

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**

**Department of Management**



**Diploma Thesis**

**Traditional travel agency in competition with online  
agency**

**Meri Grigolia**

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# CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Economics and Management

## DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

B.Sc. Meri Grigolia

Business Administration

Thesis title

*Traditional travel agency in competition with online agency*

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### Objectives of thesis

This thesis will compare two companies operating in the same sector to discover how a local, traditional "Bricks-and-mortar" travel agency can remain profitable when in competition with a multinational on-line company. By means of a detailed case study this thesis seeks to identify what the strengths and weaknesses are of each type of company, and what lessons can be learned – especially regarding the use of internet technology.

### Methodology

The research starts with a review of current literature relating to the travel industry, before leading on to the practical part.

The practical part will rely mainly on quantitative research, which will be conducted based largely on the results of surveys and questionnaires, on which mathematical, statistical and numerical analyses can be performed. Deductions from the results of these studies will be considered, and presented as the results of this work.

**The proposed extent of the thesis**

Approx 60 – 70 pages

**Keywords**

Online, e-commerce, website, travel, traditional

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KOTLER, P. – KELLER, K.L. *Marketing management*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2012. ISBN 978-0-13-600998-6.

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## **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled "Traditional travel agency in competition with online agency" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any their person.

In Prague on

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# **Traditional travel agency in competition with online agency**

## **Abstract**

This thesis will compare two companies operating in the same sector to discover how a local, traditional "Bricks-and-mortar" travel agency can remain profitable when in competition with a multinational on-line company. By means of a detailed case study this thesis seeks to identify what the strengths and weaknesses are of each type of company, and what lessons can be learned - especially regarding the use of internet technology. I will compare two companies, from the travel industry field with each other. One, which is not using online Internet tools and follow the traditional ways and second, which is the example of doing business online. Will give detailed explanation and analysis, advantages and disadvantages of using online internet tools, compared to traditional ways and partially will examine the development of website usage. Thesis will show how the travel business is operating effectively through the digital world compared to the traditional travel company. This work is highlighting the advantages of using online market tools versus the traditional one.

Thesis consists of two main parts. The first is theoretical, it includes basic theories about e-marketing, e-commerce and related theory to the travel industry.

Practical part will rely mainly on quantitative research, which will be conducted based largely on the results of surveys and questionnaires

**Keywords:** Online, E-commerce, website, travel, traditional

# **Tradiční cestovní kancelář v konkurenci s online agenturou**

## **Abstrakt**

Tato práce porovnává dvě společnosti ze stejného sektoru, aby odhalila, jak může lokální, tradiční, „kamenná“ cestovní agentura nadále vytvářet zisk v konkurenci s multinárodní on-line společností. Prostřednictvím podrobné případové studie se tato práce snaží identifikovat, jaké silné a slabé stránky má každý z obou typů společností a jaká ponaučení si z toho lze vzít, zejména pokud jde o používání internetových technologií. Vzájemně porovnám dvě společnosti z oblasti cestovního průmyslu. První, která nepoužívá online internetové nástroje, ale využívá tradiční cesty, a druhou, která je příkladem provádění obchodní činnosti online. Předložím podrobné vysvětlení a analýzu, výhody a nevýhody používání online internetových nástrojů v porovnání s tradičními způsoby a částečně prozkoumám vývoj používání webových stránek. Tato práce ukáže, jak je možné účinně provozovat služby cestovní agentury s využitím digitálního světa v porovnání s tradiční cestovní agenturou. Tato práce zdůrazňuje výhody používání online tržních nástrojů oproti těm tradičním.

Práce se skládá ze dvou hlavních částí. První je teoretická a zahrnuje základní teorie e-marketingu, e-commerce a související teorie v cestovním průmyslu.

Praktická část se bude opírat zejména o kvantitativní výzkum, který bude proveden z velké části na základě výsledků průzkumů a dotazníků

**Klíčová slova:** Online, E-commerce, webové stránky, cestování, tradiční

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# 1. Introduction

People and environment around them are continuously developing, compared to the past decade, their behaviour has changed significantly. Globalization has become an essential way of survival and Nowadays, world is living in the digital era. Internet and social network has changed everyday life, whole world is the part of the one big system, where people are able to search information, develop, learn, shop, negotiate, and do better marketing suggestions, with less effort, in a shorter time and cost-effectively.

Business effectiveness is based on the two crucial things. One is the amount of customers they have and the second is the revenue they gain from their buyers. In order to attract customers, business needs to have developed strong marketing tools. For many years, companies used traditional ways of marketing, based on Media- television, radio, newspaper advertisements on billboards or campaigns.

Nowadays, due to the digital era globalization is going too fast. People started to use Social-Internet networks, step by step they have learned how to use effectively online market, and found out that e-commerce and e-market is way more efficient than traditional market. They can easily find researches, articles, examine needs and expectations of their potential segment. Based on online surveys, people are getting more reliable and productive answers from the potential customers. The world is trying to be the part of social life and follow the challenges they face. Online market has become more and more sufficient, people are getting information about product or service they are interested in online for 24/7 . Online marketers use psychotype advertisements for the people's memory to be caught up with the interesting offer. (Philip Kotler, 2015)

E-commerce is the biggest market in the world, it has a huge number of customers and is becoming bigger and bigger every day. Online commerce or e-commerce represents a wide range of business activities for services and products. It can also be defined as a form of business transactions in which parties interact online rather than physical presence or physical exchange. It is associated with selling and buying products online, E-commerce is usually associated with buying and selling over the Internet, or conducting any transaction involving the transfer of ownership or rights to use goods or services. The more exact definition is: E-commerce is the use of online communication system and digital

information technology in business activities to build, redefine and transform relationships for value creation between individuals and organisations. (P.Schneider, 2015)

Millions of websites can be found worldwide , which can meet, meet and even exceed our needs and expectations. The term online market is too broad, I will focus on explaining why it is beneficial to use internet technologies on the example of travel agency “tripadvisor” in competition with traditional travel agency, In the practical part based on the surveys, statistics and records I will explain the benefits they gain from using online tools.

## **2. Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives**

This thesis will compare two companies operating in the same sector to discover how a local, traditional "Bricks-and-mortar" travel agency can remain profitable when in competition with a multinational on-line company. By means of a detailed case study this thesis seeks to identify what the strengths and weaknesses are of each type of company, and what lessons can be learned - especially regarding the use of internet technology. Thesis will highlight the benefits of using online internet technologies for business sector in competition with traditional way of doing business. Discuss advantages of the use of online communication system and digital information technology in business activities to build, redefine and transform relationships for value creation between individuals and organisations. I will compare two companies, from the travel industry field with each other. One, which is not using online Internet tools and follow the traditional ways and second, which is the example of doing business online. Will give detailed explanation and analysis, advantages and disadvantages of using online internet tools, compared to traditional ways and partially will examine the development of website usage. Thesis will show how the travel business is operating effectively through the digital world compared to the traditional travel company. This work is highlighting the advantages of using online internet tools versus the traditional one.

Thesis consists of two major part, first one is Theoretical and second part is practical. The research starts with a review of current literature relating to the travel industry, before leading on to the practical part. The second, practical part includes will rely mainly on quantitative research, which will be conducted based largely on the results of surveys and questionnaires

## **2.2 Methodology**

The research starts with a review of current literature relating to the travel industry, before leading on to the practical part. The practical part will rely mainly on quantitative research, which will be conducted based largely on the results of surveys and questionnaires, on which mathematical, statistical and numerical analyses can be performed. Deductions from the results of these studies will be considered, and presented as the results of this work.

Questionnaires will be used, which were sent to our segment electronically through the Social network, to find out what are the percentage of users of the segment online website „Tripadvisor“, questionnaires were sent to the people of different nations, it was sent to my home country Georgia and to Czech population, in order to get multiple different answers. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to find out the benefits of using online, digital sites versus traditional ones.

Questionnaires include questions about how many people are using the website “Tripadvisor”, which is the place where millions of people, choose, order and get different types of services, time efficiently and without much effort, how often do they prefer to use website, rather going to the local travel agency, are they content of the service, do they have some negative experience and what they would like to change into the current service.

### **3. Literature Review**

#### **2.3 E-commerce & E-business**

Globalisation is growing too fast and the business segment tries to make step forward and be the part of technological era. Most companies today do at least one of their main operations online. Most businesses operate sales, marketing and customer service through the internet. E-business model means having part or all of the business operations online.

E-commerce is the sales part of internet business. It includes collecting and analyzing data in order to get payments. E-commerce can also be defined, as exchanging the services and goods between the multiple types of business. There are four types of businesses that can be done in order to negotiate; Business to business, consumer to business, consumer to consumer and intra-companies. E-commerce includes the parts of management, sales, marketing and financing. The main workflow of the system is going automatically to avoid and minimise the risk of mistakes. E-commerce seems to be the new and innovative model for dealing with negotiation and more and more people are getting part of selling and buying through the internet. (Andam, 2003)

E-commerce is best way to create and transform connections between organizations or individuals through the use of Internet networks and digital world

#### **2.4 E-commerce and globalization**

Globalization is the process, where connections between the nations, companies' organizations are getting much easier. The system has related lots of different fields around the world. Internet and E-commerce has become a strong part of globalization. It helps the process to faster connect people with each other and negotiate across the globe. Globalization and e-commerce together will change the whole process of economic structure. (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999)

E-commerce is cost-effective, flexible way of communication. It has significantly increase international trade among the world and is improving on the daily basis. E-commerce includes activities that are held online, through the transactions automatically, rather than using intermediary human beings with the higher salaries. (Andam, 2003)

Global firms are choosing to use e-commerce, they are facing foreign competition, need to always be in the top of innovation, follow the trend and keep an eye of the top companies in their field. They try to expand their market, based on the experience they learn from global competitors, try to eliminate risks and mistakes. While using e-commerce their result is more efficient and cost-effective. Companies that are working around the world need transactions, feedbacks, communication, they choose to work through the Internet in order to be fast and again save the money. Organizations, that are the part of international trade have need to use e-commerce in order to communicate with very part of their business, to strengthen the value/supply chain and improve ways of interaction with their partners. Businesses with multinational parties should be able to use e-commerce.

## **2.5 Internet growth**

Internet was the way of the interconnection of the laboratories that were held the researches financed by the government. Since 1994 the usage of the Internet has expanded and was becoming as a common source of connection for every human being. Internet became the way of communication in every field, starting with individual connection ending up with governmental issues. It has changed the way we communicated, did the business, engaged and participated in every single action for ever. Internet is the source of information for school students, at university, for employees and employers. People get required information, collect data, analyse competitors, follow up with trends, learn, improve and get motivation from web source. (commerce, 2014)

Facebook, as the part of social network, was launched in 2004 and is developing every day. It has changed lives of millions of peoples, they found replacement for television, newspapers, magazines, articles, and they feel free to post their ideas, share the best moment of their lives and communicate with the rest of the world. Internet, illustrates the most democratic way of mass media. Cost effectively, with saving lots of money, everyone can launch their own web page and be the part of globalised negotiation.

People are posting and sharing their ideas, as never before. They get feedbacks, feel safe and improve on the example of the other's around the world. Companies can get ideas, from every field of interest, can read articles, online books and discussions about religion, nations, environment, can get newest fact about the on-going process in the world and even



find a job, with the help of internet, companies create their own profile and post everything about themselves, the candidate may be interested for employers around the globe and they will try to reach the company any time at any place. The way of buying and selling goods/service has been changed significantly. People buy goods through the huge web page Amazon; they can get discounts, easily find their preferable products, order them and get them at home. People even learn through the Internet, they attend online classes for language courses, for mathematics, get the certificates and improve their skills through the digital networks. More and more people around the world understand that in order to survive and improve their abilities internet usage and being part of digital era is the most important thing.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of users</u>	<u>World population</u>	<u>source</u>
December 2000	361 millions	5.8%	Internet-world stat
June 2001	479 millions	7.9%	Internet-world stat
July 2002	569 millions	9.1%	Internet-world stat
December 2003	719 millions	11.1%	Internet-world stat
December 2004	817 millions	12.7%	Internet-world stat
December 2005	1018 millions	15.7%	Internet-world stat
December 2006	1093 millions	16.7%	Internet-world stat
December 2007	1319 millions	20%	Internet-world stat
December 2008	1574 millions	23.5%	Internet-world stat
December 2009	1802 millions	26.6%	Internet-world stat
June 2010	1966 millions	28.7%	Internet-world stat
December 2011	2267 millions	32.7%	Internet-world stat
December 2012	2497 millions	35.7%	I.T.U
December 2013	2801 millions	39%	Internet-world stat
December 2014	3079 millions	42.4%	Internet-world stat
December 2015	3366 millions	46.4%	Internet-world stat
December 2016	3696 millions	49.5%	Internet-world stat
December 2017	4156 millions	54.4%	Internet-world stat

Figure 1 Internet growth during the years

Source: Own, 2018

## 2.6 Customer needs, wants and demands

Basic three parts of the marketing principles are needs, wants and demands of the customers. These three words seems quite simple, but it is actually the key elements of the successful marketing. In order to gain profit as an organization or company, the most important step is to anticipate, and satisfy customer needs. There are millions of surveys, questionnaires and methods people use to find out what is the actual need of their potential customers. Based on the collected information , business tries to offer their potential buyers, product/service that will be interesting for them. They chose segment, that share similar needs/wants and try to use strong, attractive marketing tools in order to gain brand recognition and competitive advantage through their rivals. (Philip kotler, 2015) Between needs, wants and demands there is connection, caused by one-another. As a basic human requirement can be described the needs of the customer, requirements that are essential for them to survive: feeling hungry, thirsty, need of shelter and so.on. (Michael.J.Baker, 2003) Wants are quite different from basic needs of the human beings, but somehow it can be transferred to the need component. Wants are inspired by the environment we live in, by the surrounding atmosphere, it can be chnaged during the time period and continuously developing behaviour of people. (Abhinandan K. Jain, 1999) If people are able to satisfy their wants it can be transferred into demand term. If they are able to buy a want, we can call this action demand.

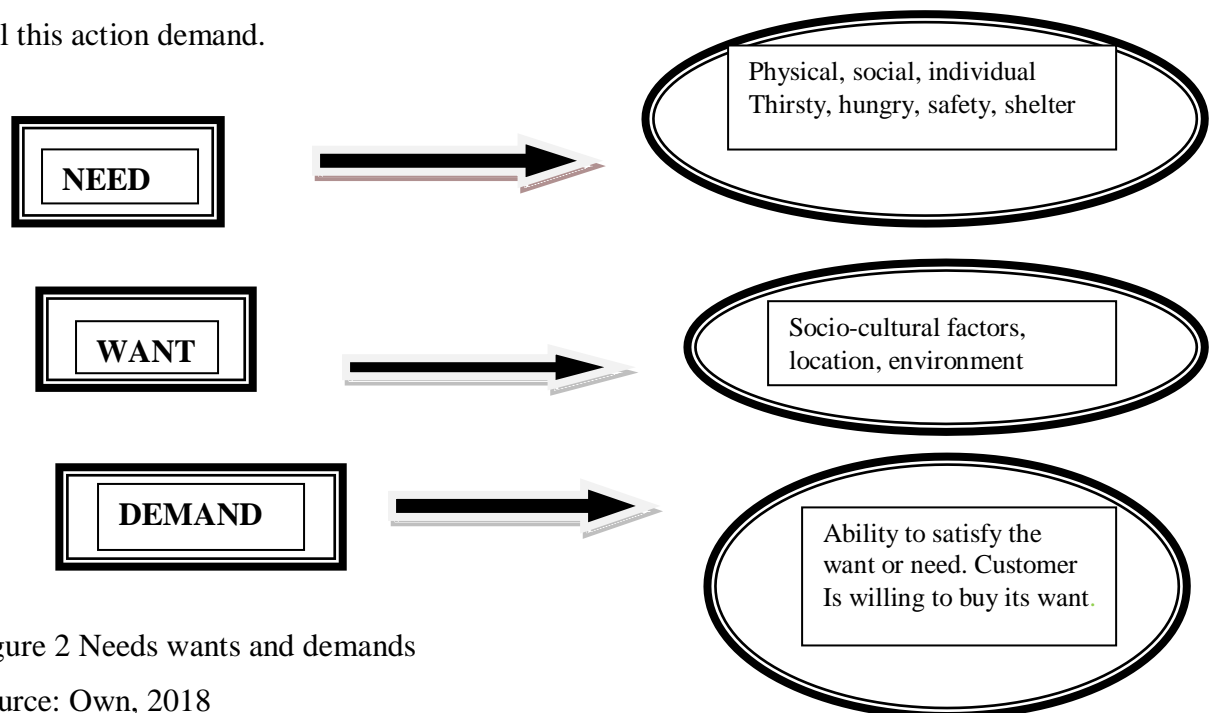


Figure 2 Needs wants and demands

Source: Own, 2018

## **2.7 Expectation and Satisfaction**

Customer's expectation and satisfaction are two the most important aspects, that needs to be analysed by the organization.

It is not easy to anticipate customer's expectations; every company tries to succeed and gain profit, if a company wants to sell products, they should motivate and make potential buyers interested in their product. In order to attract clients, organisations try to use marketing sources; they promote product/service Nowadays via Internet, social networks and through the digital world. When the customer gets information about the product, their expectation, based on the marketing tools used is moving from the bottom to the top level.

Once, customer expectation is high and new product/service is going to launch, it should meet and exceed requirements. Based on the level of buyer's satisfaction will the current organization gain profit and survive in the future. Based on the satisfaction level, company can gain brand recognition, competitive advantage and even brand loyalty. (Philip kotler, 2015)

If the satisfaction level is high enough, company will continue development and gain loyal customers. Exactly the level of customer's satisfaction helps the companies to always be competitive among their rivals and never give up in the field. Organization should always try to exceed customer satisfaction. They should always be one step forward, should collect data, plan, estimate future, development of their rival companies; Development should always be an on-going process. (Charan, 2007)

Customer expectation and satisfaction are great examples of effectiveness of online marketing. In the later chapters, I will explain how people are satisfied using Internet, online websites as a way of travel/negotiation, they are part of digital era and expect the same for the companies and organizations. People want to live easier, without any complications meet their desired requirements. Everyone tries to eliminate third party as a way of "helper" in order to satisfy own needs. "trip advisor", is one of the best example of getting desired result, much more easier, by own choice, based on online recommendations and reviews make decision and choose the best solution. (Kotler, 2005)

## **2.8 E-marketing**

In our century everything is related to the Internet, Nowadays despite the nation, gender, religion or believes everyone is the part of Digital world. As the globalization is the key element for success, people and environment got used to use global networks. When we discuss globalization and innovative, modern communication system, we mean electronic media, known as Internet.

E-marketing as a term, describes marketing the organization online, it is a great helper for companies to attract potential customers, maintain their satisfaction, gain brand recognition and loyalty. Internet marketing gives us a chance to advertise product/service through web pages, emails, blogs, and like pay per click. (Philip kotler, 2015)

Based on the type of company, organizations can choose their target market, audience, field of advertising easily; they can have higher return on investment (ROI) greater than those, who use traditional way of marketing. They are able to reach potential customers all over the world, millions of people can be attracted by smart marketing campaign, and the company can become part of the global negotiation. This is the main reason why, nowadays lots of companies are becoming part of the internet marketing and e-commerce. (Daniel, 2011)

## **2.5 E-marketing principles**

Internet marketing has lots of benefits, but one of the most important is that it has impacts, that are quantifiable. E-marketing includes the strategies of traditional marketing, but has different tools as well. listed benefits of using online marketing can be found bellow.

The most important part of the of the company is to gain profits and have the high return on investment, while using online marketing it can attract as much customer as possible and benefit from them. As, today there are lots companies, who are using online marketing tools, an organization have to be careful and smart, use innovative campaign and try to be as much interesting for the potential customers as possible. For travel agency companies, it is the best way to use e-commerce. There are millions of people, who use internet, while they are at work, at university and expect long vacation period for themselves. Company

should try to attract them with the different types of vocational offers, try to reach their minds and encourage them to make their wish come true. (Gary Armstrong, 2015)

Different from the traditional way of marketing, using online sources gives companies a chance to reach and increase potential segment easily. Organizations are able to reach customers all over the world and provide with offers at any place, any time, around the world. It is easiest way to increase significantly target audience size and be more global, known for everyone, not just in the current country, but cross the borders in gain as much profit as possible. (Philip kotler, 2015)

New marketing communication, using social networks, web pages or blogs gives opportunity to reach huge amount of customers that were unreachable for past decades. Travel agency from Georgia are not able to reach customers from India and attract them with interesting offers, while now “tripadvisor” can reach customers all over the world, with different nations, religions, ages and it is ready to satisfy all of their various requirements.

Online marketing is cost effective. Using online marketing is related to decreasing budget for advertising and if done in a right manner increasing profit simultaneously. Companies can cost effectively advertise their product through web pages or using social media advertisements. The cost of the e-marketing is much more affordable than traditional television or billboard placement.

## **2.6 E-marketing tips**

The top site with new visitors seems to be “Google”. In order to boost sales and increase the amount of customers, companies need to place their organization name in the top list of search for “Google”. The company should also think about the name, it should be not very long or very short, middle name that will be easily memorised by its potential customers.

A company should also try to deal with Google to understand website pictures. They should include names for the pictures and description of the picture, with highlighted text under the picture.

More and more people are getting used to Internet, web sources, higher amount of companies are using E-marketing, in order to always be in the top list, companies should update their website continuously and provide customers with the newest information and satisfy their requirements. If companies are able to leave their store, as it is for a few months, they can not to do the same with the social network. Website needs to updated, companies should try to keep fresh with special offers, design of the website, announcements and innovative products. (commerce, 2014)

## **2.7 Internet marketing strategy**

Company should be based on research behaviour, when the target market is already identified, next step is to research what is the key word, phrases specific target market uses regularly, and company needs to place those keywords for the items in order to gain customers easily. Company is able to use “Wordtracker”, to find out the most common phrases for search engines. (Abraham, 2014)

Google can help to provide with the most common and useful keywords, which has been placed by customers, it can give a monthly report based on the potential customer’s behaviour.

An organization should optimize the important web-page elements. When it will find out, what are the keywords, phrases for the customers, they should be included on the website text. The usage of the common phrases should be at least three or four times on the page. (Jones Alex Trengove, 2011)

Phrases are better to be used in tags or at least with highlighted titles to be easily recognised by search engines like Google.

The website should include hyperlinks, because the customer’s appreciate and connect it to high quality. Newly launched company, should be the part of forums online, under the hyperlink signature.

Companies should use guest posts, for brand recognition purposes. Guest will be able to use the content of the webpage through the links, it will increase awareness of the webpage and give more confident and recognition among the customers. More and more potential

buyers will appear automatically, when serious domains will include links from the webpage. (Abraham, 2014)

Using own employees' links – if the company employees own their own blogs, profiles or sites, they will include the online company's link on their pages and it will also increase the amount of customers from the inner side.

Being part of online world is the best practice for learning from competitors. The company can always and free, without any costs keep an eye on the competitor's webpages, can analyse what kind of advertising tools they use, what are their key elements for marketing. An organization can keep an eye of the launching process and after it analyse results, if the company will remove current marketing advertisement and campaign that means that it was not as successful step as predicted. For the company it is the great experience, they can learn from rivals, estimate steps forward and eliminate and decrease the number of mistakes that was already taken from the competitors. (Daniel, 2011)

For the past decades, there were several studies, researches and analyses done in order to discuss and conclude competitor's actions. It was not as easy to search and find information about company's sales, return on investment and benefits they gain from the current marketing strategy.

There are several benefits that companies can gain from using online marketing

- ✓ **Using Google alerts** – Google alerts can help the company to search and identify the backlinks used by the competitors.
- ✓ **Using marketing grader** – by using marketing grader it can be searched and read the competitor's final score of grade, based on the online sources, blogs and webpages, at the same time company can find out their grade and compare it to the rivals company.
- ✓ **Using Infinigraph** - Infinigraph is the tool, that keeps an eye for social networks online, company can find out by using the system, which trends and brand are best for the field. It is helpful for finding out competitors as well as improving own website.



- ✓ **Using monitoring of Backlinks** - Is the best way for collecting all backlinks from the competitor companies, can collect them and get on the own email the whole list of the required information.
- ✓ Using Semrush– Best way to collect data about the competitors can visit the website of the rival company and search for their own site. Company can easily get the set of keywords, phrases, advertising words, they use in their marketing campaign.
- ✓ Company should be aware of using their marketplace smartly
- ✓ Do not copy paste from the companies that are not in the same field, companies should search exactly the same market they are going to be launched. Try to get as much information from the current situation as possible, eliminate the risks and learn on the competitor's mistakes.
- ✓ Amazon, best known online website, has almost eighty five million visitors each month. On the example of it, company can get lots of visitors for the webpage; they may be presented as the potential customers.
- ✓ Never forget about the fees, limitations and activities of the current system the company belong to. There are always, some limitations that cannot be crossed, company should be aware of all possibilities and limitations that may occur.
- ✓ As a more narrow way of advertisement, company can always send emails to the customers, take into account that the size of email should not be too long, the content of the text should be an interesting offer, based on their expectations and interest fields, and the text should be exact, precise and concrete.
- ✓ Company should always trying to measure and Adopt the new system
- ✓ For own webpage it is successful to use Google Analytics, which is not for free and the company needs to pay for the consultation. It is the best way to

find out what are the strength and weakness, what it needs to improve and what to eliminate from the website.

- ✓ Company can make own objectives for Google Analytics, it will help to provide with all related information with the main aims, and helps the company to always be near and close to the main goal.
- ✓ If the company will use Incorporate Google Webmaster, it would provide with collection of data, indexes, all links and hyperlinks connected to the webpage, it will manually use spam actions and help to get likes for the page.
- ✓ It is important to have deep understanding of the customer's groups. They should be differentiated under several fields: gender, location, age.. Google Analytics would help the company to organize differentiation process for the webpage.
- ✓ For being continuously developed it is important to learn from the customer's behaviour. Google Analytics is also great helper for studying behaviour of customers.
- ✓ Google Analytics, can also discuss the email context and help to develop it continuously bases on customer expectations.
- ✓ Google Analytics offer to companies to use their own campaign URL for the advertisement issues.

## **2.8 E-MARKETING BEST PRACTICES**

Make the website look convenient and secure. For getting information from the customers, in order to study their behaviour continuously make them sign up for own website. Should be used the necessary and required questionnaires' for sign in. If the company needs to get them information about their email addresses, date of birth, gender and nationality. Should be exact and do not ask to long questions and lots of them. Try to be easy for them and guarantee security.

Based on studies, companies should not send irrelevant information to their customers; they will always try to avoid whole next email as spam.

Companies should guarantee their customer's. That website or email via which they communicate with the organization is under privacy policy.

Companies should create good advertising newsletters for their customers, provide them with the relevant innovative case studies, send relevant emails, and give them short reviews for industry analyses with its statistical information, trend and improvements. In order to get feedback from the customers, send them short surveys. That would not need too much effort from them, it will include basic questions companies' need to learn the behaviour and improve continuously. (Abraham, 2014)

A company can also use interesting offers for the customers. Except of what they will buy, there should more fields they will be interested in the nearest future. Give them the chance, to always be interested, encourage visiting the website through the daily basis and increasing the amount of customers, with the amount of product they are willing to buy.

Timing for e-communication should be anticipated in advance, companies should analyse how often emails can be sent to the customers, what time period is best for sending offers, when surveys can be sent and if there is any restrictions they should take into account. Based on several studies sending email to the customers is quite safe once a month, companies cannot send surveys weekly to the clients, they will avoid answering the questions and even more is more chance to never use webpage again. Companies need to be smart and the steps need to be estimated in advance. An organization can, also ask them in the survey, which time period is preferable for them and how often they are able to fill the questionnaires'. (Jones Alex Trengove, 2011)

An owner of the webpage should have multiple format information, to provide customers. There are different types of people who prefer different types of formats to have received.

Avoid sending huge emails, which include some attachments or links, people are afraid of being hacked, or spreading viruses through their laptops or computers. Try to be concrete and send them short emails without any additional links.

Be continuously developing, gain customer loyalty, always answer to their questions and provide with the required information. Analyse the topics with lots of profit, discussion and eliminate or improve, those which has the lowest level of interest.

## **2.9 Personalize your content**

Another way of gaining customer royalty and making feel them important is to always use the customer's name, while communicating with them. Start the sentence with the name of client, when answering the questions, offering new products or sending them emails. (Abraham, 2014)

## **2.10 Benefits of online marketing for business**

As internet has become more and more popular and common way of communicatio for everyone , the growth for online marketing has significatnly increased. People found out quite bigger amount of benefits in using online marketing compared to traditional.

Mass marketing, that is the traditinal way of promoting, using advertisements on televison, newspapers or radios, Online marketing gives everyone a chance to be in close communication with their customers all over the world. Organizations can have personal relationships with their potential buyers, they are able to analyze their segment effectively without spending hige amount of money.

Online marketing can offer lots of benegits to the organization's on their way to gain profit, professional online marketing strategy can attract more customers, gain rand recognition and brand loyalty for the company. (Daniel, 2011)

### **2.10.1 Fast and convenient service**

One of the benefits for online marketing is the decreased cos of transportation for the purchasing goods from all around the world. The reason why costs are decreased is caused by the the accessibility, through the internet customers can be reached everywhere, without any effort.

People are able to easily sale/buy items online, they can deliver preferable product without living their homes. Importers, benefit a lot from the online marketing, they can order and deliver products at their office. For more comfort, digital products can be downloaded by only using mouse click .

Internet marketing is the best way, to negotiate and communicate with the customers. It helps to identify their needs, wants and demands.

### **2.10.2 Cost-effective**

Internet marketing is cost-effective way of doing promotion. Using this way requires much less budget to advertise the product, than using traditional way of marketing, such as television, newspapers, billboard or radio. In online marketing company can collect data, get free lists in every field of business direction.

E-marketing allows the company to communicate with the customers frequently, with less costs and effort. Having online relationship with customers is more affordable way, companies can send them e-mail, questionnaires, surveys, get from them required information, collect data about the trends that are interested for the segment and improve online the current position. While, in traditional marketing people use brochures, billboard, outside campaigns and it much more expensive for them with having less personal relationship with their customer (reynolds, 2004)

### **2.10.3 Measure Results**

Internet marketing gives a chance to track and measure the results companies have gained . Marketers can use broad range of tools to measure the results, they can analyze their current situation and illustrate the progress or regress of their online marketing campaign. With the help of Google Analytics, they can analyze their strategies, what worked well and what field needs to be changed or improved.

Analyzing and measuring results, gives an organization a better understanding of how the marketing advertisement campaign works. It provides the company with the idea of how to boost sales, what needs to be changed in marketing, what is the best way of promoting the product. Online measurement of results is the quicker way, to find out the solutions and

improving the company performance. An organization will easily search for the root cause of the problem, eliminate and change the actions, that are causing the unpredictable problems for the company.

#### **2.10.4 Targeting all around the world**

Marketing online the products and services gives a chance to target chosen segment based on demography. Companies are able to have access to the potential customers all over the world, they can choose exact target market, with less effort. Collect data online, regarding the target groups and choose the proper segment online.

With the usage of demographic targeting companies get more specific information about the customers they think are potential buyers for service/product. If companies will have above mentioned sign in system for the website, they will find out from every visit on their webpage, who their customers really are, with the filled in form companies will get the information about their gender, age, e-mail addresses. Based on which they can communicate with the potential buyers on a monthly basis, send them surveys and questionnaires to get more information about their interests or expectations.

#### **2.10.5 Global Marketing**

As the internet is the part of globalization process, usage of online marketing gives us a chance to advertise, negotiate and communicate globally, all over the world.

With the E-marketing companies can reach the audience in every geographical location, advertise the product everywhere they need, attract customers from the all parts of the world, make the company be globalised and trade internationally.

Globalised company, gives a chance to gain partners, be interested for global organizations, learn from the competitors and be the part of the huge international trade, rather than using traditional way of marketing and focusing only on local geography and customers. (Philip Kotler, 2015)

### **2.10.6 Multitasking**

One of the most important benefits of online marketing is the ability to communicate and attract millions of customers. Companies can do several tasks together, once the main vision of the companies' website is handled and works efficiently, they are able to deal with the different issues; communicate with customers, collect information about them, analyze their behaviour, fields of interest. Companies can follow up with the brand new trends around the world, identify competitors, measure their performance, get their results and compare to themselves. Companies can measure own performance, if it is not satisfying, search for the resolutions, implement new plans and improve the marketing campaign.

Companies can offer their customer the best shopping experience, by providing satisfactory service, while buying products/service online. They should have secured and safety website, where customers will feel calm and enjoy choosing and buying process. (Daniel, 2011)

### **2.10.7 Non-stop marketing**

E-marketing is the best way to have always on-time marketing, the campaign would work for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Companies will define in advance, exactly when the advertisements should be done through the social networks for example, with the usage of millions of people. They will be the part of search engine's, which means that they will have 24 hour online advertisement for huge amount of population. Companies do not have to worry about the time frame of the marketing campaign, and pay extra salaries for working over-time to the employees.

If the product/service is for global customers, they do not need to worry about the difference in time frame. There is no restrictions for online marketing campaigns, People will get advertisements or special offers, when they will use the social network, visit the website or even search for some other information in the search Engine like Google. (reynolds, 2004)

### **2.10.8 Automated marketing**

Online marketing can offer us automated campaign, which means that organizations can have system integrated in the company that will give them a chance to use mouse-click. If

compare it to the traditional offline way of marketing, where marketers use several strategies to deal with advertising on even analysing process, online marketing is easier way to just choose the right, proper system integrate it in the campaign and use only mouse touch and be the most efficient, developed and cost-effective company. By using, automated marketing company will improve its results, be more efficient, will pay more attention to the things that need way more effort, and will save huge amount of money.

#### **2.10.9 Data collection**

Data collection, is the essential part of the marketing. Firstly, companies need to have all necessary information collected on their customers. Once they will visit the website and use short sign-in form, companies will get basic information about potential buyers. It will be captured and saved for the analyzing process.

Data, collection can be the great helper, while sending the advertisements to the customers, companies can send them specific ads, that will be focused on their exact interest, data collected from buyer will help to analyze their wants and needs or can also analyze their behaviour, buying habits from the own website. Companies can collect information about their age, gender, nationality, interests, get their e-mail addresses search their profiles online and be more close to the customer.

Compared to traditional marketing, online marketing offers way more possibilities to get and collect data about the customers, it allows to analyze the customer profile, behaviour and helps to make advertising campaign that will sell the product with the higher percentage, than traditional marketing would do. By using the online marketing, businesses are able to serve millions of customers with different services/products based on their specific demands.

#### **2.10.10 Marketing diversification**

It is important to be clearly identified what kind of strategy, marketing tool the company will use to meet and exceed the customers expectations. Starting from targeting customers, ending up with selling the goods, with the use of online marketing company can easily run various marketing systems and improve.



While working, on one system, companies can simultaneously integrate and improve new way of doing the campaign. Try and choose some of the best practises for the company and take the lead positions of the market. (reynolds, 2004)

#### **2.10.11 Easily modified.**

In order to improve and have strong marketing campaign, it needs to be changed or improved time-by-time. Online marketing programmes allows the business to have easily modified systems, it means that organizations can change the structure, appearance of online web, without losing time, money and having problems with service interruption.

Traditional way of marketing needs to improve the problem step-by-step, with the effort of human beings, with spending lots of time and budget.

#### **2.10.12 Improved transaction service**

Transactions become easier, if companies are using online system. they can use digital payment system, where everything is done online, do not have to get cash and go with the marketer. companies can use third party service, that will deal with the payment transactions, they are safe, secured and guarantee that the result will be satisfying for the both parties of the negotiation. One example of this system is „Paypal“

#### **2.10.13 Time-efficient**

Compared to traditional marketing, online marketing is easier to integrate and implement. Companies can choose, and set up online marketing campaign at their preferable time frame, they can make their work be time-effective, efficient. Companies can implement autonomous systems, autoresponders, Google Analytics and be as more flexible with the digital era as possible.

#### **2.10.14 On-going development of campaign**

Strategies for marketing campaigns are developing every day. There are lots of offers that will guarantee the business to have long-term effects and continuous improvement. Websites and blogs can be the long-term marketing campaign for the organization, it can be developed but function for many years from today.

Types of online marketing, including; email marketing, click-marketing, social network or search engine strategy can be developed on the daily basis and offer to the company, newest and innovative promoting ideas to attract as more customers as possible.

Online marketing allows to learn from the behaviour of the customer, can capture their buying experience, their interests, time they spent on the webpage, the period of the day they visit it, what are the products/services that sell frequently ?, what are the products that do not attract people, companies may need to change their promotion, appearance or remove from the website. (reynolds, 2004)

### **2.11 Online e-commerce versus offline**

Deciding whereas the products/service should be offered online or in a traditional store, is quite difficult it can be the most important strategy the organization will ever chose. By prioritising what segment the business is going to cover, what are the main visions and goals, companies can come up with the main idea. Whether, they will operate offline or online it will change the whole structure of the company, the way they will interact with the customers, offer an advertising campaigns, promote the product, attract potential segment, hire employees and develop continuously.

In my opinion, nowadays it is essential and even necessary to be the part of digital era and use online commerce as a way of negotiation. I will give some brief advantages of disadvantages of use both systems. (reynolds, 2004)

#### **➤ Advantages for using online commerce**

As a first advantage, I need to mention budget, financing costs. To start online e-commerce business, companies need to do own website, compared to traditional way, they are not required to buy or hire space, equip with required furniture, technology and pay huge amount of money to start running the idea. With the use of online website, companies can start their ideas with less costs and try to sell product/service straight away.

Using online advertising campaigns is another advantage, companies can have 24/7 marketing campaign, through the multiple ways.

After attracting customers, companies can measure the performance, results through the using of online software systems, compare to the competitors and implement the solution plan.

➤ **Disadvantages of online commerce**

As the main disadvantage of online commerce, we can consider that they do not have physical store, where customer can come, take a look, choose, discuss and touch the products. If traditional store can be seen somewhere in the street, and attract potential buyers at a glance, online commerce needs to put all of its efforts in the digital marketing campaigning to make their product/service popular among the million of people and competitors.

As the second important disadvantage of online commerce we can discuss, face-to-face interaction between the seller and buyer. In traditional marketing people interact with each other, discuss the importance of product, offer innovative service and try to deal with customers with every possible effort, while in online marketing companies are not able to meet the customer face-to-face, but they can get and collect required data, information about them.

➤ **Advantages of Offline commerce**

Offline stores, have the advantage to get more customers from „at glance“ , which means that with a good location of the store, creative atmosphere and interior can get more customers than predicted. Segment of potential buyers can be increased without too much marketing effort, companies can become famous locally and gain brand loyal customers.

Companies can communicate face-to-face with buyers, give them recommendations, help to make choice and have positive review on the store.

➤ **Disadvantages of Offline commerce**

If we compare offline commerce to online one, the main disadvantage of offline retail is that, it is much more expensive to start-up the idea and launch business, through the traditional way. Companies have to pay lots of money for buildings, offices, advertising

offline campaigns and employees. Additionally they have to pay for extra charges; Electricity, gas, water.

If the company is going to turn traditional store, one of the most important part in order to gain benefits and make the business be successful is to choose the right location to open the store. There is a big risk, if location will not be satisfying for customers, despite product quality it will lose lots of potential buyers. While, online commerce do not need to think about the physical presence of the store and they will attract customers without the good or bad location.

## **2.12 SWOT ANALYSIS**

Swot analysis is a useful strategy to implement in the business. It helps to find out strength, weaknesses, what new opportunities company can handle and what are the threats the company may face.

SWOT analysis include the four critical elements for the analysis; Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats. Strength illustrates the company's advantages among its competitors. Strengths provide an analysis of the company's advantages over its competitors. Weaknesses are the part of SWOT analysis, from which we can analyse the organization's competitive disadvantages. Opportunities can be discussed as the part of open new possibilities for the business and the threats are external factors that may affect existing company. (fine, 2009)

- Strength: Business strong strategies, anything it can be described as strong player.
- Weaknesses: The part of the organization, where it has the main problems.
- Opportunities: Open possibilities in the new market.
- Threats: External factors, that may change companies current position/situation

For having successful SWOT analysis for e-commerce, businesses need to take into account few things:

- Time: Companies should consider all possible time-frame for the business based on its size, Swot analysis can be completed from several days to few months.
- Data: SWOT analysis requires having all necessary data collected. Based on the company, that needs to be analysed organizations will need to have customer interviews, surveys, competitors' data, financing, and audit.
- Benchmarking As a smart company, are required to have special industry benchmarking done, in order to meet international requirements.

### **2.13 Creating website for online company**

The most important part for the online business is to create an attractive, interesting and memorable website. Nowadays there are over 200 million active websites, as a star-up developer have to be specific, innovative and gain competitive advantage through the building of the own unique website.

Doing online business is quite different from the traditional one. Companies need to promote their business online; the first and most important impression for the potential customers will be the website of the company. Lots of effort should be allocated from the very beginning.

Firstly, companies need to choose the website builder; there are several platforms that help start-up owners to run their webpages in a correct way. They can guarantee that the website will be safe, full of technical skills, companies will be able to choose and focus more on design and content issues. The rest for creating strong website will be done 100 % professionally. (Jones Alex Trengove, 2011)

#### **Features to be considered while building a website**

- **Easy for use** – While choosing the website builder, companies should consider how the structure of the webpage is going to be. For every customer its preferable to be the easy to use one. Every one prefers, website with several options, easily understandable. Their main aim, while using online commerce is to spend less

effort and get the required result. For that the website should offer multiple options for buying the good/services, lots of ways how to choose their preferable product and the way how they choose, order and get things should be easy and memorable for them. With the good service website can gain as much customers as possible.

- **Flexible Design** – To attract customers, the website should have unique design, It should be appropriate for the industry the business is going to operate in, design should create a friendly atmosphere, give customers a feeling like they are visiting their physical store. Website should be modern, innovative and have its competitive advantage among the rivals.
- **What features the website will have** – It's important to take into account, when choosing the website builder, what features it will include, for the future to have as many possible solutions as possible. Website should have blogging field, should be part of e-commerce, should have optimized the searching engine, should use Google Analytics. The more website builder includes, the more the company is able to analyze, make conclusions, measure the results and improve continuously.
- **Support & help center** – Website should include everything starting from knowledge centers ending up with live chats with the customers. As online business differs from the traditional one, sellers are not able to meet face-to-face their customers, so they should have some alternative way to answer their questions, help them to make decisions and make their shopping experience as positive as possible. Live chat is the good example of how sellers and buyers can communicate through the online service. They will be satisfied if every question will be answered without time interruptions.
- **Customer score measurement** – It would be great, if website will include customer score measurement field, where customers will give their feedback about the current website, they will be able to score the quality of the webpage, write their comments, reviews, what they liked, what would they change, if there is something that needs to be improved. Using customer score system, is great to gain more visitors on the website. Every one reads reviews and make decision based on the scores website got from their current customers.

➤ **Use permission marketing** - Smart website should have made sign up form to be the participant of the webpage. It can be short form to get basic informatio about the customers, such as; name, date of birth, email address. Once website will get the visitors company will be able to analyze their behaviour, send them offers and interesting news through their email addresses, and try to build communication with them. Companies should promote their business through the social media advertising, be in the top list of the search engine sites and make sure that company will meet and exceed every customer's needs, wants and demands. (Jones Alex Trengove, 2011)

## **2.14 Target Market**

The most important part for every business to succeed is correctly chosen target segment. Companies should choose from the millions of people, who are going to be the buyers for the product. For the online commerce it is essential to come up with the appropriate group of target people, to understand their needs, wants and demands. To have analysed their expectations and what the company is going to offer them and how a business is going to meet and exceed potential customer's expectations.

Once, company will find out the target segment for the business, It has to examine their current wants and needs, what they expect from the organization as an innovator and the company should offer them interesting products through the use of social media, help of the search engines and blogs. As soon as they will visit the website, marketers will be able to learn more about their buying behaviour, time they spent on the website, which product they choose, what was the advertisement they were attracted from and company will be able to improve every day. (Friedmann, 2009)

## **2.15 4P and marketing mix**

The most common definition for marketing is to have the right products in the right place at the right time, for the right price. The most important parts for the business to succeed are combined together in the marketing mix. (Michale.J.Baker, 2014) For every business it is essential to have well-defined marketing mix in order to succeed.

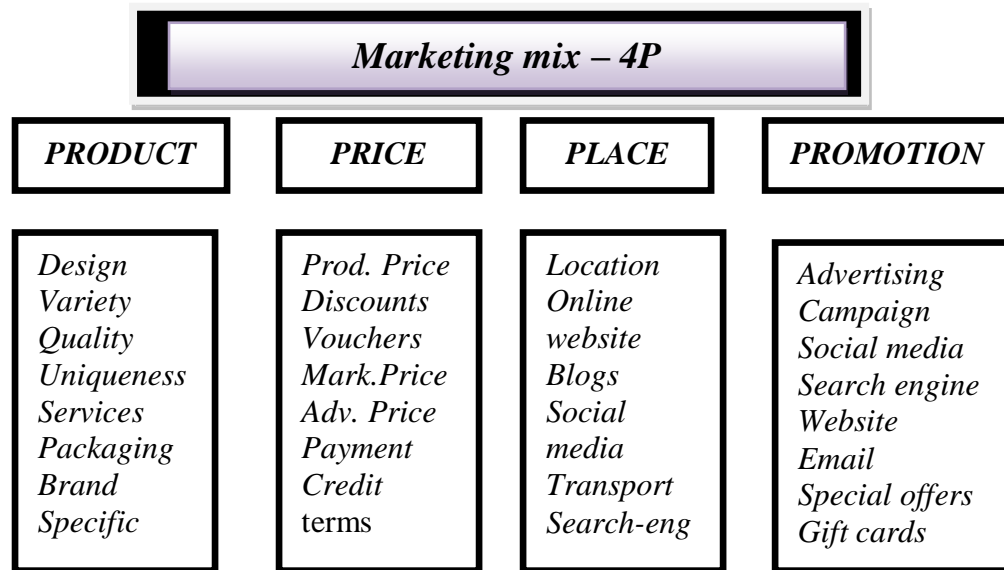


Figure 3 Marketing mix

Source: Own, 2018

If the company has implemented the right marketing mix, it will ensure that they will have right product, offered for the right piece at the right place on the right time. Marketing mix is the great tool to understand what the company is going to offer, what are the requirements from customers they need to meet and what benefits can the business bring for the customers and shareholders.

### **PURPOSE OF 4P**

The main purpose of the marketing mix strategy is to satisfy both sides of the negotiation, it has to deal with sellers and buyers, bring benefits for the both parties, it helps to define and achieve marketing targets, and with the properly defined marketing mix company can result with high sales, profits and gain customer satisfaction. Marketing mix strategy helps the organization to have constant monitoring of the products, to follow-up the newest trends and brands, every step in marketing mix should be exact and updated. (Michale.J.Baker, 2014)



## 4. Practical Part

### 4.1 Case study in the travel industry

Practice part will start from the questionnaires' and statistics I got from the customers of the "Travelot" Georgian agency and "Tripadvisor" global online agency

The main aim of the questionnaires' and the collected statistical information is to compare traditional travel agency versus digital one, and define the advantages and benefits of the online travel agency.

The vision of the thesis is to define the benefits of the online travel agency in competition with traditional one; I will try to show the analysed results from the questionnaires and discussion regarding two travel agencies.

### 4.2 Basic Data from "travelot" customers

Questionnaires' were sent to Georgia to the customers of "travelot" company and were asked with several types of questions, I tried to find out how is their level of satisfaction, if it will be easier for them to use online website, what benefits will it bring for them and what are current advantages that they have, while using "travelot" company. The first table represents the number of customers to whom the questionnaires' were sent and how many of them answered our questions. First survey shows the total number of customers who participated in our survey.

Table 1 Total number of questionnaires

Number of questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage
100	75	75%

Source: Own, survey, 2018

Table 1 represents the percentage and total number of answered questionnaires from the customers of Georgian travel agency "travelot"

Table 2 Gender of the customers’

Gender	frequency	percentage
Female	45	60%
Male	30	40%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 2 shows the number and percentage of the customers’ gender who took part into our survey. Majority of the customers that answered to my questions are female respondents – 60%, while males represent 40% of the participants.

Table 3 Age range of the customers’

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Under 18	5	7%
18-35	34	45%
35-55	30	40%
55+	6	8%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 3 illustrates the age range of the respondents. The age of the majority of the respondents is between 25-35- 36%. The minority of the respondents are under 16 ages

Table 4 The length of internet usage of the “travelot” customers’

Hours per day	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	3	4%
2-3	5	7%
3-4	10	13%
4+	57	76%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 4 illustrates that the majority of the respondents, which are 76% spend online four hours and more, their number is 57 out of 75. The minimum number of respondents which seems to be three customers out of 75 spends from one and two hours online. Their percentage is 4. The similar number we got from the question if there are people who spend between 2-3 hours online, their number is 5 out of 75 and are 7% of the total respondents. 13% of the customers, 10 out of 75 people spend 3-4 hours online.

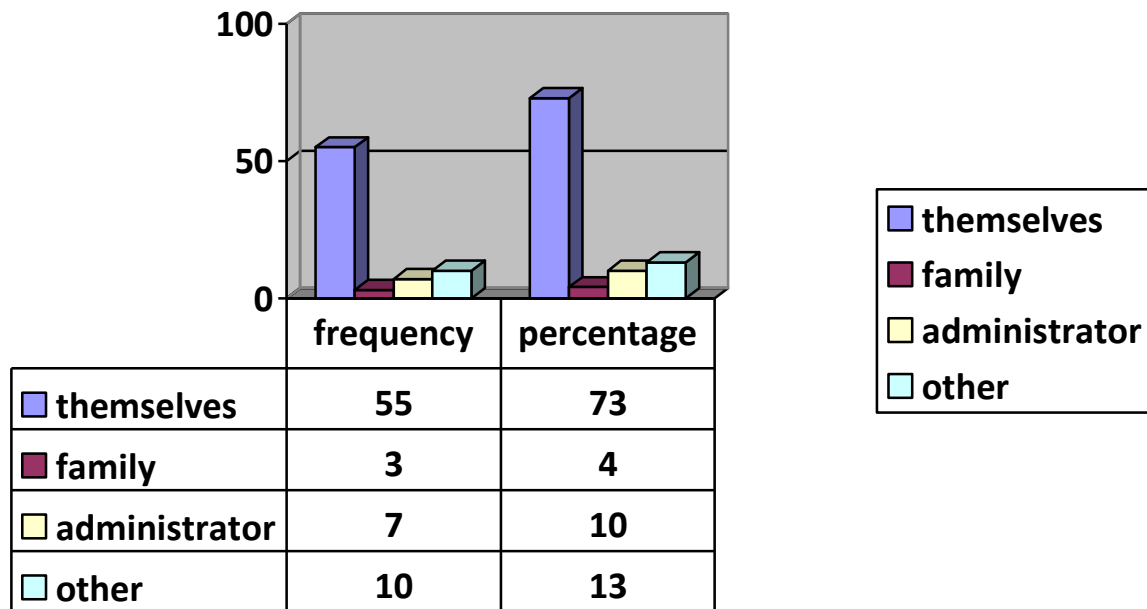
Table 5 flying reasons for the customers of “travelot”

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Travel	45	60%
Business	8	11%
Education	7	9%
Other	15	20%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 5 illustrates the reasons why customers travel with the help of “travelot”. The majority 60% of the customers use the “travelot” for the reason of travel – 45 respondents out of 75. There are eight respondents who travel on the reason of business, which seems to be 11%, from total 75 customers 7 and 9% travel for educational reasons and 20% use other reasons.

Table 6 how respondents organise their travel



Source: Own, survey 2018

73% - 55 respondents out of 75 do the organization for their travel themselves, they search choose and give prepared options to the travel agency. 10% of the people use the help of their administrators..4% of the respondents use their family members’ help and 13% have the other ways of organizing their travel.

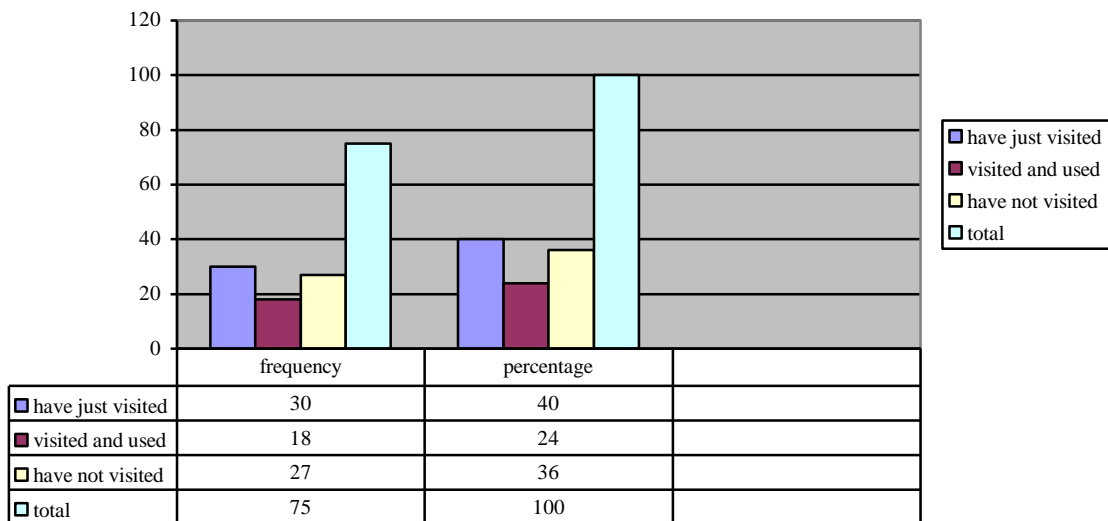
Table 7 Reasons why customers use travel agency

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Buy travel package	40	53%
Buy airplane ticket	10	13%
Get info about embassy	25	34%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 7 illustrates the reason of why the customers use travel agency. 40 respondents out of 75 that represent 53% use travel agency to buy their whole package, which includes tickets, hotel reservations, and transfers from the airport. 35 % of the customers get information about the embassy of the specific country and what they need to apply for visa. 13 % use travel agency to buy their flying tickets

Table 8 Have the customers used online website ?



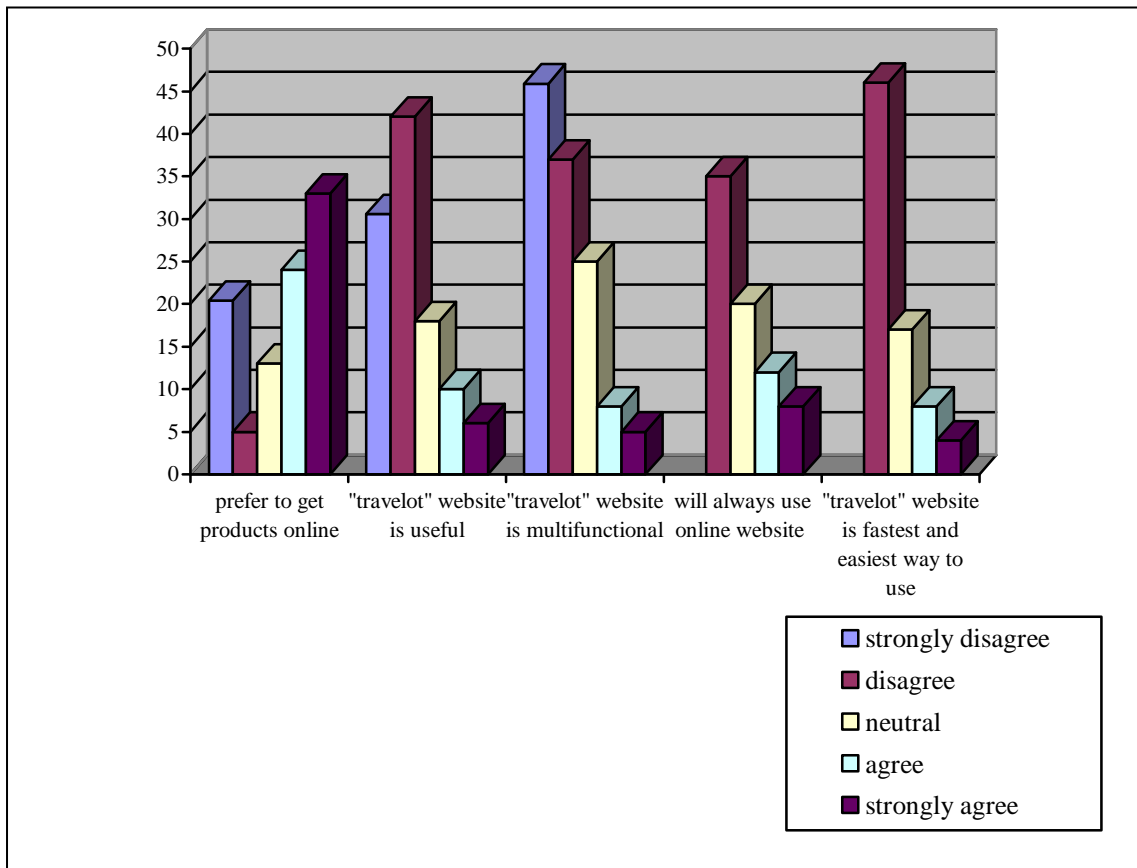
Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 8 illustrates that 30% of the respondents have just visited the online websites for travel agency; they are 40 customers out of 75. 18 % of the customers have visited online

travel webpages and also used their service. 36 people out of 75 have never visited or used online sources for planning and organising their travel.

travel agency; they are 40 customers out of 75. 18 % of the customers have visited online travel webpages and also used their service. 36 people out of 75 have never visited or used online sources for planning and organising their travel.

Table 9 represents the level of satisfaction of the “Travelot” website



As we can see from the above given chart, the majority of the respondents prefer to get service/product online, approximately 40 out of 75 customers, prefer to use internet in order to get required product. There are less than 10 people, who think that internet is not good tool to use for the purpose of getting desired service; more than 40 people think that “travelot” website is not useful for them; there number is almost 53%. Almost 50 respondents about of 75 strongly disagreed that the website of “travelot” is multifunctional

for the customers. 40% of the respondents think that they will never use website of the travel agency again. Almost 50% of the customers approved that “travelot” is not the company, which is using strong, smart and fast website.

#### 4.3 Questionnaire for “Tripadvisor” customers

Tripadvisor is the largest travel website in the world. The site gives the customers’ ability to choose their preferable service, with approximately 661 million reviews and discussions it covers the largest options for travel - including: best restaurants in the countries, airlines, hotels, accommodations and experience of the people. Tripadvisor help the users to decide where to go, where to stay, what to eat and how to travel. The website has average 456 million visitors for month, all of them are trying to choose the best and unforgettable experience.

Table 10 Total number of questionnaires

Number of questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage
100	75	75%

Source: Own,2018

Table 11 gender of the customers

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	30	40%
Female	45	60%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 11 represents the gender of the respondents in the questionnaire. The majority of them are female customers, with the number of 45 out of 75, they represent 60% of the total amount. Male illustrate 40% of the respondents.

Table 12 Age range of the respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	13	17%
25-35	32	43%
35-45	22	29%
45+more	8	11%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 12.2 represents the age range of the respondents. The majority 43% of them are the middle age customers, their age range is 25-35. The next percentage of the customers is 29, at the age of 35-45. Users of the “Tripadvisor” website at the age of 18-24 represent the 17% of the respondents. 8 customers out of 75 are at the age of 45 and more. This means that the minority percentages of the users are above 45 ages.

Table 13 The length of internet usage of the “tripadvisor” customers’

Hours per day	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	2	3%
2-3	3	4%
3-4	11	15%
4+	59	78%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, 2018



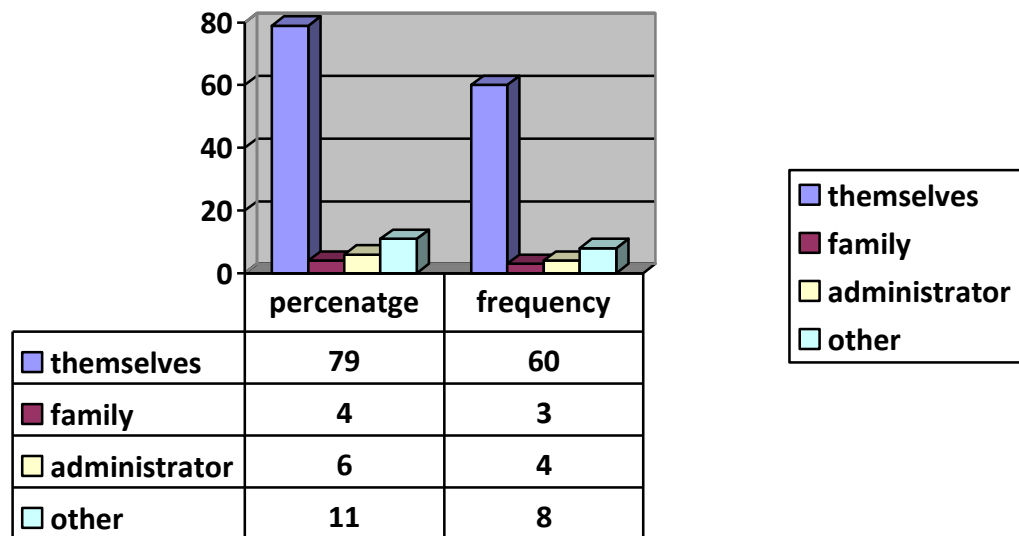
Table 13 illustrates that the majority of the respondents, which are 78% spend online four hours and more, their number is 59 out of 75. The minimum number of respondents which seems to be two customers out of 75 spends from one and two hours online. Their percentage is 3. The similar number we got from the question if there are people who spend between 2-3 hours online, their number is 3 out of 75 and are 4% of the total respondents. 15% of the customers, 11 out of 75 people spend 3-4 hours online.

Table 14 flying reasons for the customers of “tripadvisor”

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Travel	45	60%
Business	8	11%
Education	7	9%
Other	15	20%
Total	75	100%

Table 14 illustrates the reasons why customers travel with the help of “tripadvisor”. The majority 60% of the customers use the “ripadvisor” for the reason of travel – 45 respondents out of 75. There are eight respondents who travel on the reason of business, which seems to be 11%, from total 75 customers 7 and 9% travel for educational reasons and 20% use other reasons.

Table 15 how respondents organise their travel



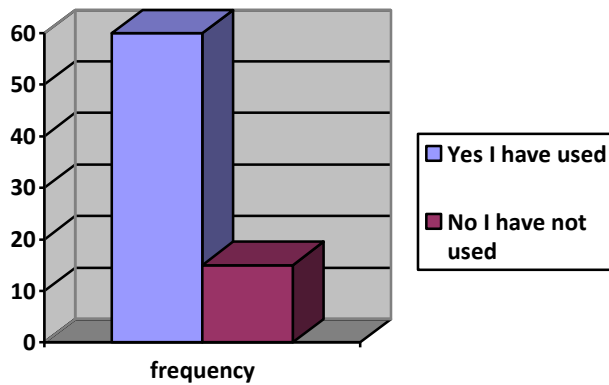
Source: Own, 2018

Table 16 Reasons why customers use travel agency

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Buy travel packet	40	53%
Buy airplane ticket	10	13%
Get info about embassy	25	34%
Total	75	100%

Source: Own, 2018

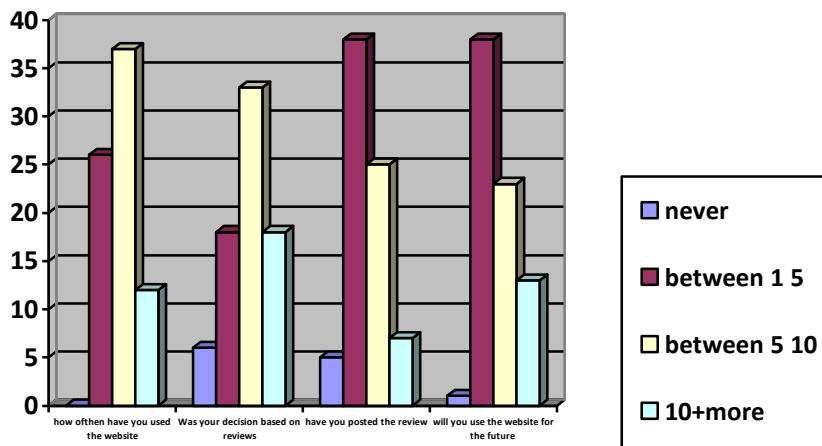
Table 17 how many customer have used “Tripadvisor” within the last 1 year



Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 17 represents how many respondents have used the “Tripadvisor” within the last 12 month. 60 people out of the 75 – 80% have used the travel service website.

Table 18 feedback regarding the “Tripadvisor”

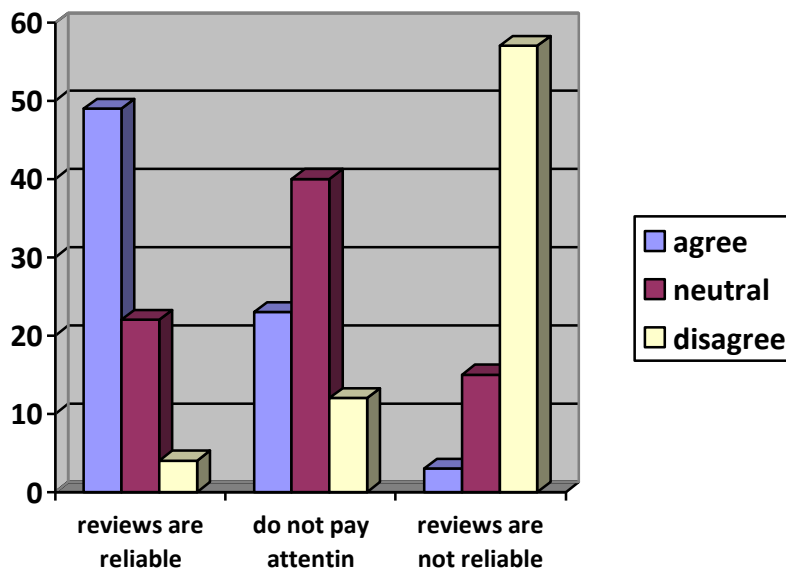


Source: Own, survey 2018

Table 18: represents the chart, with the feedback from the respondents. The question – How often have they used the website, the negative answer was with 0%. The majority of the respondents have used the “Tripadvisor” website between 5-10 times; their decision seems to be based on the reviews, which are posted from the other users. Little, but still

less than 5 customers, has never used the review of the other customers. 38 out of 75 respondents have written their own reviews more than once; they have feedback to the customers of the website for all over the world. Again, the majority of the respondents will use the website for the nearest future and the minority of them gave the negative answers.

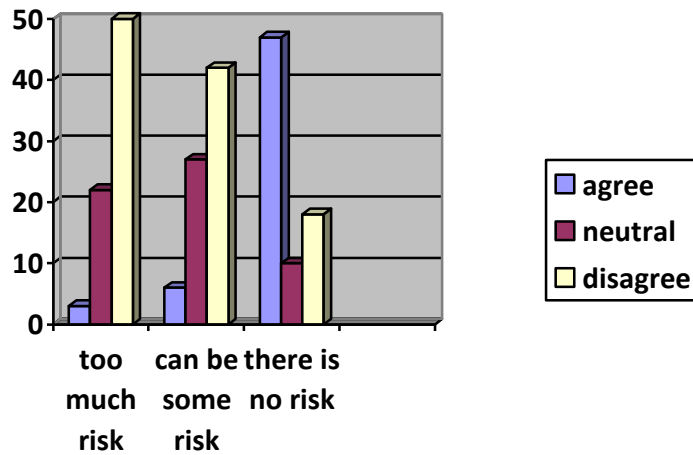
Table 19 represents the level of reliability of the “Tripadvisor” reviews



Source: Own survey.2018

Table 19 represents the level of reliability of “Tripadvisor” company. The majority of the respondents more almost 49 people answered that the reviews on which the website is based is reliable. The buy service, products regarding the other customers comments, pay attention to the experience of the customers and take into consideration the experience of the buyers. Less than 5 people agreed that “Tripadvisor” is not reliable. Less than 30 people are neutral regarding the reliable level of the website.

Table 20 represents the risks regarding “Tripadvisor” website



Source: Own survey 2018

Table 20 represents the level of risks customers may face while using the “Tripadvisor” website. The majority of the respondent 47 of them agreed that there is no risk when choosing the service based on website reviews. They can rely on them and feel safe and confident. Survey gave us more than 20 neutral answers; respondents think that there may arise little risk, when using the “Tripadvisor”. Almost 50 respondents disagreed that website has too much risks, their experience and feedback is positive.

#### 4.4 “Tripadvisor”

“Tripadvisor” was founded in 2000 and is one of the most popular and used American internet-based travel company in the world. Company gives the customers chance to plan, choose and buy their preferable service. The site offers plenty of services including: Tickets, hotels, transportation, reviews and recommendations regarding the best restaurant and places to view in almost every country. Company has more than 600 million user reviews and feedbacks including seven million listing for rentals, restaurants and hotels.

Due to continuous number of growing users, the company is expanding every day; it has almost three thousand employees all over the world and got the 1.5 billion U.S dollars revenues for 2017.

“Tripadvisor’s” innovative ideas regarding the customer’s reviews helps the users to get free advices from the people all over the world, they can choose rely or no on the other people’s experience and opinion. The company is increasing every day, because there are more and more people, who want to get free or cheap service, based on strong and safe reviews, no one likes to spend lots of time and too much effort to get their required service. “Tripadvisor” helps the customers to save their money and get feedback from the experienced users.



Figure 4 Tripadvisor Average monthly visitor

Source: TRIPADVISOR INVESTOR RELATIONS Andy Gould 2017

For 2016 and 2015, monthly users or visitors of the website has increased 14% and 22%, for the first half of the 2017 their number was gown by 16%.

#### **4.5 “Travelot” Company**

Travelot is the Georgian travel agency company, located in Tbilisi. It offers several services to its customers. Including; flight tickets, local tours, Hotel reservations, Tour package and etc. The company is quite known and popular among the Georgian population. They have lots of loyal customers and are trying to always be satisfying for them and offer the safe, reliable and excellent service. “Travelot” has the strong brand-recognition and huge amount of satisfied customers, who share their experience to the rest of the population and due to the fact that Georgia and especially Tbilisi is not very big City, It is easy to reach mouth-to-spread recognition.

The position of the travel agency among its competitors is quite high; “Travelot” tries to increase its brand awareness but locally and gains more and more customers in the local market. “Travelot” company operates on several fields; customers use it for travelling reasons, buying tickets for airplane, or collecting information regarding the visa issues. If people would like to go in foreign countries for long-term purposes, they need to have plenty of paperwork prepared, in Georgia people feel safe when they get help from the travel agency companies. Company has its own website and Facebook page in Social media, they are announcing offers and packages on their site, but operate only for local customers. Mainly, users visit their office located in Tbilisi and get the required information from their operators face-to-face. Customers are only able to get advice from the employees, they do not use the other users reviews based on their experience. People need to visit “Travelot” office, spend time and effort to use the service; however the company has gained huge popularity, brand recognition and awareness among the Georgian population. People feel safe, when they are relied on the experienced employees, and get services from the popular tour agency. As the level of the customer satisfaction and brand recognition is quite high, I think the company should expand globally. Based on the usage of Internet growth, more and more people are using online website and communication ways to get their business done. Companies following the digital era requirements gain much more profit and brand recognition all around the world than the traditional ones, operating only locally.

#### **4.6 Comparison of “Travelot”- “Tripadvisor”**

The growth of the internet and technologies is transforming our lives to the new, innovative level. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has offered the consumers to communicate all over the world without any boundaries. People using online communication system, are able to be online 24/7 and follow new trends and challenges worldwide. Rapid growth of the Internet usage is the main reasons of developing e-commerce. More and more people are becoming the parts of the e-commerce; they prefer to buy and sell products/services online, communicate to the potential customers, without any boundaries and are the part of international trade.

“Travelot” Facebook page has more than 13,000 followers compared to “Tipadvisor” with that obtained more than 600 million user reviews. To compare these two travel companies, means comparing global versus local businesses.

Total number of collected answers from the both companies was 150. I received 75 answers out of 100 from the customers of “Travelot” and 75 from “Tripadvisor”. Based on the results from the first questionnaires it seems that female groups of the users represent the majority for the both companies. For “Travelot” 60 % of the female answered the questions compared to 40% of male respondents (Table 2). Collected answers from male and female respondents were the same for “Tripadvisor” (Table 11).

The second similarity that I have received from the questionnaires was the answer on second question – What is the age range of the customers? - It appeared that for the both companies the majority of the respondents are between 18-35 ages. 45% of the “Travelot” respondents are between 18-35 age range (Table 3) and the 45% are for the “Tripadvisor” company (Table 12). The minority for the “Travelot” company appeared to be people above 55 age, they represent 8% (Table 3). Minority for “Tripadvisor” are above 45 age, their percentage is 11 (Table 12).

I got the similar results for the first and second questions. The gender and age range of the respondents appeared to be the same for the both travel companies. Based on these results I can suggest that the “Travelot” company, which has the same customer age range, are focused more on local market, they can take example from the same aged segment



company “Tripadvisor”, which is already, know globally. To strengthen my opinion I will be based on the (Table 4), which represent the length of internet usage per day. The majority of the “Travelot” customers use internet more than four hours a day. They represent to the 76%. If the company had developed the online usage of the agency and offered their customers services through the internet they would raise the amount of the potential users across the world. Based on the number of majority respondents who are using Internet, the frequency of visitors online will also be higher. For “Tripadvisor” the same figure was a little bit high with the percentage of 78. The company is using the needs and expectations of its current and potential customers. Table 7 represents the reason why customers use travel agency. From the collected answers the majority of the respondents 53% use travel companies to buy travel tickets and the similar 60% of the “Travelot” customers fly on the reason of travel. The main reason while Georgian population use “Travelot” appeared to be the travel purposes, the same reason why the world’s population is using “Tripadvisor”. The company offers millions of reviews online, based on the experience of the users. Customers are writing positive or negative feedback of their own experience. The customers of “Travelot” company are not able to use different opinions and make decision based on several reviews; their only one adviser is operator of the company. Therefor they are not able to use online website of the company and get the service for 24/7. Table 9 represents the level of satisfaction for the “Travelot” website. 40 respondents out of 60 prefer to use internet in order to get required product/service. More than 40 people think that “travelot” website is not useful for them; there number is almost 53%. Almost 50 respondents about of 75 strongly disagreed that the website of “travelot” is multifunctional for the customers. 40% of the respondents think that they will never use website of the travel agency again. Almost 50% of the customers approved that “travelot” is not the company, which is using strong, smart and fast website. Based on the answers I got for the Table 9, it seems that customers of the “Travelot” are not satisfied with the company’s website; therefor majority of them would like to get services online. My recommendation for “Travelot” company would be to strengthen the companies’ website and start using online tools, based on the example of “Tripadvisor” company. Based on the table 6 87% of the respondents would like to organise travel themselves. “Travelot” company offers them trips and services from which the customers are able to choose and select their preferable ones, while using “Tripadvisor” customers can plan travel on their

own. Based on experienced peoples' ideas choose the places and hotels they would like. If 87% of the customers of "Travelot" would like to plan their travel themselves, the best choice to offer them would be the website created on the example of "Tripadvisor". 18% of "Travelot" customers have visited and used online sources for travel. 30% of them have just visited online websites and 48% of the respondents have never used online sources for planning their travel. (Table 8) "Travelot" can expand its digital performance and offer Georgian people innovative idea, on the same time company can attract customers all over the world. Comparing to the "Tripadvisor", 75% of the respondents of the company have used website within the last one year (Table 17). The majority of the respondents seem to be the current customers of the website. The feedback chart, customer satisfaction of using "Tripadvisor" got the overall positive results, which can be the good example for the "Travelot" company. The question – How often have they used the website, the negative answer was with 0%. The majority of the respondents have used the "Tripadvisor" website between 5-10 times; their decision seems to be based on the reviews, which are posted from the other users. Little, but still less than 5 customers, has never used the review of the other customers. 26 out of 60 respondents have written their own reviews more than once; they have feedback to the customers of the website for all over the world. Again, the majority of the respondents will use the website for the nearest future and the minority of them gave the negative answers (Table 13) "Travelot" customers have negative attitude to the company's website, the level of reliability of "Tripadvisor" company seems to be really high (Table 19). The majority of the respondents more than almost 40 people answered that the reviews on which the website is based is reliable. They feel safe to rely on the experience of customers', Less than 5 people agreed that "Tripadvisor" is not reliable. "Tripadvisor" appeared to be reliable and safe for the respondents. 40 people out of 75 agreed that there is no risk when choosing the service based on website reviews. They can rely on them and feel safe and confident. Survey gave me more than 20 neutral answers; respondents think that there may arise little risk, when using the "Tripadvisor", which means that, people's needs and expectations are different all over the world. Based on the one user's review, another customer might not be satisfied. However website has more than 600 million reviews and almost 35 respondents disagreed that website has too much risks, their experience and feedback is positive. "(Table 18)

## 4.7 SWOT Analysis

Swot analysis	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<b>Travelot company</b>	Loyal customers, brand recognition, positive feedback, experienced staff, word-of-mouth adv customer number	Local presence, lack of digital usage, lack of international trade, poor website. Do not follow the newest trends	Be the part of online website, gain customers worldwide, increase revenues, get more positive feedback from users	Competition among the current market, potential new entrants, competition of online sources, changes in customer needs
<b>Tripadvisor company</b>	Number of customers, loyal users, worldwide presence, positive feedback, creatively created website, on-going development.	Not always reliable reviews, different needs of customers, unsatisfied reviews of the customers.	To widen its presence, attract more customers, offer innovative service, growth of Internet usage worldwide	Competitors, potential new entrants in the market, change in customers behaviour, changed needs of the users

Table 21 represents the SWOT analysis for both companies

Source: Own, 2018

#### 4.8 4P for both companies

Table 22 represents marketing mix for the “Travelot” & “Tripadvisor”

<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>PRODUCT</b>	<b>PRICE</b>	<b>PLACE</b>	<b>PROMOTION</b>
<b>Travelot</b>	Flight ticket Hotel booking Transfer Insurance Vacation rental	High price for the whole service.	Office in the Tbilisi, capital city of Georgia	Based on local market, local campaigns word-of-mouth promotion
<b>Tripadvisor</b>	Flight ticket Hotel booking Vacation Rental Cruise Restaurant list Reviews from the customers	Customer can choose themselves. Based on the user’s experience	Customers can get the service from all over the world at any time. Through the use of internet	Online promotion, website offers, social media, search engine, online advertisements

Source: Own, 2018

#### 4.9 Discussion about SWOT analysis and 4P

Strength of the “Travelot” company is that, it has huge number of local loyal customers; also locally agency has gained brand recognition. Has quite positive feedback from the current customers. The company owns experienced staff and uses word-of-mouth marketing promotion. “Travelot” Compared to “Tripadvisor”, the company, which has the higher number of global loyal customers. Website has gained worldwide presence, collected positive feedback from customers, and designed its webpage creatively. Company is developing every day. Both companies have its own field of strengths part, but “Tripadvisor” is famous worldwide, with the huge amount of customers and has gained strong competitive position among the market.

Weaknesses for the “Travelot” company can be described as the local presence, lack of digital usage, lack of international trade and problems related to the agency’s website. The company does not follow the new trends, and continues to operate without any challenges. For “Tripadvisor” the main weakness is the reliability of the reviews, sometimes it may not be satisfying for all customers, based on different wants and demands. If the company gets a bad review, it can be easily illustrated to the decreased number of potential customers. However, “Tripadvisor” has opportunities to develop. The company can widen its presence by attracting more customers. “Tripadvisor” can offer innovative service to its customers and continue the development stage. Meantime “Travelot” has lots of new challenges and opportunities to face. The company can change the current service from local to global field. Develop its website, get more customers across the globe, and increase its brand recognition, simultaneously to the increase of the revenues for the company. “Travelot” has the threat of competition among the current market, potential new entrants with innovative ideas, competition from online sources and the most important threat that company can face is the change in customer’s behaviour. Their needs and wants are changing based on the globalisation worldwide. Customers may need the new source of service. The similar threats may face “Tripadvisor” company, as the customers’ needs are changing over the time. To deal with the problem, both companies should be on going developing and always try to offer innovative ideas to the customers before the rivals.

Both travel companies offer several product/service to the customer. The main difference between them is that, “Tripadvisor” is based on the customer reviews and suggestions. The company has no local presence and customers do not need to visit their office, as it is the crucial for the Georgian company. Customers need to visit the store and get the service from there, while “Tripadvisor” users can get the service online from all over the world. Customers using “Tripadvisor” are also able to choose the price of the service themselves, based on the users experience, while “Travelot” customers are only able to rely on the employee of the company. Also, the huge difference is between the promotion tools of the companies. “Travelot” is based on local promotion. Company uses campaigns, word-of-mouths marketing and feedback from customers, while “Tripadvisor” is based on online marketing. The company is advertising its website in social media uses search engine power and offers customers new services through the use of Internet.

## 5. Conclusion

The main aim of the work was to compare two companies operating in the same sector to discover how a local, traditional "Bricks-and-mortar" travel agency can remain profitable when in competition with a multinational on-line company. By means of a detailed case study this thesis identified what the strengths and weaknesses are of each type of company, and what lessons can be learned - especially regarding the use of internet. As the globalization is the key element for success, people and environment got used to use global networks. Globalization and innovative, modern communication system is the synonymous to the electronic media, known as Internet.

E-marketing as a term, describes using marketing tools online to promote the organization. It is a great helper for companies to attract potential customers, maintain their satisfaction, gain brand recognition and loyalty. Internet marketing gives a chance to the companies to advertise product/service through web pages and use the sources of unlimited possibilities. Travel companies which operate in online market, based on the example of „Tripadvisor“ are more profitable and have the broad number of customers, compared to the traditional agencies similar to „Travelot“. Internet is the new way of communication and the biggest market in the world. Companies, which follow the new trends and respond the customer needs are more profitable and have the broad range of customers. “Tripadvisor” is the best example of company, which follows the newest trends and gains competitive advantage across the globe, compared to “Travelot” company, which is focused on traditional way of doing business and operates locally for the specific segment. The partial aim of the Thesis was to identify the advantages of using online market. Based on the SWOT analysis done for the both travel agency companies, it is clear that „Tripadvisor“ has the higher number of global loyal customers. Website has gained worldwide presence, collected positive feedback from customers, and designed its webpage creatively. Company is developing every day. Lots of potential customers are attracted by the service “Tripadvisor” offers. Both companies have its own field of strengths part. Strength of the “Travelot” company is that, it has huge number of local loyal customers; also locally agency has gained brand recognition. Has quite positive feedback from the current customers. The company owns experienced staff and uses word-

of-mouth marketing promotion. But “Tripadvisor” is famous worldwide, with the huge amount of customers and has gained strong competitive position among the market.

Based on the survey, 75% of the respondents of the “Tripadvisor” company have used website within the last one year (Table 17). The majority of the respondents seem to be the current customers of the website. The feedback chart, customer satisfaction of using “Tripadvisor” got the overall positive results, which can be the good example for the “Travelot” company. The question – How often have they used the website, gave 0% of negative answer. The majority of the respondents have used the “Tripadvisor” website between 5-10 times; their decision seems to be based on the reviews, which are posted from the other users. Little, but still less than 5 customers, has never used the review of the other customers. 26 out of 75 respondents have written their own reviews more than once; they have feedback to the customers of the website for all over the world. Again, the majority of the respondents will use the website for the nearest future and the minority of them gave the negative answers (Table 18)

Weaknesses for the “Travelot” company can be described as the local presence, lack of digital usage, lack of international trade and problems related to the agency’s website. The company does not follow the new trends, and continuous to operate without any challenges. Table 9 represents the level of satisfaction for the “Travelot” website. 40 respondents out of 75 prefer to use internet in order to get required product/service. More than 40 people think that “travelot” website is not useful for them; there number is almost 53%. Almost 50 respondents about of 75 strongly disagreed that the website of “travelot” is multifunctional for the customers. 40% of the respondents think that they will never use website of the travel agency again. Almost 50% of the customers approved that “travelot” is not the company, which is using strong, smart and fast website. Based on the answers I got for the Table 9, it seems that customers of the “Travelot” are not satisfied with the company’s website; therefor majority of them would like to get services online. While (Table 4), which represent the length of internet usage per day. The majority of the “Travelot” customers use internet more than four hours a day. They represent to the 76%. If the company had developed the online usage of the agency and offered their customers services through the internet they would raise the amount of the potential users

across the world. Based on the number of majority respondents who are using Internet, the frequency of visitors online will also be higher. “Travelot” has lots of new challenges and opportunities to face. The company can change the current service from local to global field. Develop its website, get more customers across the globe, and increase its brand recognition, simultaneously to the increase of the revenues for the company. “Travelot” should identify the change in the customer’s behaviour. Their needs and wants are changing based on the globalisation worldwide. Customers need the new source of service.



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## 8. Appendix

### Form of Questionnaire (Screenshots)

1. What is your sex ?

- Female
- Male

2. What is your age

- under 18
- 18-35
- 35-55
- 55+

3. How long do you use Internet per day ?

- 1-2 hours
- 2-3 hours
- 3-4 hours
- 4+ hours

4. Why do you fly abroad ?

4. Why do you fly abroad ?

- Travel
- Business
- Education
- Other

5. How do you organise your travel ?

- Myself
- By family
- By Secretary
- Other

6. Why do use travel agency ?

- Buy travel packet
- Buy airplane ticket
- Get info about embassy

7. Have you ever used online website of travel agency ?

- Have not visited
-

7. Have you ever used online website of travel agency ?

- Have not visited
- Have just visited
- Visited and used

8. Do you prefer to get product/service online ?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

9. Is Travelot website useful ?

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
- 

10. Does Travelot website offer multifunctional service ?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

11. Will you always use Travelot website ?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

12. Is Travelot website fastest and easiest to use ?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Strongly disagree

Disagree

13. What is your age ?

- 18-24
- 25-35
- 35-45
- 45+more

14. Have you uses Tripadvisor within the last 1 year ?

- Yes
- No

15. How often have you used Tripadvisor website?

- Never
- Between 1-5
- Between 5-10
- More than 10 times

16. Was your decision based on customer's reviews ?

- Never
- Between 1-5
- Between 5-10
- More than 10 times

17. Have you posted your own review ?

- Never
- Between 1-5
- Between 5-10
- More than 10 times

18. Will you use the Tripadvisor website for future ?

- Never
- Between 1-5
- Between 5-10
- More than 10 times

19. Are the reviews of Tripadvisor reliable ?

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

20. Do you pay attention to the reviews of the customers ?

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

21. Is there too much risk while using Tripadvisor website ?

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

22. Can there be any risk while using Tripadvisor website ?

- Agree
- Neutral
  
- Neutral
- Disagree

21. Is there too much risk while using Tripadvisor website ?

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

22. Can there be any risk while using Tripadvisor website ?

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

23. There is no risk while using Tripadvisor website

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree