten zum Beispiel die Kriminaltour an, das ist, ich weiß nicht wegen dem Nachtwächter, Ich würde jetzt auch nicht erwähnen, dass wir das nicht haben, das klingt dann ein bisschen blöd. Aber es gibt natürlich bestimmte Firmen, die wir jetzt nicht aufführen. Wenn jemand genau das will, dann kann er das auch haben. Also ich würde jetzt nicht erwähnen, mit der Nachtwächterführung, dass wir das nicht anbieten.

Arbeiten Sie denn mit irgendwelchen, ich sag jetzt mal, wir haben im Studium ziemlich viel gemacht mit local travel, dieser Trend, dass die Touristen eine stärkere Erfahrung haben wollen mit der Kultur, wirklich mehr erleben. Arbeiten Sie da auch mit irgendwelchen Partnern zusammen? Ich sage jetzt mal als Beispiel Couchsurfing, das ist eine Art von Unterkunft, also dass es da irgendwie solche Arten gibt mit denen Sie zusammenarbeiten?

Allgemein bieten wir auch gerne die typisch kölsche Touren. Also eine Aktion, TypischKölsch – Köln ist ein Gefühl die halt das ganze Lebensgefühl und Sagen und Legenden und Märchen und ja, genau das ist die eine und da gibt es noch eine Aktion meinHotelColonia, wo Kölner und Einheimische aus der Umgebung en Hotel günstiger buchen können. Das ist dann immer für ein Wochenende. Das ist um die Kölner und die Leute aus der Umgebung zu begeistern. Da können sie dann beispielsweise in ein 5-Sterne-Hotel für weniger Geld.

Gäbe es denn da generell Interesse, in Zukunft eher mit solchen Partnern zusammenzuarbeiten, die wirklich mehr noch, ich sag jetzt wieder als Beispiel Couchsurfing oder sogar noch Einheimische, die Touristen zu sich einladen und sagen, wir kochen für euch, ich weiß nicht, ob Sie das kennen, Meet a Local oder so und man die Zeit mehr in Kontakt ist. Besteht da Interesse? Weil wenn Sie sagen, dass die Touristen danach fragen und dass der Trend dahin geht, dass die Touristen mehr sehen wollen als nur die Hauptattraktionen…

Ja also, wie ich gerade sagte, dass nach wie vor die klassischen Sachen gefragt sind, für die die außerhalb von Köln wohnen, aber die aus Köln sind, fragen schon eher nach dem Speziellen… Also ich habe von diesem meet-a-local noch nichts gehört, also ich weiß was das ist, aber ich habe noch nicht gehört, dass eine Stadt das einbaut auf der website.

Also es gibt auch Städte, die Werbung dafür auf ihrer Seite machen, dass es da eine alternative zum Hotel gibt.

Also wir hatten eine Privatzimmervermittlung, jetzt aber nicht mehr.

Ah okay. Es gibt halt einige Städte, die mehr darauf gehen, der Trend geht dahin, dass die Touristen kommen und dass die eher Alternativunterkünfte haben wollen. Es gibt da verschiedenste Möglichkeiten, oder wenn sie sagen, sie möchten was Besonderes, das Hotel wollen wir nicht mehr und wollen lieber beim Einheimischen wohnen, oder irgendwas besonderes…

Das kann ich auch ja mal fragen…

Tourist information office – KoelnTourismus www.cologne-tourism.com/ (translated into English by researcher)

What kind of information are tourists looking/ asking for? (Gastronomy, Transportation, accommodation) at which stage are they?

Mainly tourists ask about sites or what they have to see in the city. Where do most of the tourists come from? I am not absolutely sure but mainly German.

Do they ask for insider tips? Yes, always! They always want to know special places or restaurants. Do they ask very specific questions or very open questions?

Mainly very open and they just want to know where to go and what the best restaurants are. Many tell us for how long they stay and ask what they should see during that time. Very general questions but some ask very specific questions for instance about specific churches that they would like to see.

At which stage do they ask for what kind of information? (before, during or after their visit)

Most tourists walk in and ask for information. Some older people ask before the trip, they prefer to plan their trip. Also groups call before and want to organize their trips or via e-mail to organize a guided tour for a bigger group of people in advance. Also in terms of hotel bookings, people do it in advance to be prepared via telephone.

Where do the travellers look for the information, which channels do they use?

In my opinion, most come in person. E-mail more in the last 8 years but now recently not more e-mails than before 5 years. Hotel bookings more tourists call in her opinion. They want to get more information and want to know if they know the places before they book anything thus most people call instead of just booking on the website.

Are there any changes in the information use of travellers regarding the type of information and the channel over the last 5 years?

Since the last 8 years more e-mails. Nobody asks for the apps for smartphones. Normal app and also a city tour app which are both for free. App for iphone and android.

Are you expecting any other changes within the next coming years?

I think that through the app less people come into the office but also with this many tourists still walk in. They use the app to prepare something but then still come in and want to know more details and get more information.

Have you heard about local travel and specifically local travel information? Is this the case in Cologne and do tourists ask about it?

I think that the professional authors talk to the locals about cafes and which ones are frequented by them.

Are there any questions by tourists about local information?

Yes absolutely. Many tourists ask about insider tips. Many have seen where the dome is and know about the classic sites but want to know more specific hidden sites. But we are not allowed to prefer one partner over another thus we can only offer objective information and not tell them what we think is good. But we try to find out about the needs and wishes of the tourists and then offer them the best fitting activity.

What is your opinion about this market; is it growing?

Yes absolutely. More and more tourists ask about specific activities. Like city tours with a theme for instance a night tour. (She asks the local tour guide) International tourists want to see rather the sites but locals and from the surroundings prefer to visit special attractions and find out about hidden spots.

What are you doing about this trend, is there a change in the program?

If someone asks about a specific activity which we don't offer, then we can tell them and give them advice. We can give the tourists tips according to their expectations. If there is a business that would offer this then we would advise them of course but we would prefer our partners.

Do you involve in any way locals in the tourism business in Cologne?

All tour guides are locals and they have a good knowledge of the city. However we do not work with any local travel businesses.

Do you work with any partners from the field of local travel?

Typisch Kölsch – city tours including legends and the cologne feelings Köln ist ein Gefühl, because that's what tourists want to experience, the feeling of Cologne and its treasures.

meinHotel Colonia – locals get a hotel cheaper, one weekend, to include locals and get them to spend the time and visit Cologne. 4 or 5 star hotels are cheaper for locals during these weekends.

Would you consider working with them in the future?

Still tourists come and look for the classical sites. Locals however want to see more the hidden spots. We used to have an option to book a private room with locals. But do not have that any longer.