

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Management



Diploma Thesis

**The marketing role in a competitive railway public
transport environment in the Czech Republic**

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CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Economics and Management

DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Economics and Management

Economics and Management

Thesis title

The marketing role in a competitive railway public transport environment in the Czech Republic

Objectives of thesis

The objectives of this thesis are to identify the role of marketing and the impact of marketing strategies on the previously monopolistic railway industry in the Czech Republic.

A second objective is to determine how operators in a previously monopolistic public transport industry use marketing to improve their competitiveness and establish their position in the marketplace, and to what degree they are successful in this.

Methodology

To fully disclose this topic of the thesis, quantitative (statistical procedure) and qualitative (questionnaires and surveys, interviews) studies will be analyzed.

The quantitative approach will comprise surveys and secondary data drawn mainly from previous academic sources. The qualitative approach will be based on interviews and secondary data, using appropriate analytical techniques.

The proposed extent of the thesis

60 – 80 pages

Keywords

marketing, competition, achievement of competition, marketing practices, marketing in the transport field, transport sector, competitiveness, market of transport services, transport enterprises, marketing mix, increased competition

Recommended information sources

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-

Expected date of thesis defence

2020/21 SS – FEM

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled "The marketing role in a competitive railway public transport environment in the Czech Republic" 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 the person.

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Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Ing. Richard Selby, Ph.D. for his advice and professional support during my work on this thesis. I also would like to thank all the people who have supported me throughout my studies. And finally, I would also like to thank those who devoted their time to participate in the survey.

The marketing role in a competitive railway public transport environment in the Czech Republic

Abstract

This diploma thesis is focused on the marketing role in a competitive railway public transport environment in the Czech Republic. The aim of this diploma thesis is to determine how operators in a previously monopolistic public transport industry use marketing to improve their competitiveness and establish their position in the marketplace, and to what degree they are successful in this. Given thesis includes two parts: theoretical and practical parts. The theoretical part of the thesis includes basic terms and definitions on the topic of marketing to achieve a competitive position in the marketplace. The practical part is based on an analysis of the marketing practices used by private (and denationalised) companies operating in the public transport sector in the Czech Republic - České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express by means of a survey of customers and potential customers. Based on the survey results evaluation recommendations to improve marketing strategies in the Czech railway companies, as well as ways to improve and strengthen competitiveness to further consolidate the market position of these companies.

Keywords: marketing, competition, achievement of competition, marketing practices, marketing in the transport field, transport sector, competitiveness, market of transport services, transport enterprises, marketing mix, increased competition

Marketingová role v konkurenčním prostředí železniční dopravy v České republice

Abstrakt

Tato diplomová práce je zaměřena na roli marketingu v konkurenčním prostředí železniční dopravy v České republice. Cílem této diplomové práce je zjistit, jak provozovatelé v dříve monopolním odvětví veřejné dopravy využívají marketing ke zlepšení své konkurenceschopnosti a upevnění své pozice na trhu a do jaké míry jsou v tom úspěšní. Daná práce obsahuje dvě části: teoretickou a praktickou. Teoretická část práce obsahuje základní pojmy a definice týkající se marketingu k dosažení konkurenční pozice na trhu. Praktická část je založena na analýze marketingových praktik využívaných soukromými (a odnárodněnými) společnostmi působícími v sektoru veřejné dopravy v České republice - České dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express prostřednictvím průzkumu mezi zákazníky a potenciálními zákazníky. Na základě výsledků průzkumu jsou hodnocena doporučení ke zlepšení marketingových strategií v českých železničních společnostech a také způsoby, jak zlepšit a posílit konkurenceschopnost k dalšímu upevnění postavení těchto společností na trhu.

Klíčová slova: marketing, konkurence, dosažení konkurence, marketingové praktiky, marketing v oblasti dopravy, sektor dopravy, konkurenceschopnost, trh dopravních služeb, dopravní podniky, marketingový mix, zvýšená konkurence

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List of abbreviations

ČD	České Dráhy
CZK	Czech crown
EUR	Euro
OOH	Out-of-Home
PEST	Political, Economical, Social, Technological
PESTLE	Political, Economical, Social, Technological, Legal, Ecological
PPC	Pay Per Click
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TV	Television

1 Introduction

The importance of public transport in the modern world is strengthening its position every day and becoming more and more attractive to customers. Many passengers are beginning to prefer more comfortable, safer, and more environmentally friendly kinds of transport, both for travel to study or work, and for travel. Therefore, more and more attention has recently been directed to the development of railways, since this type of transport meets all of the above criteria. With the significant increase in the number of passengers, the passenger rail market is becoming increasingly attractive to the competition. In some countries, the railway segment is gradually expanding and is not limited to one monopolistic company. The Czech Republic is a prime example of this. The market is expanding recently; private companies entered the railway market, competing with České Dráhy in the Czech Republic. The emergence of private railway carriers is the main reason for the strengthening of the competitive environment on Czech railways, which stimulates both the market in general and the railway companies themselves. The entry of new private companies into the market in this segment encourages competing carriers to create various marketing campaigns and use strategies with which they want to attract customers.

In turn, marketing is one of the most important “tools” for any company in modern times. It is very important to keep the client's attention and attract him/her to use the services of a particular company in a market where competition appears. It is almost impossible to do this if the customer has never encountered the services of the company and has never heard of it anywhere. Therefore, marketing has a fundamental impact on both clients and the company, as with the help of various marketing strategies and practices, a whole range of customer acquisition programs is developed, ranging from advertising to special discounts and offers. That is why it is worth noting the importance and special relevance of this topic. Marketing stimulates competition, as well as vice versa, and this is one of the main opposition to monopoly. This gives the customer a choice, and the companies struggle for the customer's attention. All this creates favourable conditions in the market. This diploma thesis is intended to provide the reader with a comprehensive analysis of marketing strategies, their impact on previously monopolistic companies, as well as real analysis carried out among clients of three Czech railway companies České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express to demonstrate the real weight of marketing for competition.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The aim of this diploma thesis is to determine how operators in a previously monopolistic public transport industry use marketing to improve their competitiveness and establish their position in the marketplace, and to what degree they are successful in this.

By analysing the main principles and strategies that influence marketing development, detect possible disadvantages and suggest ways to eliminate them in order to increase competitiveness in Czech railway companies. It is necessary to have knowledge of theoretical concepts and basic definitions of marketing to achieve this aim. It is also important to study marketing strategies to analyse and conclude on how to increase the competitiveness and improve the reputation of companies in the marketplace through advertising. Following objectives must be achieved in this diploma thesis:

- To characterize and analyse marketing tools;
- To evaluate the influence of marketing on companies' reputation and on how marketing strategies influence consumer choice;
- To assess the impact of marketing on monopoly using the example of the previous monopoly in Czech railway companies;
- To prepare an overview of the chosen companies - České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express;
- To analyse Czech railway companies using Marketing Mix, PEST analysis, SWOT analysis, etc.;
- To conduct an analysis of the existing marketing practice in the Czech railway sector using the example of České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express;
- To create a list of questionnaires and interviews;
- To conduct an analysis of consumer opinion based on own survey and a sample of studies;
- To set solutions on ways to improve and strengthen competitiveness to further consolidate the market position of these companies;
- To make conclusions.

In order to achieve these aims, the hypothesis was formulated: competition in the Czech railway sector is fuelled by marketing rather than the expansion of offered

destinations: a change in the marketing policy of one of the companies leads to a greater increase in passenger flow than an expansion of the destinations.

2.2 Methodology

To fully disclose this topic of the thesis, theoretical literature (regarding marketing to achieve a competitive position in the marketplace), as well as methodological aspects of the application of various economic policies, quantitative and qualitative studies will be analysed, namely:

1. Quantitative approach:

1) Surveys

The survey consists of multiple-choice questions, a rating scale, and open questions. The aim is to conduct the survey with about 200-300 customers of České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express (final number of respondents: 245). A representative sample of the population for the purposes of the study was selected among clients aged 18 to over 75 years old, as it is important to take into account the opinion of consumers of different age groups. The surveys were conducted online and in person, and participants were given 5 minutes to fill in the survey anonymously.

The questionnaire is included as an appendix to visually show the completed survey with all the questions in the English and Czech languages. Questionnaires and interviews are representative because on the basis of the collected data the hypothesis will be proved or disproved. The surveys were conducted in the time period from November to January (inclusive) 2020-2021.

2) Existing data

The literature - publications and archival data, which is directly related to the structure of railway transport in the Czech Republic and the marketing influence on three Czech railway companies - was analysed. Scientific articles and theoretical materials were also used. Most of the articles were drawn from the world's leading scientific and technical research sources such as Science direct, SAGE Journals, Education Resources Information Centre, etc. Changes in marketing strategies have been identified using local news sources as well as official companies' websites. Material directly related to rail transport in the Czech Republic and marketing impact was selected based on criteria such as date range (mostly publications in the time period 2010-2020) and issues discussed in the papers.

2. Qualitative approach:

1) Surveys

Based on the above-described survey among potential clients of Czech railway companies, a qualitative approach is also implemented. Based on the questions, this survey was a tool for analysing the quality of services provided in České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express, as well as based on the data obtained and using the analysis, a strategy for improving marketing in the studied companies will be selected.

2) Interviews

In order to gain a better insight into the possibilities for improvement of the marketing strategies, structured interviews are conducted. Approximately 3-5 people are interviewed who work directly in České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express or are responsible for the marketing department. The goal is to analyse the correspondence of customer opinions and marketing strategies that will be applied in companies, with the ability to identify weak points and improve them. The interviews were conducted in the time period from January to February 2021.

3) SWOT Analyses

Based on this analysis, a complex of marketing research was analysed in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of Czech railway companies - České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express.

4) Study using existing secondary data from official open sources such as companies' websites, published reports, books, and journal articles, in the time period 2000-2020. Some of the fundamental research that forms the basis of marketing theory has been taken into account since the 1990s.

5) Marketing Mix

Based on the Marketing Mix, the marketing tools used by companies to promote their products were analysed. For the analysis, two of the train routes of all trains of the Czech railway companies, Prague-Brno and Prague-Ostrava, were chosen. This choice is based on the length of the journey, prices, and service, as it was most convenient to take for comparative analysis.

3 Review of Current Literature

3.1 Fundamentals of Marketing

3.1.1 Marketing and Its Impact

Marketing plays a very important role in the activities of any company in modern times. The growing number of companies and competition every year more and more stimulate market players to apply new strategies to stay afloat and develop their companies. Every year it becomes more difficult to attract the attention of customers, as the demands of many consumers are increasing, the supply on the market is also increasing; all this creates a fertile ground for promoting their services through the introduction of new marketing strategies. Therefore, it is very important, to begin with assessing the role of marketing in modern society and give the necessary characteristics, both marketing and marketing tools, and strategies. The first part of the literature review is more descriptive, as it will characterize the main and important marketing concepts based on the analysed literature of fundamentalist authors in the field of marketing. In subsequent parts of the literature review, a more critical analysis will be presented, taking into account the work of modern authors and different positions on topics requiring discussion.

Philip Kotler, an American economist, and marketing author, made a fundamental contribution to the development of marketing theory, so it is very important to focus on his definition of marketing:

“Marketing - is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others” (Kotler, P., 2005, p.6).

This definition is the basis for understanding marketing in general. But marketing research continues, so many definitions and concepts are being modernized and developed. For example, the American Marketing Association defines marketing in terms of more descriptive characteristics:

“Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” (AMA, 2017).

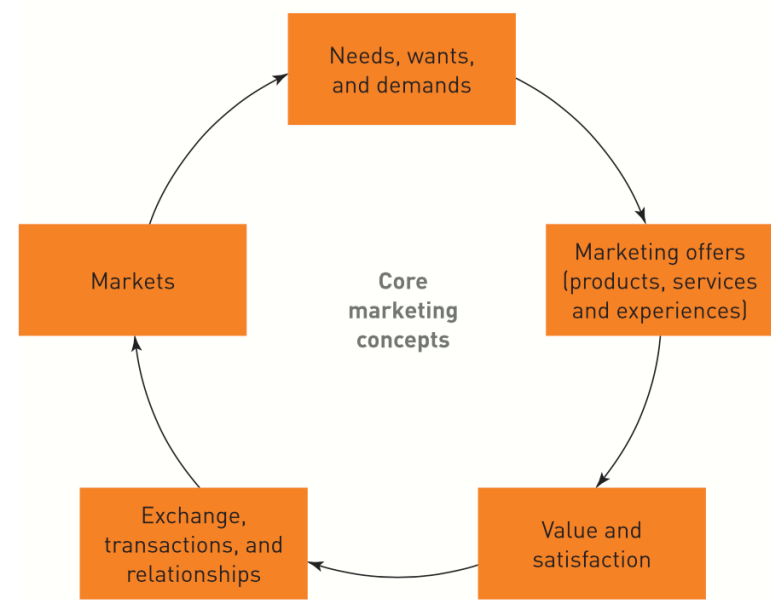
In turn, there are also many scientific works and analysis by authors of an earlier time, which defined marketing in more accessible words for understanding. For example,

the Russian academician and editor-in-chief of the scientific journal “Marketing in Russia and Abroad” E. Golubkov gives a simpler definition of marketing:

“Marketing is one of the most powerful tools used by various organizations in the endless struggle to survive and thrive” (Golubkov, E., 1999, p.2).

All these definitions of the authors harmoniously complement each other, which makes it possible to understand the definition of marketing in a more detailed sense. For a deeper study of marketing, it is necessary to understand in more detail not only the basic definitions but also such definitions as needs, wants, and requirements; products and services; value, satisfaction and quality; exchange, transactions, and relationships; and markets (Kotler, P., 2005, pp.6). It can be more clearly represented in the form of a diagram in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Core marketing concepts



Source: Principles of Marketing by Philip Kotler, 2005

According to P. Kotler, these basic marketing concepts are related and each of them builds on the previous one. It is worth focusing on each concept in more detail since these key links together constitute a single marketing system. Human needs and desires are some of the most important in this scheme. On their basis, consumer choice and market demand are formed. Usually, the needs of the customer are formed in the society in which he/she is located, therefore there are some differences depending on the country, which is important to consider when further creating marketing models (Kotler, P., 2005). In turn, companies, in pursuit of satisfying the needs of the customer, try to form a value proposition, which is

not only about creating a finished product of good quality but also in the very service of providing this product. In this case, it is important for the company to evaluate the advantage not only of the product itself but also of how this product will be presented in the eyes of the customer. Considering the value and satisfaction, it should be borne in mind that the customer is often faced with a fairly large number of offers, which expands the boundaries of his/her choice. Usually, the consumer is focused on value for money. As for the exchange and transactions, “marketing occurs when people decide to satisfy needs and wants through an exchange” (Kotler, P., 2005, p.10). This is what makes exchange an important part of marketing. In exchange, each party provides the other with a specific value that is satisfactory to both parties and has a value equivalent. Therefore, marketing does not pursue a single goal - making a profit. Marketing focuses on mutual satisfaction in the exchange, as good interaction with the consumer is more important, which can bring even more profit in the future. In general, all of these concepts occur in the market. This is an important component for marketing, since the exchange, sale, provision of services, and so on is not possible without the existence of a certain market. This is where buyers and sellers interact with each other and transact.

Similar ideas were presented in the scientific work of Russian author E. Golubkov. A very important conclusion was made in his work, that due to the existence of such concepts, it could be assumed that marketing is not only a system of thinking but also a system of concrete actions (Golubkov, E., 1999). Marketing is not just a tool with rules on how to sell a certain product better and more profitably. Marketing is presented as a complex system of interaction between people in the market, where everyone takes an active part, in the future to get a certain benefit. In the case of companies it can be not only profit but also, for example, reputation.

3.1.2 Marketing Environment

The impact of marketing on the company and its importance should be analysed not only as a separate unit. It is very important to assess the environment in which the company exists, since it is the marketing environment that can influence the company both positively (creating new opportunities) and negatively (presenting threats). That is why, no matter how successful marketing strategies are (there will be a detailed analysis of marketing strategies below), the environment in which the company exists can play a

decisive role. That is why it is also important to evaluate the marketing environment as one of the aspects of achieving a competitive position in the marketplace.

An important fundamental definition of the marketing environment is provided by Philip Kotler: “The marketing environment of a firm is a collection of active participants and forces operating outside the firm that affect the marketing management's ability to establish and maintain successful relationships with target customers” (Kotler, P., 2007, p.104).

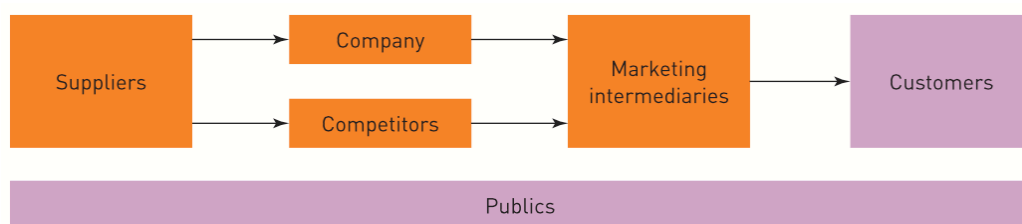
The environment is uncontrollable and that is why it is a rather difficult problem for companies (Kotler, P., 2007). In other words, these factors and forces are not always subject to direct control by the enterprise. Therefore, firms should focus on this and, taking into account changes in the marketing environment, adjust and modernize their marketing strategies.

To analyse such a broad concept, the marketing environment should be divided into levels: macro and microenvironments (Kotler, P., 2015). Another author comes to a similar conclusion, having analysed the marketing environment and describes the division into sublevels as a necessity for more accurate analysis (Golubkov, E., 1999). In turn, Golubkov in the terminology of his research designates a microenvironment as an "environment of direct influence".

1) The microenvironment or environment of direct influence includes a set of subjects and factors that directly affect the organization's ability to serve its customers (the organization itself, suppliers, marketing intermediaries, customers, competitors, banks, media, government organizations, etc.) (Golubkov, E., 1999). The microenvironment is also directly influenced by the organization.

According to Kotler, marketing managers who build relationships with consumers and satisfy their needs are not the only participants in the process at this level (Kotler, P., 2005). In this case, it is also important to consider other participants in the company's microenvironment. Figure 2 shows all participants in the company's microenvironment.

Figure 2 Principle actors in the company’s microenvironment



Source: Principles of Marketing by Philip Kotler, 2005

As can be seen in the figure, there is a clear relationship between different participants in the microenvironment. Further, it is important to give a more detailed description of each of them.

Suppliers

Suppliers are critical to providing customer value to the firm, as they are responsible for providing the necessary resources (Kotler, P., 2005). It is important to closely control the presence or absence of supplies, as the latter can negatively affect production and sales, which can lead to damage (be it short-term or long-term damage).

In a changing world, market prices can change frequently, which is why it is also important for marketing managers to keep an eye on price trends and supplier offerings.

Company

The company also should not be characterized as a simple structure. To develop marketing strategies and plans, it is worth considering the impact of the following factors on the company:

- Senior management (defining the goals, strategy and policy of the company);
- Finance (searching for financial resources to implement marketing strategies);
- Research and development (designing attractive, but safe products);
- Procurement (getting supplies and materials);
- Manufacturing (is responsible for producing products of the desired quality and quantity);
- Accounting (a measurement of income and expenses, in order to clearly demonstrate whether marketing goals are being achieved or not).

All these departments of the company and factors influence the further creation of effective marketing strategies and marketing plan (Kotler, P., 2015).

Competitors

Competition is an important driving force for companies since it is not enough for a firm to simply focus on consumer needs. It is important to monitor offers on the market from competing companies: what quality of goods they represent, what methods of promoting goods on the market they use, how effective their interaction with potential customers is, etc. Based on all of these factors, it is important to create a competitive position and design marketing strategies that will attract a customer. Oftentimes, large

companies have more resources to create marketing strategies than small companies. But in this case, it is important to realize that large investments in marketing plans are not always a winning position. For example, in modern times small companies are becoming more and more popular and attractive to the client, as they use an individual approach (Govindarajan and Lev, 2019).

Marketing intermediaries

“Marketing intermediaries are firms that help a company promote, sell, and distribute its products to end customers” (Kotler, P., 2005, p.89). It is the actors of the microenvironment that are the most difficult since sometimes it is very difficult to keep track of their quality and the quality of their services. That is why it is important to always monitor the effectiveness of these companies, and if their effectiveness decreases or the companies stop functioning, it is necessary to implement programs to replace them. If we touch on this topic in more detail, then it is worth highlighting some marketing intermediaries (Kotler et al., 2018):

- Resellers (who buy and resell products, thereby developing the company's sales channels);
- Physical distribution firms (which help move and store the company's goods);
- Marketing service agencies (marketing agencies that help promote the advertising of goods and services, for example, media firms);
- Financial intermediaries (banks, insurance and credit companies).

Customers

The company must be fully aware of its consumer market and what type of customer it is targeting. There are different types of markets, they can be both consumer and institutional and state. Depending on the orientation of the company and the format of the product, it is needed to focus on a specific group. If a company considers all types of markets, it must be able to tailor its product for each of them (Golubkov, E., 1999).

Publics

In the case of the public, this is precisely the parameter of the microenvironment that has a real or potential interest in a company and can affect the promotion of the company's products. Kotler distinguishes several types of such publics:

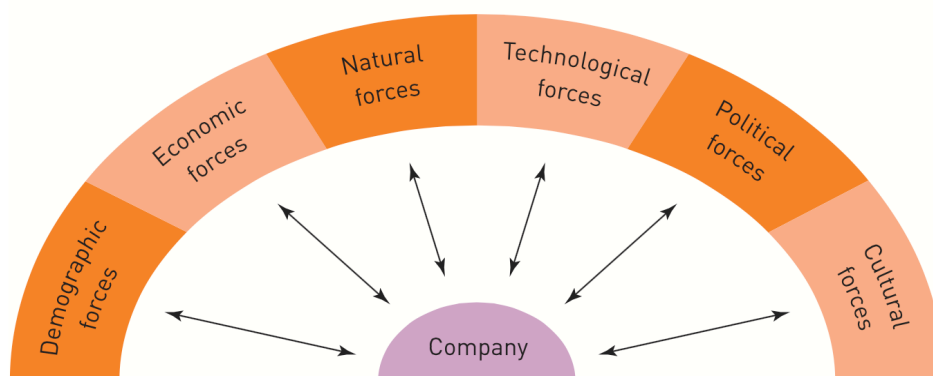
- Media (for example, publications in different media such as magazines);
- Government (necessary legal advice related to the safety of products and the veracity of advertising);

- Citizen action (for communication with citizens) etc.
Also, this can be viewed in terms of scale:
- Local (e.g. city dwellers);
- Internal (company employees - if employees are happy, both customers and the public are happy);
- General (public image of the company and the general perception of customers about it).

As for the conclusion, the microenvironment combines many important components that together form an integral system for creating marketing plans. But the study of the macroenvironment is not complete and sufficient to ensure that marketing strategies and plans were effective. Therefore, it is also important to consider the macroenvironment.

2) The macroenvironment (the environment of indirect impact) of marketing is understood as a set of large social and natural factors that affect all subjects of the micro-external environment of marketing, but not immediately, in a direct way, and includes; political, socio-economic, legal, scientific and technical, cultural and natural factors. Political factors characterize the level of stability of the political situation, the protection of the interests of entrepreneurs by the state, its attitude to various forms of ownership, etc (Golubkov, E., 1999). In order to more clearly represent this definition from the scientific work of E. Golubkov, it is presented in more detail in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Influential forces in the company's macroenvironment



Source: Principles of Marketing by Philip Kotler, 2005

As for P. Kotler, the author, in his “Principles of Marketing”, conducts a very extensive analysis of each of these forces. In turn, Golubkov's work touches on similar

indicators, but in a more concise format. For a more accurate analysis in this diploma thesis, the opinion and analysis of both authors were taken into account.

Demographic forces

This force is key in the case of marketing since people are the constituents of the market (Kotler et al., 2018). But it is worth taking into account more accurate parameters in the topic of demography since each has its own special influence on the adoption of certain marketing strategies:

- Population size and growth trends (population trends and population growth can be used to assess the potential for a wide range of goods and services);
- Changing age structure of a population (it is important to take into account such demographic changes, while both locally and regionally and globally; it is also important to consider for which age group of people a product or service is being created and which method of marketing promotion will be most appropriate in terms of acceptance from different groups of people);
- Migration (the current migration situation has a rather strong impact, for example, in terms of the workforce that will be employed in companies. In particular, due to migration, some new products for the society also appear on the market, or there is a need for them);
- The changing family (in this case, it is meant divorce, a diverse distribution of values and roles within the family, which affect preferences in the choice of goods and services);
- The rising number of educated people (this parameter increases the demand for quality goods and services);
- Increasing diversity (a wide variety of member states in the case of the EU, integration, but at the same time different preferences in goods and services).

Economic forces

The economic area affects the purchasing power of consumers and the structure of spending (Kotler, P., 2007). At the same time, different nations differ greatly in the distribution of income, etc. That is why marketing plans and strategies must take into account the economic components of different models of consumer spending.

- Change in purchasing power and income distribution (in this case, marketers should focus on income distribution as well as average income and analyse it);

- Changes in the structure of consumer spending (consumers with different income levels spend different amounts on products and services. It is important to analyse how changes in basic economic variables such as income, interest rates affect the market).

Natural forces

“The natural environment includes natural resources that marketers need as resources or are influenced by marketing activities” (Kotler, P., 2005, p.104). In today's world, marketers need to be especially mindful of environmental and climate concerns. More and more consumers prefer organic products or products made from eco-friendly materials. For example, previously familiar advertising promotion channels may become irrelevant, such as advertising flyers.

Technological forces

It is the fastest-growing influencing force. Technology is evolving and marketing must adapt to these changes in order to be relevant to the client. For example, marketing channels for the distribution of advertising are changing at a very fast speed and it is becoming more and more important to interest a potential client with a product or service using the Internet (Golubkov, E., 1999). Emerging new technologies provoke marketing strategies and channels for promoting products and services to develop so that the company can maintain its competitive position in the market.

Political forces

“Marketing decisions are strongly influenced by changes in the political environment. The political environment consists of laws, government agencies and pressure groups that influence and restrict various organizations and individuals in a given society” (Kotler, P., 2005, p.109).

Cultural forces

Society shapes core beliefs and values. The main task of marketing and marketer, as the creator of certain strategies, is to analyse cultural influences on society, their types and changes in the market where the company operates (Golubkov, E., 1999). It is important to assess how people in a particular society and in a particular market look at certain products, whether they seem important to them, what attitude people have in society towards different types of marketing and advertising, etc.

Further, in the literature review, PEST analysis will be investigated, which just systematizes the study of political, economic, social and technological elements of the macroenvironment (Kotler, P., 2005).

As a result, it is worth summing up that the creation of a marketing plan and the subsequent creation of marketing strategies is influenced by many different factors that relate to both the microenvironment and the macroenvironment. At the same time, it is important to take into account all factors from both environments without giving preference to one of them, because otherwise, the marketing plan may not take into account some weighty aspects. In order to properly navigate the marketing environment, it is necessary to study the influence of factors and adapt to them.

In this part of the diploma thesis, an in-depth analysis of the fundamental research in the field of marketing was carried out. In this case, theories and scientific works complemented each other, touching upon similar aspects, so the analysis was more descriptive than critical. Based on the analysed literature, which bases all knowledge about what marketing is and what factors influence the marketing environment when creating a marketing plan, then the topics of marketing strategies and tools will be directly investigated, to which a more critical approach will be applied, since on this basis further, an analysis of Czech railway companies will be carried out.

3.2 Marketing Strategies for a Competitive Market Position

3.2.1 Main Marketing Strategies

In order to create successful marketing strategies and plans, it is necessary to analyse the marketing environment and understand the impact of marketing on the company as a whole. After studying all these aspects, the company needs to come up with a marketing plan and strategies in order to formulate a clear positioning of the company in the market. Therefore, it is very important to analyse various studies on marketing strategies.

In the modern world, every enterprise must be very clear about its goals and the necessary set of measures that will be required to achieve them. In other words, any enterprise must develop a strategy that affects the structure of the organization at almost all levels. This has been discussed by a great number of authors in literature.

“Marketing is one part of the strategy of an organization where marketing of the strategic plan drives the company forward” (Kotler, P., 2005, p. 24).

Marketing strategy, in turn, is one of the most important components of the overall strategy of the company, the development of the enterprise, its prospects. The content of the marketing strategy includes clearly formulated current and future positioning of the company, as well as a set of actions that will allow to implement marketing goals as efficiently and in a reasonable time as possible.

Walker O. defines a marketing strategy as “effectively distributed and coordinated market resources and types of activities for performing the tasks of a firm in a certain product market (Walker, O., p. 41). The same feature is noted by one of the leading experts in the field of marketing P. Kotler in his famous work "Principles of Marketing", giving the following definition: "A marketing strategy is a logical scheme of marketing activities, with the help of which a company hopes to fulfil its marketing tasks" (Kotler, P., 2005, p. 129). A number of authors interpret the concept of "marketing strategy" as a means of influencing the consumer, meeting his needs with the help of a marketing mix. Katernyuk A. believes that "the marketing strategy is to select and analyse the target market" (Katernyuk, A., 2008, p.18). Henry Assael notes the same feature in his work. In his opinion marketing strategies are a means of influencing a firm on a consumer (Assael, H., 2001).

It is also important to understand the origins of marketing strategies. “The early years of marketing strategy research focused on the emergence of the marketing concept and the definition of the marketing domain. In the 1990s, researches explored market orientation as an organization-wide implementation of the concept of marketing, its effectiveness and the scope of the marketing function. The effectiveness and impact of marketing were further investigated in the 2000s.

Over the past 20 years, researchers have contributed to marketing accountability by assessing marketing activities and assets and linking them to financial performance. This has improved the position of the marketing function, although its impact still seems limited. Finally, researchers began exploring alternatives to studying market orientation from a market perspective” (Sozuer & Gregory, 2020, pp. 3-5).

Among other things, Sozuer and Gregory in their work analysed not only fundamental concepts and their change in the course of history but also focused on the latest issues of marketing strategy. The authors find, through research, the problems and weaknesses of marketing strategies - namely, the limited impact of marketing in companies and the lack of research in the field of digital customers. Also, other authors note the

problem in the formation of marketing strategies. There are problems of globalization and technological change that impede the development of companies in the market and retain their positions in the competitive world (Butković & Bošković, 2014). Also, other authors point out weaknesses when creating marketing strategies. “To succeed in today's competitive business environment, a firm must have a clear business strategy backed up by other organizational strategies. While previous research has argued that strategic alignment improves firm performance, little attention has been paid to either strategic alignment involving multiple factors or the strategic orientation of firms” (Al-Surmi & Cao, 2019, p.8). Hunt confirms this point of view, and also adds that for a successful marketing strategy and an accurate marketing plan, it is necessary to generate internal company resources and explore the external environment, given that if one thing works well in one competitive example, then it may not work in another example (Hunt & Derozier, 2004).

There is also a more innovative view of building marketing strategies, which sees marketing strategy as a discourse. “As in the case of any discourse, a marketing strategy is built from a number of subject positions, thanks to which some beliefs, ideas and arguments are given preference, while others are silent” (Godfrey & Higgins, 2020, pp. 3-6). In this research paper, the authors analysed the building blocks of the discourse of marketing strategy and compared it with the critical research that has already been undertaken in these areas. The authors drew on the work of Michel Foucault and a number of other critical marketers (Foucault, 2015; Munro, 2012) to explore new opportunities to explore the marketing world (Skålén et al., 2006; Tadajewski & Jones, 2016).

One of the main directions in the study of marketing strategies by many authors focused on two options of strategies - customer-oriented or competitor-oriented. For example, this position was shared by the authors Narver and Slater (1990), speaking about the existence of these two main configurations of marketing strategy. Firms with customer-centric marketing strategies tend to integrate customer preferences into product development and marketing by putting customer interests first (Voss & Voss, 2000). This can motivate businesses to look ahead and be more interested in long-term success. “On the other hand, firms with a competitor-focused marketing strategy tend to analyse competitors in their external market, use competitor information as a guide to guide product development and marketing processes, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and keep pace with or stay ahead of the rest” (Al-Surmi & Cao, 2019, p.3).

In turn, some authors come out with a critical assessment of such a study, since they assess the strategy focused on competitors as the most important. For example, Essam B. Ibrahim and Tina Harrison confirm this in their study to assess the impact of competitors' actions on the effectiveness of marketing strategies (Ibrahim & Harrison, 2019). This study is also supported by data from other authors. The marketing strategy is based on competition theory (Hunt, 2015); it is influenced not only by the firm's actions and environmental conditions but also by the actions and reactions of competitors to the firm's marketing strategy (Ibrahim & Harrison, 2019). Kotler P. comes to the same conclusion in his "Principles of Marketing": it is not enough to understand customers, it is important to analyse competitors.

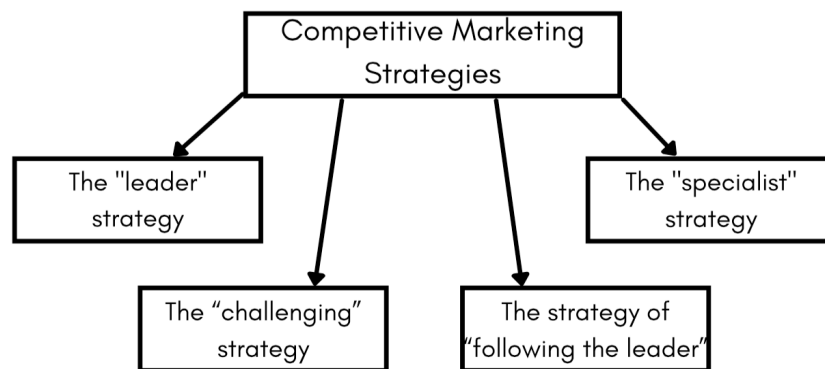
Also, in addition to looking at customer-centric and competitor-centric strategies, several authors examine marketing strategies in terms of their scale. So, for example, in the work by Butković L. and Bošković D., the authors note the importance of considering precisely international marketing strategies, rather than internal marketing strategies that can bring much greater success in the international market (Butković & Bošković, 2014). In this paper, construction companies are taken into account, but in this case, their specificity regarding marketing strategies is very similar to that of railway companies, since both of these markets are complex in their specificity and meeting the needs of consumers is a rather difficult task. Marharyta M. Berdar supports this position. The author notes the novelty associated with the analysis of the relationship between the phases of development of international marketing and the level of application of international marketing strategy. As a result of using the proposed complex, enterprises can increase the level of international marketing activities (Berdar et al., 2020).

According to Popova I., the formation of a company's marketing strategy directly depends on four groups of factors:

- 1) Trends in the development of demand and external marketing environment;
- 2) The current state and features of competition in the market, the main competing firms and the strategic direction of their activities;
- 3) Management resources and capabilities of the firm, its strengths in a competitive environment;
- 4) The basic concept of the formation and prospects of the company, its global goals and business objectives in the main strategic areas (Popova, I., 2015).

It is possible to trace the tendency that marketing strategies are a very broad concept, which many authors interpret in their own way, and some try to supplement the already existing theories. As this diploma thesis focuses on researching marketing strategies to gain a competitive position in the marketplace, some traditional research based on competitive marketing strategies is analysed below. Ryabkov O. (2015) also adheres to the position of highlighting competitive marketing strategies, which are presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Competitive marketing strategies



Source: own creation (according to “Typology of Marketing Strategies by Ryabkov), 2015

1) The "leader" strategy refers to the concept of "market leader" - this is an organization that occupies a dominant position in the market, and the majority of competitors and customers recognize this. Other competitors with similar products or services try to target the leader. According to Kotler, every company should strive for this position.

2) The “challenging” strategy (or “challenger” strategy) is the position of the company striving for leadership, but not being a leader. There is a weak side in this position - a significant risk of the strategy lies in the fact that spending too much energy on the competition may not take into account the real needs of the market (Ryabkov, O., 2015).

3) The strategy of “following the leader” is based on adaptive behaviour, consistent with the actions of competitors and the market leader as well.

4) The “specialist” strategy assumes that the company shows interest in its specific segment, and not in the market.

Kotler's study is also relevantly taken into account, which notes that the statement of a marketing strategy consists of three parts.

“The first part describes the size, structure and behaviour of the target market, the expected positioning of the product. The second part of the marketing strategy statement provides an overview of the estimated price of the product, the general approach to its distribution and the estimated marketing costs for the first year. And the third part of the marketing strategy statement contains long-term goals for sales and profit indicators, as well as a long-term strategic approach to the formation of the marketing mix” (Kotler, P., 2007, p.360).

The development of a marketing strategy is seen as a key stage in the process of strategic planning of the enterprise as a whole and is a necessary element to achieve the best results for the company (Gupta et al., 2016).

There is no universal strategy for all companies, just as there is no single universal strategic management. That is why marketing strategies are a very broad concept that finds different options in different scientific papers. The modern concept of marketing means that the company must focus on satisfying the needs of customers all functions related to goods, but at the same time, competitive analysis is an important aspect. It is the focus on a competitor that often contributes to getting more customers and a better position in the market. Therefore, many companies choose this way of building marketing strategies that are aimed at strengthening their competitive position in the marketplace.

3.2.2 Porter’s Five Force Framework

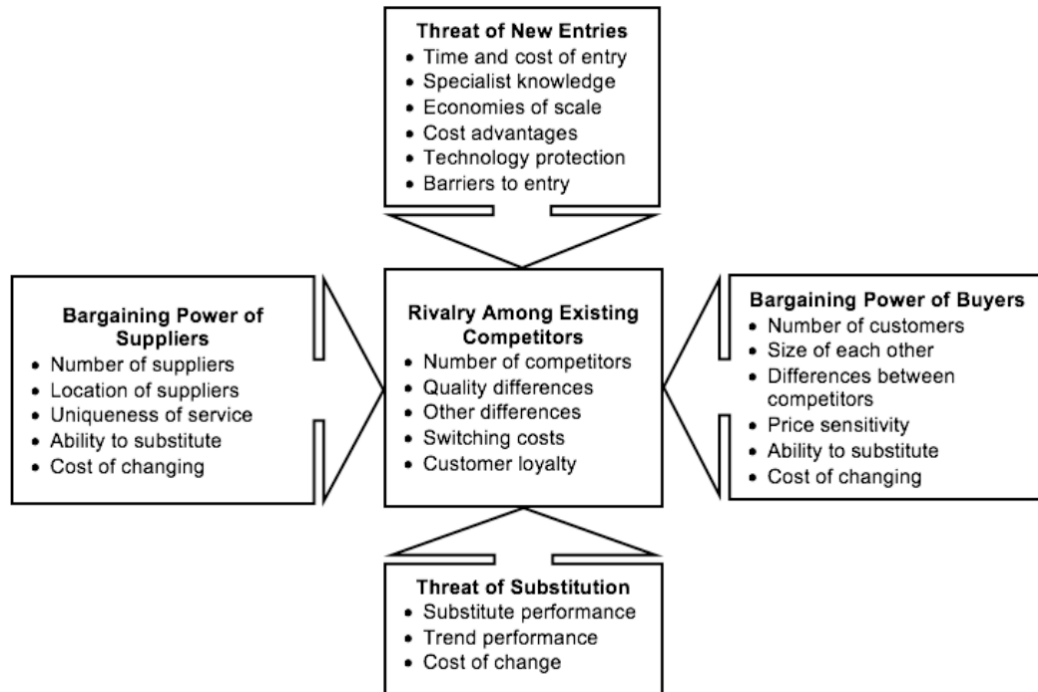
Having analysed the existing marketing strategies that help achieve a competitive position in the market, it is also necessary to separately assess the intensity and severity of competitive forces in the industry and assess the strength of the company's marketing strategy. For this, it is worth resorting to Porter's Five Forces.

The strategic model for analysing the 5 forces of competition was described by Michael Porter in 1979. Michael Porter, using the five building blocks that are specific to each industry, described the ways to create a competitive advantage and long-term profitability of a product, as well as ways in which a company can maintain its profitability and remain competitive in the long term.

Competitive analysis of the industry by Michael Porter helps to determine the intensity and severity of competitive forces in the industry, to find a position in which the company will be maximally protected from the influence of competitive forces and will be able to

influence them on its part. Figure 5 shows the Michael Porter Competition Matrix or Five Forces Model.

Figure 5 Porter’s Five Forces



Source: Porter M., 2008

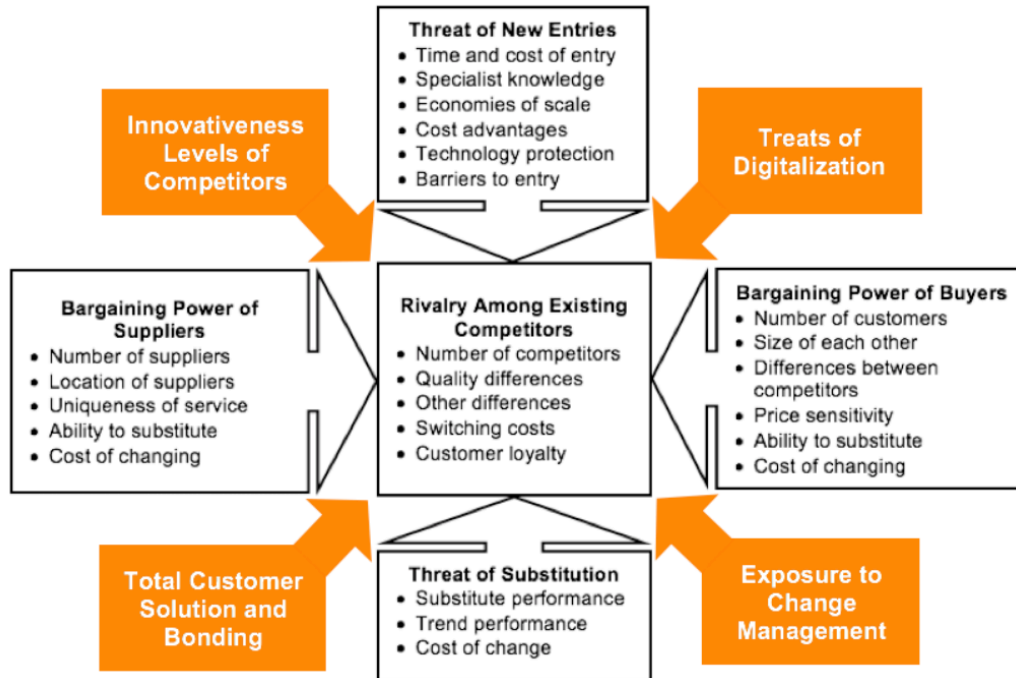
The golden rule of Michael Porter's theory of the five forces of competition is that the weaker the influence of competitive forces, the more opportunities a company has to generate high profits in the industry. Conversely, the greater the influence of competitive forces, the more likely it is that no company will be able to deliver a high return on investment. And the most powerful competitive forces determine the industry’s average profitability.

Michael Porter's five competitive forces analysis model has been widely used both before and now. Many authors analyse and research this topic, and some even add innovative approaches. Some authors argue that the model will change depending on the situation in the world. For example, Mohapatra notes that “individual forces and their collective impact will change as government policies and macroeconomic and environmental conditions change” (Mohapatra, 2012, p.274).

One of the modern authors makes very significant additions to Porter's model. G.Bruijl (2018) supplements Porter's model taking into account additional factors that are presented in Figure 6. At the same time, the author notes the importance of the concept of Porter's five forces, since it stimulates competition in the industry to this day. With the

additions from G.Bruijl, Porter's model becomes more extensive and there are more parameters for analysing competition (Bruijl, G., 2018).

Figure 6 Porter’s Five Forces Readjusted to Industry Challenges



Source: The Relevance of Porter's Five Forces in Today's Innovative and Changing Business Environment by Gerard Bruijl, 2018

In this case, factors such as threats of digitalization, innovativeness levels of competition, customer solution and bonding, and exposure to change management are used, which is important to consider in the 21st century.

There are authors who consider Porter's model as an incomplete model, naming its weaknesses, but do not add factors. The Y. Baburaj sees the weaknesses of Porter's model in the fact that this structure is best suited for sectorial analysis in developed countries, and not in developing countries; and also adds that the structure assumes only relative stability of structural characteristics (Baburaj, Y., 2016). Despite this, the five forces model had a big impact on the marketing field. Another author agrees with this opinion. Within the framework of 5 competitive forces, competitive advantages are the result of strengthening the company's own position (Frumkina, E., 2017). Today, within the framework of these forces, it seems impossible to explain and analyse the dynamic changes that are transforming entire industries.

Porter's theory was largely based on principles that took place in the economy of the eighties; periods characterized by strong competition and relatively stable market

structures.

But, in turn, there are scientific works that, on the contrary, confirm the importance of the primary Porter's model. The Five Forces Framework is an influential tool for defining specific powers according to a given situation using an outside-in perspective (Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington, 2008).

3.2.3 Marketing and Competition

Summing up the analysis of marketing strategies and the study of the driving forces of market competition by Michael Porter, it is worth noting the special influence of competition in the market on marketing methods.

Wang and Lou also agree with this position. "Market competition is a dynamic process and organizations are constantly making the necessary changes to meet changing market needs" (Wang and Lou, 2020, p. 449). In the authors' study, the intensity of competition was considered only as one of the key environmental factors influencing the strategies of companies. But the weakness of this study was that it takes a lot of effort to investigate other environmental factors that could potentially influence this process; these environmental factors were analysed and their particular importance for analysis was noted in the previous part of my thesis.

Also, the importance of the influence of competition is noted in the work of other authors. In general, market competition is perceived as the main incentive to modernize and strengthen marketing strategies. In turn, studying the activities of competitors, their price catalogues, interviewing buyers, the company must objectively assess its position in the market and, on this basis, adjust prices for goods or services (Sanovich, M., 2015). The group of methods for assessing the effectiveness of the competitiveness of a product or service is based on the judgment that the competitiveness of an enterprise is the higher, the higher the competitiveness of its product or service. Most of the methods are based on finding the price-quality ratio.

So, to summarize, it is worth noting the importance of marketing strategies for consolidating a competitive position in the marketplace, which in turn stimulates the development of new marketing plans. Many authors, including M. Porter, who contributed greatly to the development of marketing strategies using the Five Force model, have analysed how to achieve a competitive position in the market using marketing.

This topic is still relevant today. Contemporary authors continue to analyse marketing strategies and how these strategies can be made most useful in strengthening a company's position in the market. Also, many modern studies add information and contribute to the development of existing strategies, which allows marketing to develop even more over time.

3.3 Characteristics of Marketing Tools

Marketing methods are implemented using marketing tools. As is the case with marketing strategies, these marketing tools are presented differently in the studies of different authors. In general, there is a wide range of marketing tools: marketing research, product policy, distribution channels, price, advertising, service, etc. But there are also broader marketing tools that are also closely related to management, on the basis of which marketers are able to create much more accurate marketing plans.

3.3.1 Marketing Mix

The selection and application of all marketing tools to achieve the goal are implemented through the procedures of a marketing mix or theory (concept) called 4P. For the first time the "4P" model, in its modern form, was published by EJ McCarthy in 1960. Later, Philip Kotler made a significant contribution to the popularization of this approach.

The marketing mix has been defined as the "set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market" (Kotler, P., 2000, p. 9). The marketing mix structure, traditionally known as the 4P, is one of the main theories of marketing management and a widely used tool that helps identify the main components of a product (Fan et al., 2015).

4P structure includes: product, price, place, and promotion.

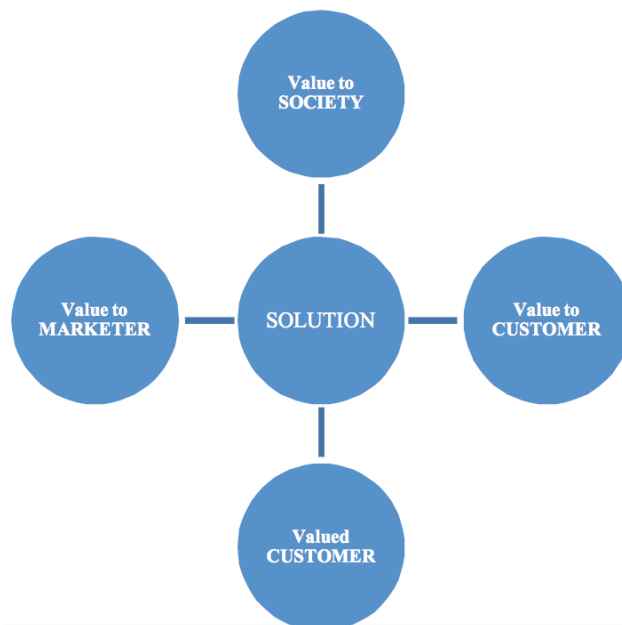
“A marketing mix is a set of controlled marketing tools that an organization uses to get the desired response in different target markets” (Ivy, J., 2008, p.289).

In modern times, many researchers have criticized the 4P model. Ross Gordon's scientific article concludes that the dominant 4P structured marketing mix no longer meets the goals of modern social marketing. The author highlights the weaknesses of previous studies, noting that the emphasis on firm, profits and transactions is more irrelevant in modern times, and updated models of the marketing mix have been developed: changes and promotion in relation to the marketing mix must also be included (Gordon, R., 2012).

The 4P model also drew some criticism from other authors (for example, Constantinides, 2006), but it is still a useful tool in helping businesses to solve management issues that affect such aspects as market segmentation, marketing positioning and differentiation, which allows companies to focus on a few elements of the marketing mix (Möller, 2006).

The marketing works of some modern authors are aimed at adding to the marketing mix. For example, B.R. Londhe also refers to the fact that the marketing structure has undergone dramatic changes over the past few decades. "The new model of the marketing mix, although it is at the conceptual level, certainly answers many of the questions of modern marketers that traditional marketing mix theories do not answer. However, the creation of new 4P, 4C, 4S could not offer practicing specialists the most suitable marketing mix tool that would be mutually beneficial for clients and marketers " (Londhe, B., 2014, p. 336). The author has done very unusual research with the proposed new model. The proposed model of four values - the conceptual model of the marketing mix is presented in the form of a model of four values and is shown in Figure 7 (Londhe, B., 2014).

Figure 7 Four Values Marketing



Source: Marketing Mix for Next Generation Marketing by B. Londhe, 2014

The author characterizes valued customers as an important part of the model since it is important to know whom to serve. When it comes to value to the customer, "it includes the value proposition offered to the client. A value to society is marketing benefits the community by informing and educating consumers. And value to the marketer: the

marketer promotes products and services for profit, but he also creates brand value and brand equity, a corporate image for the marketer” (Londhe, B., 2014, p. 339).

But, it is important to understand that the four-value model, although “it is at the conceptual level, certainly answers many questions of modern marketers that traditional marketing mix theories do not answer. The new approach will attract academics to further explore the model” (Londhe, B., 2014, p. 341). The disadvantage of the model is that this concept is not fully developed and this is only a variant of the proposed model for analysis.

As for the criticism of the 4P model, a more fundamental criticism was that the 4P reflects the mind-set of the seller, not the customer. Robert Lauterborn (1990) suggested that sellers should work with 4C first. “4C is customer value (not product), customer costs (not just price), convenience (not location), and communication (not promotion). Once the marketer has thought of the 4C for the target customer, it becomes much easier to set up the 4P” (Kotler, P., 2003, p.109).

Also, in modern times, the 7P model is quite often used, which, in comparison with 4P (product, price, place, promotion, process, people, physical evidence), provides a more complete basis for analysing the marketing mix of a product (Loo and Leung, 2018). It is also important that all elements of the marketing mix are interconnected (Golubkov, E., 1999).

As has been revealed in previous chapters, researchers in the marketing literature emphasize the concept of "international marketing." It refers to carrying out business activities to standardize the flow of goods and services to external changes and consumers in more than one country (Ghauri and Cateora, 2011), as the main framework for interacting with environmental factors and achieving the strategic goals of the organization (Wong and Merriles, 2007).

Thus, the marketing mix refers to the variables under the control of marketing. It is the complex, simultaneous and systematic work with these variables that allows achieving a marketing result and creating a high-quality marketing plan. In accordance with the concept of a marketing mix, the company, within the framework of marketing activities, develops, implements and evaluates the quality of what was invented and implemented and corrects what was developed. The use of a marketing mix is very important for conducting marketing research, regardless of what type of model is used 4P, 5P or 7P. In this case, the choice of a model depends on the company, the marketer and the purpose of the analysis. For example, if a company providing services is being investigated, it is more preferable to

apply an extended model, namely 7P. If a company produces goods, then the 4P model should be applied.

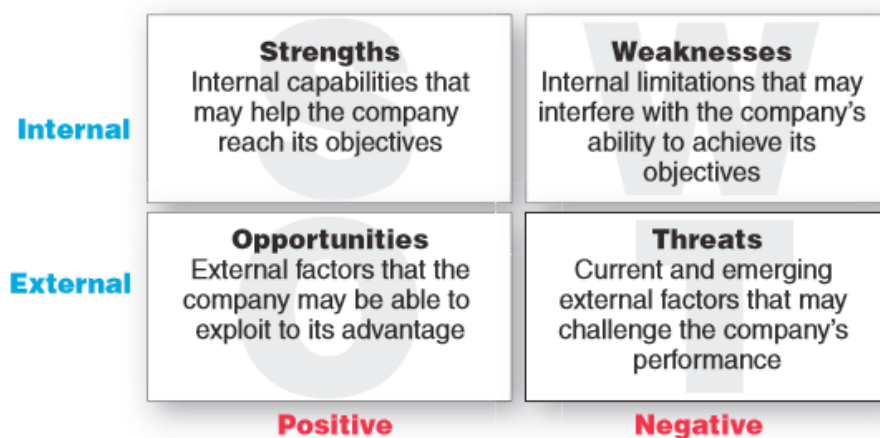
3.3.2 SWOT Analysis

Also researching marketing tools should touch upon the topic of SWOT analysis. There are authors who classify SWOT analysis as management tools or characterize it as a method of strategic planning. But there are also many scientific types of research, where the authors attribute SWOT analysis to marketing tools (for example, P. Kotler). In other words, this type of analysis is usually considered as a method of marketing research of an enterprise's activities in the market, i.e. in the context of the business practices of individual organizations. This can be traced, for example, in the scientific works of G. Houben et al. (1999), K. Flyaysher and B. Bensussan (2005), and others.

When conducting marketing analysis, it is important to consider the enterprise from the point of view of its strengths and weaknesses, which can be done using the SWOT analysis.

“SWOT analysis is a summary of the results of internal and external audits that draws attention to the organization's critical strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and threats the company faces” (Kotler, P., 2005, p.58). The SWOT analysis is of particular importance because its essence lies in the analysis of the internal and external factors of the company, the assessment of risks and the competitiveness of the product in the industry. It is important to take into account the clear structure of the SWOT analysis, presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8 SWOT Analysis



Source: Kotler and Armstrong, 2005

According to P. Kotler, it is very important to identify the main threats and opportunities in time in order to predict likely important events that may have an impact on the company (Kotler, P., 2005). What is important to note especially in the case of threats is a competitive activity. When assessing the marketing potential of a company, this will be a decisive component in the SWOT analysis. It is also important to take into account that in the SWOT analysis, in contrast to the analysis of the macro and micro marketing environment, not all threats require the same attention. Therefore, it is necessary to assess the approximate potential of each threat and how much damage it can bring. And if a certain number of threats are identified, sometimes it is important to focus only on the most important threats for a particular company. Likewise, with opportunities, each opportunity needs to be assessed in terms of its potential attractiveness and the likelihood of a company's success (Kotler, P., 2005). As for strengths and weaknesses in a SWOT analysis, it is important to consider only the most important factors, because a very long list of factors will indicate a lack of focus on what is really important for the company.

All this makes the SWOT analysis more flexible. Thus, SWOT analysis is applicable to objects of different sizes and not only in areas where there is a focus on increasing profits (Maysak, O., 2013) but also in areas of goals, where goals are of a complex social or social-economic nature. In other words, the object of modern SWOT analysis in a broad sense is a socio-economic object.

Many authors also come to the conclusion about the possibility of mutual use of the PEST analysis, and Porter's Five Force models. That is, universal and abstract models of the PEST type (Ograjenšek and Kenett, 2008), Porter's 5 forces model (Ivanova, E., 2009) can be used in SWOT analysis, which does not contain detailed sets of factors, but categories that play the role of a framework for factors. Therefore, further, it is worth analysing the PEST analysis.

In general, SWOT analysis is a flexible tool; therefore it is suitable for assessing in completely different areas. A person or a group of specialists captures all the factors affecting business and activities. Already on their basis, conclusions are drawn about the prospects for the development of a company or a situation, which is very important for marketing analysis.

3.3.3 PEST Analysis

In the first part of this thesis, an important component for the application of marketing strategies was discussed - the analysis of the marketing environment. As noted earlier, it is necessary to analyse both the microenvironment of the company and the macroenvironment, which from the outside has a tremendous impact on the decision to further create a marketing plan. Therefore, one of the main marketing tools is the analysis of political, economic, social, technological, and sometimes legislative, and environmental factors, which is called PEST analysis (or PESTLE analysis).

According to Zahari and Romli: "A PESTLE analysis is a strategic management tool that can be used to determine the potential or risk of a project, product or service to its overall environment" (Zahari & Romli, 2019, p.2). P. Kotler also notes the importance of this analysis, as "most organizations need to observe the macro environment to understand how they need to adapt to it" (Kotler, P., 2007, p.61). This tool originates from business management and has expanded to engineering management because of its usefulness in assessing the impact of the external environment on projects (Rastogi and Trivedi, 2016).

Certainly, this tool has its advantages and disadvantages. The PEST analysis should be updated about once a year, as the external environment is constantly changing. PEST analysis is also a strategic management tool, but it is also an effective tool in the case of marketing. In this diploma thesis, the use of PEST analysis is necessary, since the marketing strategies of Czech railway companies will be assessed, and then a set of measures will be applied to improve the marketing plan.

3.4 Marketing in the Public Transport Field

In modern times, issues related to the search for tools to ensure the competitive development of large industrial companies based on the implementation of marketing strategies are important and relevant. This strategy is focused on innovative development, the development of new market segments aimed at increasing the transport mobility of the population and removing infrastructural restrictions on the development of railway transport. And also, managing the company's competitiveness can significantly reduce the degree of uncertainty in the development of the company, increase its market stability, and ensure the potential for stable development. In order to study this topic most accurately, you need to turn to existing research on this issue.

The research question is about marketing to achieve a competitive position in the marketplace and about the role of competition in the former monopolistic railway industry. The specific thesis is to determine how operators in a previously monopolistic public transport industry use marketing to improve their competitiveness and establish their position in the marketplace.

To fully disclose this topic of the thesis, theoretical literature (regarding marketing to achieve a competitive position in the marketplace), as well as methodological aspects of the application of various economic policies, quantitative and qualitative studies will be analysed.

Many recent studies have focused on the problem of moving from a monopoly in the railway segment to private companies, since on the one hand, creating competition in this industry leads to positive results, but on the other hand, exacerbates some aspects of the industry. Also, it is worth noting the relevance of the topic of marketing in this area, as modern approaches can significantly affect industries, including the railway segment. Although there was a lot of research on the transition from a monopoly to private companies in the railway sector, and a lot of information was found on the role of marketing, a gap was found in the literature, since few researchers took into account these two topics in general.

In this work, was analysed the literature as directly related to the monopolistic structure of railway transport in the Czech Republic, as well as work based on the analysis of this industry, as it is important to evaluate this topic as a whole, to identify common and different aspects and then outline the picture.

With the accelerating pace of globalization, competition between companies is increasingly intense in modern times. New companies appear on the market, and provide new structures and business models. In addition, the emergence of new technologies has allowed small and medium-sized enterprises to enter global markets, which has led to the emergence of more competitors. Accordingly, to compete effectively in the marketplace, companies must develop strategies that take into account the interdependence of competitive positions between different countries (Homburg, Fürst, and Kuehnl, 2012).

Ibraeva and Figueira de Sousa analyzes the field of public transport and the application of marketing strategies in terms of changing the preference of more people from personal transport to public transport. The authors emphasize that it is important to develop public transport marketing in order to improve the overall image of this area so

that more people tend to use this particular type of transport. The authors also argue that marketing public transport can indeed be a way to encourage its use (Ibraeva & Figueira de Sousa, 2014).

Ibraeva and Figueira de Sousa cover the topic of the principles of public transport marketing, noting that “the use of marketing tools in the public transport segment is fraught with a number of difficulties and gaps associated with the features of this service, although many transport companies can improve their marketing presentation” (Ibraeva & Figueira de Sousa, 2014).

In general, railways in Europe and many other countries have traditionally been organized as legal monopolies, but in some countries, regulators are considering ways to create conditions for domestic competition. An article by Jensen A. (1998) attempted to expand understanding and analysis of internal competition as a means of increasing the efficiency of rail transport. The author notes the problematic and weak aspect of the change in strategy, which is associated with the negative development of financial and market indicators of the railways (Jensen, A., 1998). A similar point of view is shared by other authors, Charlton K., Gibb R. and Shaw J., also come to the conclusion that the topic of improving the quality of rail services by encouraging competition is very relevant (Charlton, Gibb & Shaw, 1998).

But it is important to study the topic of competition directly in the country about which the bulk of the work will be presented, namely, the Czech Republic. Tomeš, M. Kvizda, T. Nigrin, D. Seidenglantz (2014) describe the development of competition in the passenger train market in the Czech Republic. The authors note the problematic aspect that important strategic steps in the reform of railway transport are often carried out as a way out of the critical financial situation of the incumbent president, and not as a strategic reform aimed at increasing market efficiency (Tomeš, Kvizda, et al., 2014). Many authors also point out that in recent years, new developments in the railway market have provided new insights into the impact of competition in this sector. For example, the authors of Finger M., Kupfer D. (2016) touched upon the problem of competition in the segment of railway transportation, as well as the prospects for competition in several countries, including the Czech Republic. Authors tend to generalize from some academic papers and data that competition is usually limited to a few key routes and between very few participants. The authors highlight the positive and negative aspects of this and also provide information that this has a positive effect on passengers and, in general, negatively

affect the system (Finger, Kupfer, 2016). As for the positive aspects for passengers, the authors, while agreeing with the authors of other articles, agree that the introduction of competition has led to a sharp decrease in prices, an increase in the frequency of service and, as a result, a significant increase in passenger traffic. The authors noted that competition has led to some negative consequences for the rail system, as, for example, price reductions may be greater than efficiency gains from the competition. But despite this, "public transport marketing provides transportation companies with the opportunity to promote their products, but beyond that, it also has some positive impact on consumers as it creates a company's image" (Ibraeva & Figueira de Sousa, 2014, p.3).

Also, the authors Tomeš, Kvizda, Yandov (2015) conducted other studies in this industry, at a time when two private operators opened the main railway connection between Prague and Ostrava. Initially, the authors note that "theoretical research and experience from other countries show that this competition should lead to a price war, intense market dynamics and product differentiation" (Tomeš, Kvizda, Yandov, 2015). The authors conclude that the industry as a whole has not received sufficient benefits, but the quality of the linear service has improved significantly and prices also began to change in a positive direction for consumers. But, Ivaldi and Seabright (2003) built a theoretical model of direct competition, which helped to analyse and conclude that the incumbent would use predatory pricing and the new company would survive in a highly competitive environment (Ivaldi & Sibright, 2003). Vit Janoš, Milana Kříž (2019) concretizes some of the problems - the opening of the intercity rail transport market must come to a decision on how to improve the price-quality ratio of Czech rail transport (Janos, Krizh, 2019).

So, with regard to competition in the modern world, in the context of globalization, competition between companies on a global scale is becoming more intense. That is why many companies resort to marketing approaches to attract customers and raise their level, image and profit. It was revealed that there are several important studies in this area, but each one touches on specific aspects using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. If we talk about marketing in the field of public transport, it was also revealed that marketing affects in the same way as in the field of personal transport. That is why it is important to understand the role of marketing in this area.

As for the transition of the monopolistic industry to private companies, several positive and negative aspects were revealed here. It is also important to note that no matter what approach the authors of the article adhere to - they had approximately the same result

and thereby agreed with each other. On the positive side for passengers, the authors agree that the introduction of competition has led to a sharp decrease in prices, an increase in the frequency of services, and, consequently, a significant increase in passenger traffic. The effect on prices was very noticeable. In addition, there are very substantial discounts as a result of the innovative pricing policy. The frequency of service has also improved.

The competition also caused some negative consequences for the railway system, which must be taken into account for the proper and proper regulation of activities. Price reductions can be greater than efficiency gains from the competition. Moreover, in some cases, the unit cost per passenger can increase, due to the tendency to offer a higher frequency with smaller trains and, possibly, with a lower load.

4 Practical Part

4.1 Characteristics of the companies - České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express

4.1.1 České Dráhy

Trains are a common mode of transport in the Czech Republic. Most Czech cities, towns and villages have a railway station. The Czech Republic has a fairly extensive system of railways of the České Dráhy. České Dráhy (ČD; Czech Railways) is a joint-stock company, and it is the dominant railway carrier in passenger transport in the Czech Republic, according to the official webpage of ČD (Ceskedrahy.cz, 2021).

The company was established on 1 January 2003; it is the successor of a traditional company that has been operating in the Czech Republic for over 160 years. The ČD Group is one of the largest Czech companies in terms of consolidated sales and one of the largest employers in the Czech Republic (Annual Report of the České Dráhy, 2019).

4.1.2 RegioJet

RegioJet is a Czech company operating in the field of passenger rail transport in the Czech and Slovak markets (RegioJet.cz, 2021). RegioJet is a subsidiary of the Student Agency. RegioJet's first plans to enter the passenger rail market appeared in 2006. According to the official webpage of RegioJet, the aim was to compete with Czech Railways express trains on the Prague-Ostrava route. In 2009, the company received a license to operate railway transport. The company continued to develop and at the beginning of 2011 changes were made to the acquired locomotives, then the railway authority approved the locomotives for operation on the public railway network in the Czech Republic (RegioJet.cz, 2021). The company currently provides rail passenger transportation on several routes. As stated on the official RegioJet website at the time of market launch, it was the first private rail carrier to break the České Dráhy monopoly.

4.1.3 Leo Express

Leo Express was originally founded in 2009 under the trade name ARETUSA, but since August 2011 there have been changes in the marketing strategy in the form of renaming the company to Leo Express (LeoExpress.com, 2021). The company received a license to operate passenger rail services in 2010 and it is now an open-access train

operator (joint-stock company). During 2011, the company mainly worked on establishing relationships and conditions with relevant institutions, for example, the Railway Infrastructure Directorate and the Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic, then Leo Express received the necessary conditions to enter the Czech railway market (LeoExpress.com, 2021).

4.1.4 Comparison of the Companies

In this diploma thesis, special attention is paid to the comparison of three companies operating in the Czech Republic, since a comparative characteristic gives a more accurate picture of the company's services and allows to evaluate similar and different points for further marketing mix (see Table 1).

Table 1 Comparison of České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express, 2019

	Comparison criteria	České Dráhy	RegioJet	Leo Express
1	Type of the company	Government-owned (100%)	Joint-stock company	Joint-stock company
2	Transportation type	Passenger transport, freight transport (subsidiary ČD Cargo)	Rail passenger transport	Open-access train operator
3	Services	Regional and long-distance Types: - Higher-quality fast (Rx); - Express (Ex) trains; - Fast trains (R); - Regional (Os) trains; - Regional fast (Sp) trains. (1st and 2nd classes)	Regional and long-distance (4 travel classes: Business, Relax, Standard, Low-cost)	Regional and long-distance (4 travel classes: Premium, Business, Economy Plus, Economy)
4	Number of passengers per year	182 million passengers	10,5 million passengers	2,4 million passengers (total – buses + trains)
5	Number of locomotives	515 locomotives	- 9 locomotives operating northern CZ and SK routes; - 4 locomotives designated For operations between Prague, Bratislava and Vienna; = 127 modern wagons	- 5 Stadler FLIRT trains for operations in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland
6	Technical equipment for passenger comfort	- The Wi-Fi equipment; - On-board portals; - Wheelchair access platforms;	- Wi-Fi internet; - Mobile platform; - Seat-reservation; - Assistance for passengers with reduced mobility, etc.	- Wi-Fi connection; - Electrical sockets; - Low-floor boarding; - Seat-reservation.

Source: Annual Report of the České Dráhy (2019), RegioJet.cz, LeoExpress.com

Also, this table as a whole contains information that allows us to draw a conclusion about the scale of each Czech railway company in the Czech railway industry. In general, based on the data in Table 1, it can be concluded that the main company in the railway industry in the Czech Republic is České Dráhy. But, it is also important to take into account the information that this company was previously monopolistic and existed on the market for many years, until new companies appeared, which services are in many ways more positive than those of České Dráhy. This analysis will be carried out in more detail in subsequent chapters.

4.2 PEST Analysis

PEST analysis helps companies identify external forces that can affect the market and analyse how they can directly affect the business. Before analysing the marketing strategies themselves, it is necessary to assess the marketing environment of the companies. Since companies exist in a similar market environment (both geographically and in terms of service delivery), general PEST analysis will be carried out for all three companies at the same time, considering the global, regional and local impact. This analysis helps to assess the overall marketing environment. The results of the PEST analysis can then be used to populate opportunities and threats in a SWOT analysis. Table 2 summarizes the main factors influencing the marketing environment of companies. More detailed information on some of the factors is provided below the table.

Table 2 PEST Analysis for Czech Railway Market

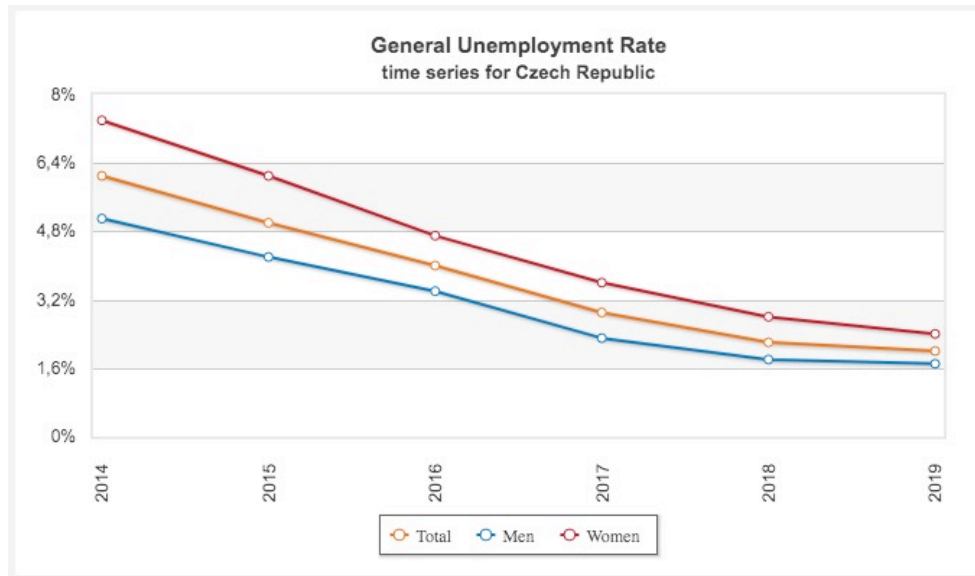
Name of the factor	Types of factors		
	GLOBAL (World)	REGIONAL (Europe)	LOCAL (Czech Republic)
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax policy; • Entry into foreign markets; • Minimum wage; • Environment protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Transport Strategy 2011-2020 and defining a long-term vision until 2050; • Political stability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union in 2004, which brought it many opportunities • Transport policy of the Czech Republic 2014-2020, with a view to 2050;
Economical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross domestic product; • Inflation rate; • General unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability of currency; • Unemployment rate in Europe; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The companies is affected by the exchange rate variable, as part of the sales is from companies abroad;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rate; • Development of the average real wage; • Exchange rate; • Tax policy; • Globalization; • Economic crisis (which affected Europe and America in particular, most strongly in 2008 and 2009) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU tax policy; • The Czech Republic is striving to move closer to European regulations, (where, for example, inflation should be reduced to 2%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment rate in the Czech Republic; • The average real wage in the Czech Republic; • Tax system in the Czech Republic (for example, in addition to direct taxes, companies must also pay indirect taxes); • The development of the Czech koruna against the Euro
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration and emigration rate; • Population and growth rate; • Tourism and the impact of the pandemic on tourism; • Changes in the lifestyle of the population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural norms and values in Europe; • European tourism; • High education level in Europe; • Attitude towards customer service; • Attitude towards foreigners; • COVID-19 measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the population in the Czech Republic; • The gap between the number of men and women; • The age structure of the population in the Czech Republic; • Suburbanization; • The number of passenger cars is still rising in the Czech Republic
Technical and technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation level; • Technological awareness; • Internet infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology is a key driver of new forms of work in the EU; • Technological equipment in Europe; • Increasing automation; • Development of the Internet in Europe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of technological equipment of wagons in the Czech Republic; • The novelty of wagon trains in the Czech Republic; • Information and communication technologies; • Modernization of the machines.

Source: own creation, 2021

Since this diploma thesis is in the economic field, it is worth considering some of the local factors affecting Czech railway companies. For example, it is worth noting the very important impact of the unemployment rate on the industry (see Figure 9).

Figure 9 General unemployment rate in the Czech Republic in 2014 - 2019 (in%)



Source: Czech Statistical Office (ČSÚ), 2020

The above chart shows the development of the general unemployment rate in the Czech Republic in the years 2014 to 2019 as a percentage (see Figure 9). The general unemployment rate shows the percentage of unemployed in the economically active population. Czech Republic's unemployment rate for 2019 was 1.93%, a 0.31% decline from 2018. A higher number of job seekers for companies mean the possibility of not increasing wages or even reducing them and thus reducing their costs.

It is also important to pay attention to the exchange rate (see Figure 10).

Figure 10 Euro (EUR) to Czech crown (CZK) exchange rate from January 2012 to February 24, 2021



Source: Statista.com, 2021

České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express cooperate with foreign countries. That is why companies are also interested in the foreign exchange market. Companies are affected by the exchange rate variable, as part of the sales are from companies abroad.

The analysis revealed several important aspects. With regard to political factors, an important role in the formation of Czech railways is played by the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union, and further development based on transport policy and the advantages of interaction with European policies (European subsidies, etc.)

Among the significant opportunities of economic factors - an important role is played by expansion to other foreign markets, reduction of unemployment, taxation features and the impact of exchange rates on the activities of companies.

As for the social factor, there is still a tendency to buy a personal vehicle, which negatively affects public transport, including Czech railway companies. Due to changes in the social environment, the demands of customers are increasing. This is another opportunity for the company to offer passengers more modern technology and thus provide more comfortable transport. The technological factor is changing towards strengthening its role. Technologies are developing and companies need modern equipment that will deliver maximum comfort to customers.

After a complete analysis of the external environment for the further creation of marketing strategies, it is worthwhile to focus in more detail on the companies themselves and apply the marketing mix and SWOT analysis.

4.3 Marketing Mix

In the literature review, the structure of the marketing mix and some discussions on the number of analysed criteria were presented in detail. In this case, since this is a marketing mix of companies providing services, it is necessary to supplement the classic marketing mix (4P) with other elements. Therefore, the marketing complex of the 7P model will be presented in this diploma thesis for all three companies. The 7P model was also chosen (and not 4C, for example) as it allows concentrating on the company and assessing its competitive advantages and disadvantages. In this diploma thesis, the analysis of the marketing mix of companies will focus exclusively on the activities of companies in the Czech Republic, for ease of comparison. Since the services of companies vary (destinations), for this diploma thesis, approximate prices will be presented for two directions Prague - Brno and Prague - Ostrava.

Also, some parts of the marketing mix, such as promotion, help evaluate the marketing strategies used by companies. This part of the marketing mix will analyse information presented on the official websites of České Dráhy, RegioJet and Leo Express, as well as from their annual and semi-annual reports and official sources. Further, in the practical part, the information provided by the companies' representatives specifically for this diploma thesis is also presented (an online interview was conducted).

4.3.1 České Dráhy Marketing Mix

Product

The main product of the České Dráhy company is passenger and freight rail transport. It is important to note that the service of transporting people includes not only one service - moving a person from one point to another. This is a more complex set of services, which includes: service during the trip, provision of conditions and services for a comfortable stay of the passenger in the carriage, provision of related and additional services, etc. At the moment, České Dráhy has to face a competitive market environment in which newer companies are rapidly developing in the quality of services and technical

equipment, which influences the opinion and choice of consumers. Customer service is very important for the development of a company from an economic point of view.

Therefore, it is important for the company to develop not only in quantitative terms (expanding and increasing the number of directions), but also qualitatively (improving technical equipment; introducing innovations; providing convenience for the consumer at all stages, whether it is the moment of buying a ticket, or the trip itself).

Price

Also, the most important criterion is the price, since many customers are often focused on this criterion, or by the criterion of a competent price-quality ratio of a service. Price, as the only instrument of the marketing mix, brings the company income, so it is very important to choose the optimal price that will bring profit to the company but also is beneficial for customers. There are quite a few indicators that ultimately affect the price. For example, a company offers various discounts, benefits and promotions to its customers in order to encourage them to buy and use their services.

There is also the possibility of purchasing a ticket of a different tariff class, which also affects the price. The price also depends on the time of purchase of the ticket, the direction of the route, travel time (for example, rush hour or during business hours), etc.

Table 3 and Table 4 show approximate ticket prices without discounts for the Prague-Brno and Prague-Ostrava routes and show how prices vary depending on the tariff class and time of purchase. For the analysis, the ticket prices for travel during rush hour were taken, because many people are going home from work or school approximately at this time.

Table 3 Prices for České Dráhy tickets on the route Prague-Brno (prices for trips in the time interval of 5-6 pm), CZK

	Buying a ticket the day before departure		Buying a ticket on the day of travel	
	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Tariff class				
Price	245	499	245	499

Source: own creation, based on CD.cz ticket purchase section (current prices at the end of February 2021)

It can be concluded that the prices for trips have not changed, in the case when tickets could be purchased the day before the trip and right on the day of the trip. But, for example, if have a look not only at this time interval, then the prices varied slightly depending on the type of train (by about 20-50 CZK).

Table 4 Prices for České Dráhy tickets on the route Prague-Ostrava (prices for trips in the time interval of 5-6 pm), CZK

	Buying a ticket the day before departure		Buying a ticket on the day of travel	
Tariff class	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Price	325	690	369	690

Source: own creation, based on CD.cz ticket purchase section (current prices at the end of February 2021)

As can be seen from the table, the price changed slightly in the case of the second class by 44 CZK. The price for the first class remains unchanged. All of this is indicative of minor changes.

As noted earlier, the company also provides various types of discounts. For example, there are the following discounts:

- Free for children under 6 years of age;
- Special fare for children and juniors from 6 to 17 years old – 75%;
- Special fare for schoolchildren and students 18-25 years old (with a student discount card or ISIC card) – 75%;
- Special fare for all passengers 65 years of age and older – 75%;
- Discount for disabled people, etc.

There are also seasonal discounts on selected routes and other promotions, and loyalty systems, for example IN Cards (up to 25, 50, or 100% discount on each train ride according to the selected application). There is also another type of loyalty program - this is the accumulation of points for purchasing tickets through a mobile application (for every 10 CZK, passengers receive 1 point, which he/she can then apply to the company's partners participating in this project), according to the official webpage of České Dráhy.

Also, depending on the tariff class that the passenger chooses, there are options for additional fees for certain types of services, for example:

- Additional places for transporting bicycles and oversized luggage;
- Snacks and drinks, etc.

In general, České Dráhy provides fairly good quality services at affordable prices, a large number of discounts and discount programs, as well as provide many additional paid options that each individual passenger can choose for him/herself.

Place

České Dráhy uses several channels to distribute the service:

- Sale of tickets at points of sale at train stations in the Czech Republic;
- Online ticketing systems - through the company's website;
- Mobile application My Train for buying tickets.

Promotion

České Dráhy's marketing is based on several of the most commonly used media. The main means of promotion are the Internet, websites, station advertisements, mobile applications, TV advertisements, etc. Also, as described earlier, there are various discounts and loyalty programs that refer to promotions. As for the promotion in this company, in this case, a structured and holistic approach is needed to the issue, since the target group of customers is very diverse (whether they are people of different ages, as well as foreign tourists, etc.). That is, there is a need for both different types of online advertising and offline advertising. Taking into account all groups of potential customers, České Dráhy uses the following types of offline advertising:

- Billboards;
- Advertising frames on trains (both metro and České Dráhy's trains);
- Advertising in the metro and at public transport stops, and stations, etc.

Such types of advertising are still relevant to this day since many passengers pay attention to advertising while waiting for public transport or while traveling on it.

Also, České Dráhy uses various types of online advertising, which are becoming more and more effective in modern times:

- Convenient website with the function of buying tickets and reading news, useful and interesting information;
- Mobile app ("My Train" app with the function of use it without an Internet – using it, it is possible to track routes, look for the necessary travel options, monitor changes during the trip, buy a ticket, etc.);
- Promotion and maintenance of the company's official pages social networks, such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram.

It is also important to note that the promotion, both online and offline, involves not only advertising in the Czech language, but also advertising in English, which creates convenience for foreigners.

People

According to the Annual Report of České Dráhy 2019, “2,949 staff employees and another 1,973 employees directly at the stations took care of their customers in 2019. They were available not only at 528 personal cash desks and ČD centres, but also answered 591,742 telephone and electronic inquiries to the ČD Central Customer Support Service. In 2019, 3,760 experienced train drivers took turns at the helm of all ČD trains. Czech Railways pay great attention to the training of new employees in this responsible profession. 255 new entrants were trained in 2019. An innovation in 2019 is the equipping of all drivers of the Czech Railways with tablets with the necessary operational and information applications” (Annual Report of České Dráhy, 2019).

In general, employees are a key part of the company. They try to help clients both offline and online. On the website of the ČD, all the necessary contacts of various departments are presented in detail, which allows the client to contact a special department on the right issue without any problems.

In the current situation with the virus, the company's employees are trying their best to help passengers and keep order on trains, and also apply special cleaning with disinfection of locomotives.

Process

Initially, when the Czech Republic had a monopoly on the Czech railway industry, less attention was paid to the various processes, although the services were still provided quite clearly. At the moment, in a competitive environment, it is most important for a company to provide several processes to provide its services and attract customers. These processes include, for example, ensuring the safety of locomotives, passenger vehicles, tracking failures and delays, providing quality services, etc.

Physical Evidence

In general, ČD trains are divided into several types:

- Higher-quality fast (Rx) - modern carriages, higher quality high-speed trains;
- Express (Ex) trains;
- Fast trains (R);
- Regional (Os) trains;
- Regional fast (Sp) trains.

The appearance of ČD trains combines blue and gray colours. Also, the design inside the carriage is also predominantly blue. Train designs are created for the

convenience of passengers. Trains are equipped with special technological devices. Many trains have separate compartments for seating and a narrow corridor. No additional seat reservation service - passengers can find a free seat on the train, focusing on special signs next to each compartment. But, it often happens that all the seats are occupied, because of this, there are inconveniences with finding people in the aisle of trains. Also, not all carriages are adapted for people with disabilities.

4.3.2 RegioJet Marketing Mix

Product

RegioJet's main product is the provision of passenger rail services. The company entered the Czech market with the aim of breaking the České Dráhy monopoly and offering carriers a new way of interacting with customers in the passenger railway market. RegioJet's services are also a high quality service during the trip. Before the advent of RegioJet, the services of Czech railways were not at the same level as they are now. Therefore, it can be partly noted that RegioJet became the first high-quality provider of passenger services on Czech railways. Service along the way, such as a multimedia entertainment portal, Wi-Fi connectivity or many other services that the company offers significantly complement the provision of the basic service, leading to customer satisfaction.

“The main benefits are: free seat reservation, free cancellation 15 minutes before departure, great service (stewards, food, etc.), credit ticket, free Wi-Fi, comfort and convenience,” according to the official interview with brand manager of RegioJet - Ing. Filip Rivola.

Also a very important service, which is the main one in the case of the RegioJet, and not an additional one, is the reservation of a certain seat for the passenger. Each ticket includes a seat for which customers do not need to pay extra, as well as water or coffee. Also, there is a variation of classes (Low-Cost, Standard, Relax, Business), which significantly increases convenience, since each client can choose a completely suitable option for him/herself.

The company relies quite heavily on value-added services, as it is the main tool for differentiating itself from competitors. For example, such a service as assistance with boarding, when at each entrance to the carriage there is a boarding attendant who helps passengers get into the carriage and provide the necessary information. There is also a

service for additional information while traveling by train, provision of drinks and snacks, headphones for a personal RegioJet tablet, etc. Each customer can use the socket to charge their devices while traveling by train. There are also night trains - while traveling by night trains, passengers can rent a blanket; use the wake-up service, etc.

In general, the services provided by RegioJet are high quality service and convenient for passengers.

Price

The level of fares in RegioJet depends on the distance between transport locations, day and time of the week, as well as on the selected fare. RegioJet usually offers one of the four fare classes that the company has.

The cheapest is the Low-cost class, in which additional services are not provided. All other classes include on-board service. The second cheapest class is Standard, followed by Relax, and the most expensive class is Business.

Table 5 and Table 6 show approximate ticket prices without discounts for the Prague-Brno and Prague-Ostrava routes and show how prices vary depending on the tariff class.

Table 5 Prices for RegioJet tickets on the route Prague-Brno (prices for trips in the time interval of 5-6 pm), CZK

Tariff class	Low cost	Standard	Relax	Business
Price	195	245	359	439

Source: own creation, based on RegioJet.cz ticket purchase section (current prices at the end of February 2021)

So, prices vary considerably by class. Prices between low-cost and business class differ by almost 250 CZK.

Table 6 Prices for RegioJet tickets on the route Prague-Ostrava (prices for trips in the time interval of 5-6 pm), CZK

Tariff class	Low cost	Standard	Relax	Business
Price	299	369	499	649

Source: own creation, based on RegioJet.cz ticket purchase section (current prices at the end of February 2021)

RegioJet has a discount system that provides customers with various discounts. The company must provide customers with some discounts based on subsidies from the state. These discounts include, for example, discounts for seniors, students aged 15-26, discounts for the disabled and others. For example, there are the following discounts:

- Free of charge for children under 6 years of age;
- Special discount for children and pupils from 6 to 18 years old – 75%;
- Special fare for schoolchildren and students up to 26 years of age – 75%;
- Special fare for seniors over 65 years of age – 75%;
- The discount for ISIC or ALIVE cardholders over 26 years old – 10%;
- Parents visiting a child in institutional care – 75%;
- ZTP cardholders - 75 %, etc.

There are also seasonal discounts on selected routes and other promotions, for example, during the autumn of 2020, there was a promotion called “Month of Discounts: 1+1 free ticket throughout the whole autumn”, etc.

Place

RegioJet uses several channels to distribute the service:

- Sale of tickets at RegioJet points and at points located directly at or close to train stations throughout the Czech Republic;
- Booking systems. The company uses two types of booking systems. One of them is the online booking system on the company's website. The second is the SMS booking system;
- RegioJet mobile application for booking and purchasing tickets.

Promotion

The company uses several communication mix tools for its promotion, including event marketing, public relations, advertising, company website and social media. The company also creates great interest for the public and draws attention to the Czech railway transport due to the competition between České Dráhy, and private carriers.

RegioJet affects promotion through advertising in media such as radio, and pays less attention to the TV. RegioJet also actively uses advertising in public places, metro stations and stops. However, the disadvantage may be the fact that the company does not attract as large a percentage of people with its advertising that it could be accessed through media such as television or radio. Also, a certain marketing trick in terms of promotion can be noted the trains of the RegioJet company themselves, which are striking with their colour and are remembered by many people. Also, to keep in touch with its customers, RegioJet publishes its own magazines.

As for online advertising, the company differs from its competitors. Unlike other companies, RegioJet does not use banner ads on third-party websites, but only on their

websites. The company also has official social media pages such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, WeChat, Google+. The company uses social media to quickly engage with customers, where the company tries to respond to comments or messages from customers as quickly as possible. RegioJet regularly announces various competitions and shares company-related photos. The company announces news, special offers, or informs about planned promotions.

Moreover, RegioJet is very open to the public and consumers. On its website, the company provides all possible and necessary information and also shares important documents such as annual reports. The company's website is great convenience for consumers as it is very conveniently organized and divided into several sections. RegioJet is committed to working on its website and improving its usability as both existing and potential customers come across it. The main page of the website has a booking system that is used to buy and book tickets. There is also information on delays and news. The website is also convenient because it is presented in many languages, such as Czech, Slovak, English, German, Dutch, Hungarian, Polish, Spanish, Chinese.

People

Company employees are an important link in the marketing mix in the case of service companies, as they often contact customers and have the greatest impact on their satisfaction. According to the information on the official RegioJet website, the main task of the on-board personnel is serving customers during the train, helping people with reduced mobility get on and off, etc. Depending on the number of wagons on the train, the number of board attendants may vary. There is always at least one steward on board each vehicle. Company employees have a special dress code to make them easy to recognize. The company's employees always try to help any client as much as possible, if necessary, and provide the full range of services available on board of the train, whether it is the provision of headphones, information, provision of drinks, etc.

Also, company employees provide their assistance not only on the train. If the client has any problems, for example, with the cancellation of a reservation, he/she can always contact the competent RegioJet employees via phone, email, or social networks. RegioJet employees take care of the safety of their passengers in connection with the COVID-19 situation and ensure that all necessary measures are followed.

Process

It is important for a company to provide multiple processes for delivering its services. These processes include, for example, securing locomotives, passenger vehicles, planning, staffing and other processes. Initially, entering the Czech railroad market, the company faced some difficulties in terms of service, for example, an unstable Wi-Fi network. But the company very quickly corrected all the shortcomings and currently has an excellent quality of service. At the moment, almost all existing processes such as procurement, cleaning, booking systems, etc. can be characterized as very efficient.

Physical Evidence

The physical evidence includes the appearance and image of RegioJet trains and branches for ticket sales. It's important to focus on each one individually:

- Trains and locomotives

The design of the company's trains is a combination of yellow and black, which stands out with a red and blue company logo, so it is clear at a glance what kind of company it is. The interior inside the train is designed in such a way as to provide passengers with maximum comfort. In addition to its striking appearance, which attracts attention, the company also pays great attention to the service, cleanliness of trains and toilets in order to increase customer comfort. Despite the existence of comfort classes, even the cheapest low-cost classes have all the comfortable conditions for passengers.

- Branches for ticket sales

The appearance attracts the attention of people as well as the trains themselves. Ticketing offices are also trying to make them as comfortable as possible for clients. Even despite the fact that many customers mainly buy tickets online, there are also those customers who prefer to buy tickets at the box office, so RegioJet is trying to create the most comfortable conditions and a supportive environment.

4.3.3 Leo Express Marketing Mix

Product

The main product that Leo Express offers passengers is rail transport. As in the case of ČD and RegioJet, the company provides not only the service of transporting passengers from one place to another but also offers on-board services. The company provides Wi-Fi services free of charge, an electrical outlet and a small table for each seat, additional

services for a fee - the opportunity to purchase hot and cold snacks, low-floor boarding, a children's section for the little ones, etc.

Also, the company serves passengers according to four travel classes: Premium, Business, Economy Plus, and Economy. This creates convenience for customers, as they can choose the appropriate option. For example, the Premium ticket includes meals, as well as a quiet place where no one bothers. The company also provides additional services such as car parking and cheaper taxi fares.

Price

“Leo Express, which was the last to enter the market, had to adapt to the on-going price war between ČD and RegioJet and set its own pricing policy in order to get its supporters in an already saturated environment. The company initially positioned itself as the cheapest carrier, and also provided tariffs consistent with this statement at the start. However, gradually it slightly adjusted its pricing policy and at certain periods was even one of the most expensive carriers” (LeoExpress.com, 2021).

As for Brno, it is possible to travel only by bus. Therefore, in the case of Leo Express, the information will only be provided on the prices for the trip from Prague to Ostrava. Table 7 shows approximate ticket prices without discounts for the Prague-Ostrava routes and shows how prices vary depending on the tariff class.

Table 7 Prices for Leo Express tickets on the route Prague-Ostrava (prices for trips in the time interval of 4-6 pm), CZK

Tariff class	Economy	Economy Plus	Business	Premium
Price	339	419	519	1659

Source: own creation, based on LeoExpress.com ticket purchase section (current prices at the end of February 2021)

As it can be seen from Table 7, the difference in price between economy class and premium class is as much as 1,320 CZK, which is quite a large amount. This indicates that Leo Express offers additional services included in this price.

The Leo Express price for a basic (Economy) ticket includes a seat, staff services, free use of the on-board entertainment portal, Wi-Fi, and daily newspapers and limited magazines.

The company also provides a fairly wide range of discounts and loyalty programs:

- Free for children (0 - 5 years) for trips in the Czech Republic;

- Discounts for children (0 - 5 years) for trips outside of the Czech Republic – 50%;
- Discounts for juniors (6-17 years) - 75 %;
- Discounts for students (18 - 25 years) – 75%;
- Discounts for seniors over 65 years of age – 75%;
- Discounts for disabled – 75%;
- An Adult fare passenger can get a 20% discount on the return trip; both trips must be in the same class.

There are also various discounts for group tickets, as well as loyalty programs and cash back programs. For example, Smile Club program – 2.5% cash back after the registration. It is possible to upgrade to a higher loyalty category immediately after purchasing tickets, meals or replenishing your Leo Express credits. Figure 11 shows the Smile Club system of Leo Express.

Figure 11 Smile Club loyalty program by Leo Express



Source: LeoExpress.com, 2021 (Smile Club section), 2021

Membership is completely free, which is a huge competitive advantage, for example, unlike České Dráhy with their In-Card system or RegioJet programs.

Place

The most common and used option for tickets is buying a ticket through an online platform (website). But this option may be inconvenient for certain categories of passengers (for example, pensioners who do not have access to the Internet). There is a traditional offline option for buying tickets - buying at Leo Express branches located at the stations where trains stop or near them. In Prague, the Leo Express point is located right in the station lobby.

Promotion

Leo Express's promotion is based on several major media that are used regularly. Leo Express mainly uses Internet banners for advertising. Also, it uses offline advertising

close to the stations where the trains stop, billboards, or stickers. Leo Express uses advertisements on its trains.

One of the important tools is the company's website and Facebook, Instagram and Twitter profiles. The company communicates with its clients through comments and also shares news and photos. Leo Express does not use traditional media such as TV or radio. Previously, the company used paper flyers, but recently this type of advertising is outdated and is not used, for example, due to environmental considerations and the ineffectiveness of this type of advertising.

Also, a very important component is the company's website. Leo Express website looks convenient for the customers. Information is presented in structured sections and is also available in several languages (Czech, English, Slovak, Polish, German, Ukrainian).

People

The company's staff strives to provide maximum comfort for all types of passengers. The main task of stewards is to assist with boarding and disembarkation, answering questions, and servicing the board. Business and Premium Classes have their own flight attendant who only takes care of these passengers. In economy class, the number of employees varies depending on the traffic load. The staff on board is dressed in black and green uniforms.

Other very important people are ticket sellers and employees who help with customer issues through mobile contact centres and through the website. The website is not equipped with a sufficient amount of information regarding employees. This makes it difficult to contact company representatives.

Process

Leo Express, like competing companies, tries to manage various processes that improve the quality of services and also affect the services of companies in general. Similarly, these processes include securing locomotives, passenger vehicles, planning, staffing and other processes.

Physical Evidence

The Leo Express trains are completely new and have been created specifically for the company (new trains from Stadler company). Due to the fact that Leo Express trains are completely new, the company has no problems with air conditioning or car breakdowns, which is a huge advantage over competitors. The trains are equipped with Wi-Fi. Also, depending on the class, different types of comfort are provided, although in

general, trains are comfortable even when buying the cheapest ticket. Leo Express is constantly striving to improve and expand its services, such as menus and other on-board services.

4.4 SWOT Analysis

After a detailed analysis of the external environment and drawing up a marketing mix, it is important what strengths and weaknesses the companies have, as well as what opportunities and threats exist. To achieve this goal, a SWOT analysis will be carried out. Data obtained as a result of the SWOT analysis, are basic elements in the development of the strategic goals and marketing objectives of the companies as well. As there are three Czech railway companies being analysed, a separate SWOT analysis will be presented for each of them (see Tables 8, 9, 10).

Table 8 SWOT Analysis for České Dráhy

	Helpful	Harmful
	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First on the market; • Well-known company; • Large company with many trains; • Wide range of travel destinations; • Professional staff; • Electronic information system - ticket booking and payment in various forms; • More economical transport compared to a car; • Availability of discounts and loyalty programs; • Strong promotion and advertising channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train delays; • Transport routes are in poor condition, the car park is out-dated; • Lack of a regulated function of booking a seat immediately upon purchasing a ticket; • Insufficient number of services included in the ticket price; • Only 2 types of comfort class; • High fixed costs; • Poor accessibility compared to road transport.
	Opportunities	Threats
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives to improve the quality of existing services; • New marketing promotions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of highways and expressways roads; • Substitution by another carrier and high

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in gasoline and motor fuel prices; • Ecological situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> competition; • Stricter legislation in this area; • Customer churn; • Price war.
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Source: own creation, 2021

Thus, based on the analysis, solutions and a set of measures were developed.

1) Strengths and Opportunity:

Improving the strength of "Strong promotion and advertising channels" using the opportunity of new marketing promotions. Due to the environmental situation (people are increasingly thinking about ecology), strengthening the "large number of directions". Improving the strength of "economical transport compared to a car" using the opportunity "Increase in gasoline and motor fuel prices".

2) Weaknesses and Opportunities:

Avoiding the weak side "Lack of a regulated function of booking a seat immediately upon purchasing a ticket" by using "Incentives to improve the quality of existing services" and "Insufficient number of services included in the ticket price".

3) Weaknesses and Threats:

Reducing market threat "Price war" by discarding the weak side "Insufficient number of services included in the ticket price". Also, reducing market threat "Customer churn" by discarding the weak side "Lack of a regulated function of booking a seat immediately upon purchasing a ticket" and train delays.

4) Strengths and Threats:

Using a strong point "More economical transport compared to a car" to reduce the threat "Development of highways and expressways roads". Also, using a strong point "Availability of discounts and loyalty programs" to reduce the threat of "Customer churn".

Further, Table 9 presents the SWOT analysis for RegioJet and offers options below the table.

Table 9 SWOT Analysis for RegioJet

	Helpful	Harmful
	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service quality; • Price-quality ratio; • Reliability; • Friendly and helpful staff; • Comfort; • Technological equipment; • Choice of a class from four options; • New trains; • Booking a specific seat for a specific passenger; • Customer support and communication; • Train cleanliness; • Availability of discounts and loyalty programs; • Catchy ads; • Bright trains memorable to the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of rail routes; • Frequency of trips along the route.
	Opportunities	Threats
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in gasoline and motor fuel prices; • Ecological situation; • New investors; • New destinations; • EU subsidies; • Development of local and regional tourism after the pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High competition; • Stricter legislation in this area; • Price war; • Service demand of a relatively new company; • COVID-19 situation.

Source: own creation, 2021

Solutions and a set of measures were developed.

1) Strengths and Opportunity:

Improving the strength of "Technological equipment" using the opportunity of EU subsidies. Using the opportunity "New investors", improve the strengths "Comfort" and "Service quality".

2) Weaknesses and Opportunities:

Avoiding the weak side “Number of rail routes” by using “Incentives to improve the quality of existing services” and “Development of local and regional tourism after the pandemic” and new destinations.

3) Weaknesses and Threats:

Reducing the threat “Service demand of a relatively new company” by discarding the weak side “Frequency of trips along the route”.

4) Strengths and Threats:

Using strong points “Technological equipment” and “Booking a specific seat for a specific passenger” to reduce the threat “High competition”.

Further, Table 10 presents the SWOT analysis for Leo Express and offers options below the table.

Table 10 SWOT Analysis for Leo Express

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train interior; • Service quality; • Choice of class from four options; • Qualified staff; • Availability of discounts and loyalty programs; • Security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of rail routes; • Frequency of trips along the route; • More expensive tickets and fares; • Little experience in the market; • Weak customer relationship.
External	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in gasoline and motor fuel prices; • Ecological situation; • EU subsidies; • New investors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stricter legislation in this area; • High competition; • Price war; • Lower service demand of a relatively new company; • COVID-19 situation.

Source: own creation, 2021

Thus, based on the analysis, solutions and a set of measures were developed.

1) Strengths and Opportunity:

Improving the strength of "Train interior" using the opportunity of EU subsidies and new investors.

2) Weaknesses and Opportunities:

Avoiding the weak side “More expensive tickets and fares” by using “New investors”.

3) Weaknesses and Threats:

Reducing the threat of “High competition” by discarding the weak side “More expensive tickets and fares” and “Weak customer relationship”.

4) Strengths and Threats:

Using strong points “Qualified staff” and “Service quality” to reduce the threat “High competition” and “Lower service demand of a relatively new company”.

When the decision matrix is built, can be started the development of a set of marketing activities, that is, creating a marketing plan, or adjusting it. A set of solutions helps to turn the weaknesses of companies into strengths using the provided opportunities of the external environment, and threats to eliminate and reduce the impact of risks by avoiding weaknesses.

4.5 Analysis of the Marketing Practices and Strategies of the Companies – České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express According to the Interviews

Using the marketing mix, data related to marketing, pricing programs, types of services, and so on were analysed in detail. The information was taken from official sources such as official company websites, annual reports and other confirmed sources of information. In order to check the relevance and accuracy of the data, as well as to better understand the possibilities for improving marketing strategies, it was decided to conduct structured interviews in order to obtain information on on-going marketing programs and plans for the future. To obtain the necessary information, it was planned to conduct a special interview with 3-5 employees who work directly in České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express and are responsible for the marketing department.

Due to the current epidemiological situation in the world, the interview format was defined as an Online interview by email. As a result, an electronic interview was sent to several emails of the České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express companies, but the only two companies - České Dráhy and RegioJet sent their answers to the interviews. In this regard, only information that is publicly available on the official website of the company will be provided for Leo Express, without additions from company representatives.

The interviews were conducted between January and February 2021 and consisted of five questions: four of which were directly related to marketing and marketing strategies; one question related to financial analysis, and will not be presented in this diploma thesis. An electronic interview form is provided in the Appendix.

Below are presented questions and precise answers from companies' representatives.

České Dráhy

This interview was conducted with Bc. Radka Turková, the Head of the Communication Department (Marketing Department) via email Turkova@gr.cd.cz:

1) What competitive advantages do you think the company has?

“So-called networking, i.e. we operate our trains and related services on most of the Czech railway network, continuity of connections within integrated transport systems” (Bc. Radka Turková).

2) What marketing strategies are used in the company to promote your services? What types of advertising were used the most?

“By default, we use most promotional channels, i.e. campaigns in the form of TV spots, online with an emphasis on PPC (pay per click) campaigns, OOH (Out-of-Home) advertising, print and radio, we also have our own communication channels, such as areas in frames in trains, posters at stations, we are very active on social networks, such as a profile on Facebook already exceeded 100,000 fans, as well as using Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn.

The pandemic situation has greatly reduced us this year, the marketing budget has been reduced and after the release, we are counting on communication in the online environment” (Bc. Radka Turková).

3) What marketing strategies do you plan to implement in the future?

“Due to the pandemic situation, communication is now very limited, travel options abroad are very limited and some connections in the Czech Republic are limited, so we now actively communicate especially travel safety by trains, we regularly disinfect trains, we also use Nano Spray and ozonation, train staff is protected protective equipment such as respirators, etc. After the release of the measure, we will focus on online communication (performance campaigns) of specific destinations and types of tickets, incl. prices or driving times” (Bc. Radka Turková).

One of the questions related to marketing costs, to which both companies responded that this information is a trade secret and is only partially available.

4) If this information exists and is available, could you indicate the main costs of marketing and advertising?

“This is a trade secret, part of the information is published in the Annual Report, which is available on our website” (Bc. Radka Turková).

So, when compared with the information of the marketing mix, this interview touches on all the previously analysed aspects, as well as provides additional information, especially regarding the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The company also provides information on the use of the PPC marketing model, about which no information was found in official sources. It also provides information on further preferences in the development of the marketing strategy. Thus, through the marketing mix and the interviews conducted, a complete picture of the company, its priorities and plans for future-marketing strategies is presented.

RegioJet

This interview was conducted with Ing. Filip Rivola, the Brand manager of Student Agency (RegioJet) via email filip.rivola@studentagency.cz:

1) What competitive advantages do you think the company has?

“It's all about service and accompanying services. The main benefits are: free seat reservation, free cancellation 15 minutes before departure, great service (stewards, food, etc.), credit ticket, free Wi-Fi, comfort and convenience” (Ing. Filip Rivola).

2) What marketing strategies are used in the company to promote your services? What types of advertising were used the most?

“At RegioJet, we use basically all communication channels from radio, through OOH to PPC. We pay less attention to the TV. Marketing strategy is a very broad concept, but in principle, we have three communication concepts - line support (e.g. Prague - Brno), benefits communication or brand support” (Ing. Filip Rivola).

3) What marketing strategies do you plan to implement in the future

“The current market situation is growing very quickly, so it is planned in the shorter term, we definitely plan to communicate new lines and support existing ones” (Ing. Filip Rivola).

One of the questions related to marketing costs, to which both companies responded that this information is a trade secret and is only partially available.

4) If this information exists and is available, could you indicate the main costs of marketing and advertising?

“Unfortunately, they are not available, at most if you get paid monitoring, which is only in the list prices and does not reflect all expenses” (Ing. Filip Rivola).

Similar to the ČD, the company representative touches on previously presented data, and also adds important additional information that allows a holistic assessment of the company's marketing plans and its priorities.

Leo Express

As it was mentioned earlier, Leo Express representatives did not get in touch, despite several emails addressed to them. Since the official website of the company does not provide detailed information on the contact of some departments, emails with interviews were repeatedly sent to the following emails: info@le.cz, press@leoexpress.com, info@leoexpress.com, jakub.vyskocil@le.cz.

In this regard, it is possible to assess the overall marketing priorities of the company. As ČD and RegioJet, the company resorts to social media and online marketing. One of the important tools is the company's website and Facebook, Instagram and Twitter profiles. Leo Express uses Internet banners for advertising.

In terms of OOH advertising, Leo Express uses advertisements on its trains, billboards, or stickers next to stations where trains stop. Leo Express does not use traditional media such as television or radio, according to the official website of the company.

It can be only assumed what the company will focus on in the future. Most likely, this will be an expansion in the online field and in the field of security, since due to the current epidemiological situation in the world; this becomes more and more necessary for customers.

4.6 Analysis of Consumer Opinion Based on a Survey and Research Sample

The previous analysis in this diploma thesis was based on a company approach. Including the marketing mix was done according to the 7P model, and not, for example, 4C (customer-oriented), since it was important to do this to analyse the competitive advantages of companies and how marketing influenced the previously monopolistic company. In order to adjust marketing strategies and add additional aspects, an analysis

was carried out based on a survey of consumers. This is also a very important analysis, as companies need to be focused on the needs of their customers. In this case, a survey is a method of obtaining a large amount of data for studying and providing a public opinion.

A survey was created for this purpose, consisting of multiple-choice questions, a rating scale, open questions. 245 customers of České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express were interviewed. A representative sample of the population for the purposes of the study was selected predominantly among clients aged 18 to over 75 years old, as it is important to take into account the opinion of consumers of different age groups.

The surveys were conducted by email, online and in-person, and participants were given five minutes to fill in the survey anonymously. The online survey was conducted using Google Forms, which is provided in the Appendix. The online questionnaire has spread on social networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, as well as on the international social platform InterPals, etc. The surveys were conducted in the time period from November to January (inclusive) 2020-2021.

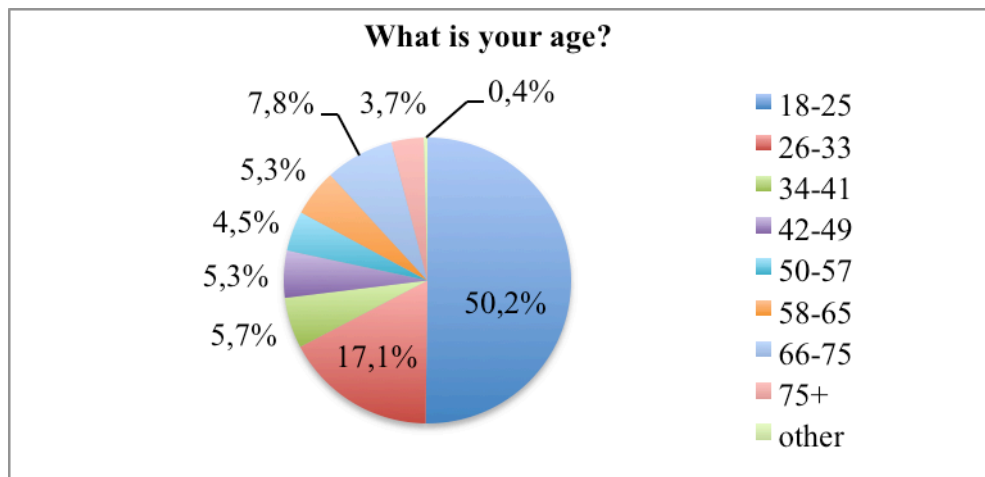
Due to the increasingly complex epidemiological situation, offline surveys were the most difficult part, as many people tried to avoid unnecessary contact, even using personal protective equipment. In order to minimize the risk of the absence of respondents of some age category in the online space, the offline survey was conducted mainly among the age group of people 50-75+ years old, since it was important to assess the opinions of different age groups and to do this in the most convenient way for different groups of respondents.

The questions in the survey concern both general questions about age, gender and place of residence, as well as questions about preference in the railway companies. Also, the questions were directly related to the relationship of customers to marketing. An important part was an open-ended question, which invited the respondents to offer their own advice or recommendations to Czech railway companies.

All questions were structured in such a way that they are easy to answer and they always cover all possible answers or allow the respondent to write a different answer. Also, the most necessary questions for the analysis were presented so that the respondent is more likely not to get tired during the questionnaire and answer as truthfully as possible. The complete questionnaire in the form in which it was distributed is in the Appendix.

This chapter analyses the results of the survey. All questions are scored separately using charts and tables for better understanding.

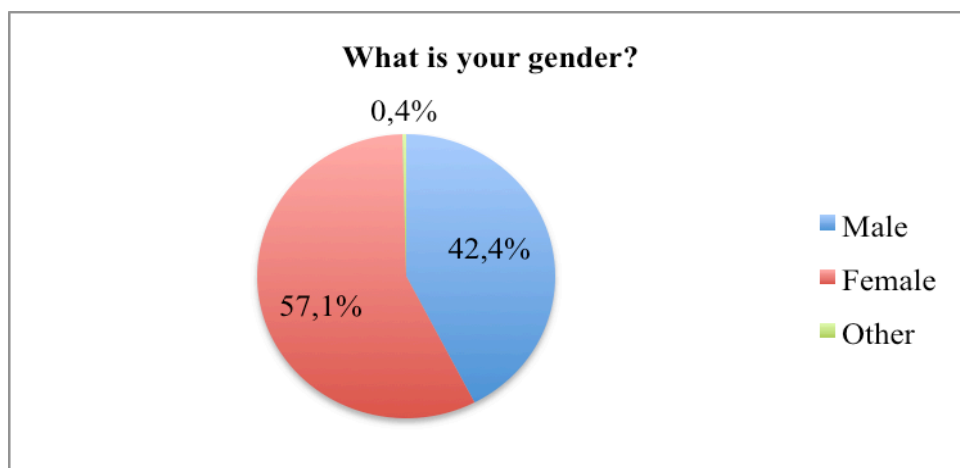
Figure 12 Age of respondents (in%)



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

The first question (see Figure 12) concerns the age of the respondents. The survey involved 123 people in the 18-23 age group, 42 people in the 26-33 age category, 14 people in the 34-41 age group, 13 people in the 42-49 age group, 11 people in the 50-57 age group, 13 people in the 58-65 age group, 9 people in the age group 75+, as well as 1 person of another age group. The groups were highlighted in great detail, which made it possible to determine the preferences of consumers as accurately as possible, but in the future, for convenience of presentation, data on the age category were combined into wider groups. As it can be seen, the largest percentage of respondents is passengers in the 18-25 and 26-33 age categories. People in this age group agreed to take part in the survey most actively, and also confirmed that they use railway transport services, while some respondents from other age categories more often answered that they did not use Czech railway companies, or did not agree to participate in surveys.

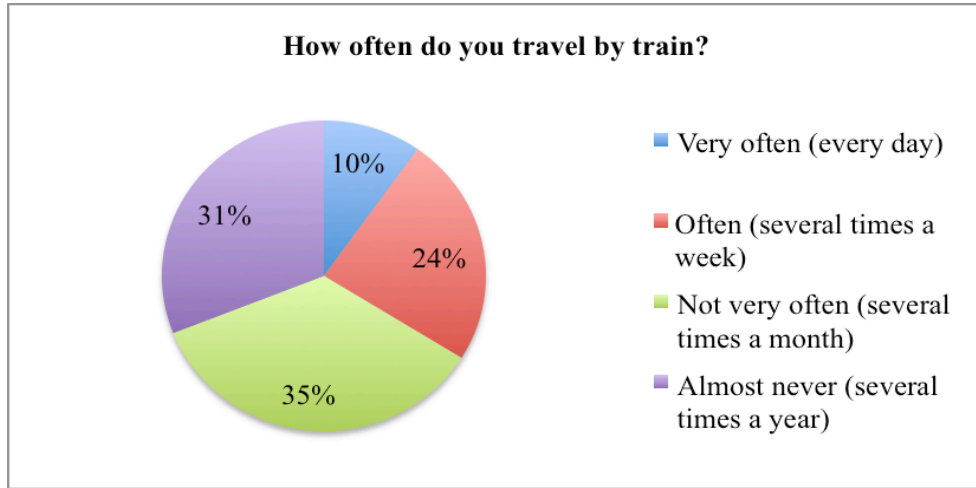
Figure 13 Gender of respondents (in%)



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 13 illustrates that there were slightly more women respondents than men, namely 140 women and 104 men.

Figure 14 Frequency of travel by train (in%)

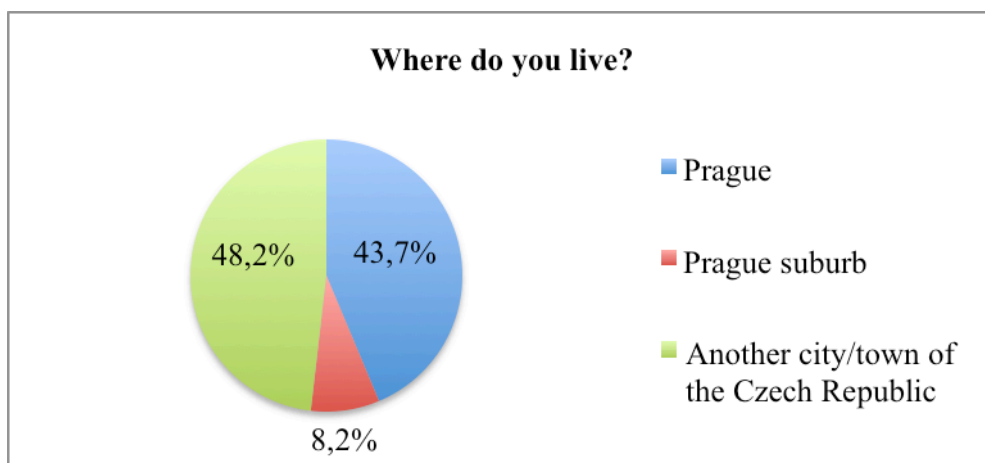


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 14 shows the answers of the respondents regarding the question of the frequency of their travel by train. The largest number of respondents (86 respondents) answered that they travel by train several times a month. In second place are the answers of respondents who travel by train only a few times a year (76 respondents). In third place are the answers of respondents who travel by train often - several times a week (59 respondents). And 24 respondents very often travel by train.

In general, many respondents also added that due to the difficult epidemiological situation, they began to travel much less, while even more than a year ago they used train travel relatively often.

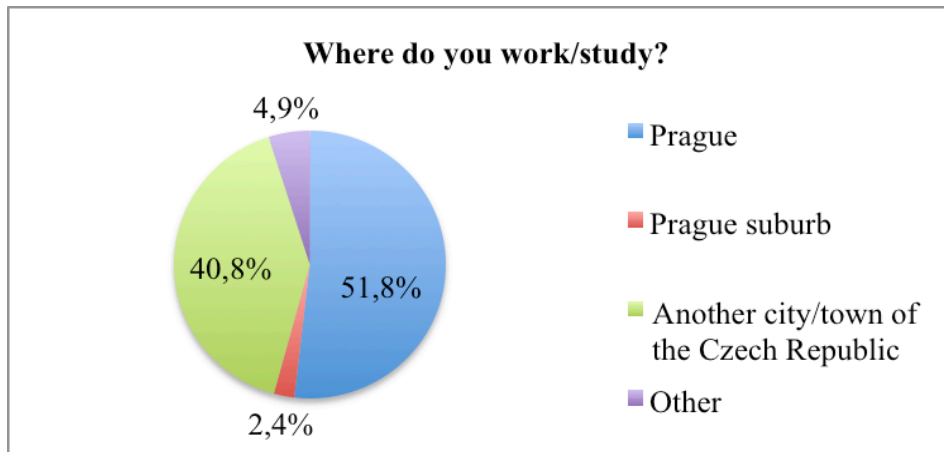
Figure 15 Place of residence of respondents (in%)



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 15 illustrates that 107 of the interviewed respondents live in Prague and 20 respondents live in the suburbs of Prague. In general, it can be said that more than half of the respondents live in Prague and the suburbs. 118 respondents live in other cities of the Czech Republic.

Figure 16 Place of work/study of respondents (in%)

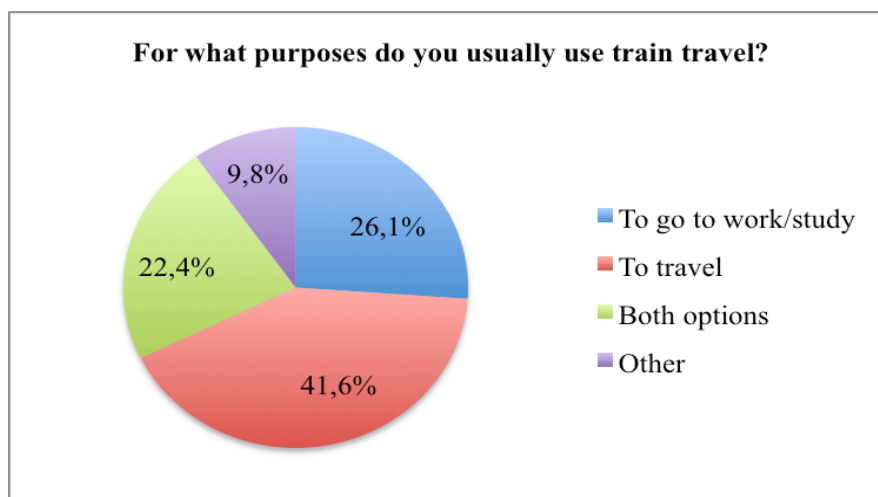


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Further, the respondents were asked the question "Where do you work/study?" (see Figure 16). 127 out of 245 interviewed respondents answered that they work or study in Prague, 100 respondents work or study in other cities/towns of the Czech Republic, the "other" option is in third place (12 respondents), and the Prague suburbs option is in the last place (6 respondents).

It was necessary to get answers to these two questions, since people often use public transport, including trains, to travel from one city to another for work or study. Further, one of the figures will show the dependence of these parameters.

Figure 17 Purposes of train travel (in%)

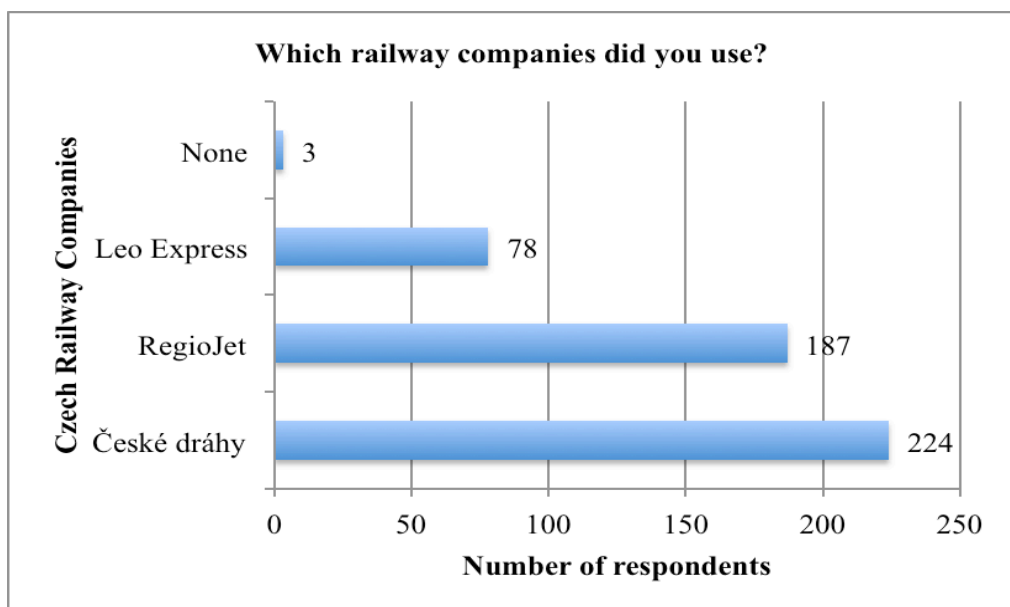


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

A specific question was also asked about the purpose of the train travel. Almost half of the respondents (41.6% or 102 respondents) answered that they use the train to travel anywhere. In second place is the option "to go to work or study" (64 respondents answered this way). In third place are the answers of 55 respondents who use the train for both options.

The respondents who chose the "other" option (24 respondents) in the previous question were offered an additional option to write what they specifically mean. Most of these respondents (8 respondents) answered that they travel to visit their family and loved ones. The second most responded (7 respondents) is to see friends, girlfriend/boyfriend, or just visit someone. In general, these two options can be combined into one "Visit friends, family and loved ones" category – 15 respondents gave such an answer in total. There were also single answer options, such as - a business trip, a trip to a cottage, to a doctor, to go to sports (volleyball), someone replied that he/she was traveling just for fun.

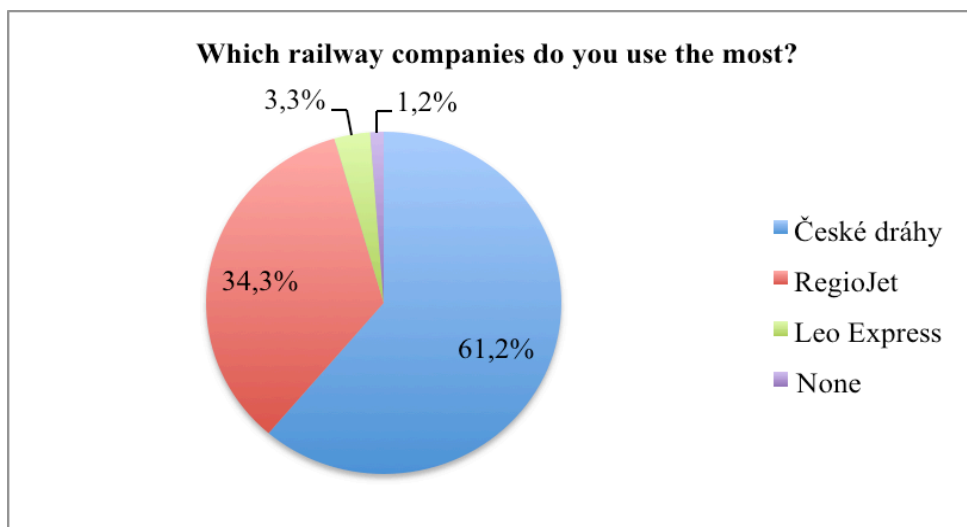
Figure 18 Railway companies used by the respondents (in%)



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 18 shows the answers of the respondents regarding the question of which Czech railway companies they used. This question was with a choice of multiple answers. More respondents noted ČD as the company they used (224 out of 245 respondents). In second place is RegioJet, 187 out of 245 respondents used the services of this company. 78 respondents also noted that they used Leo Express trains. There were also 3 people who did not use Czech railway companies at all. But, their opinion was also taken into account in the analysis of the survey, as they influenced the assessment of marketing, for example.

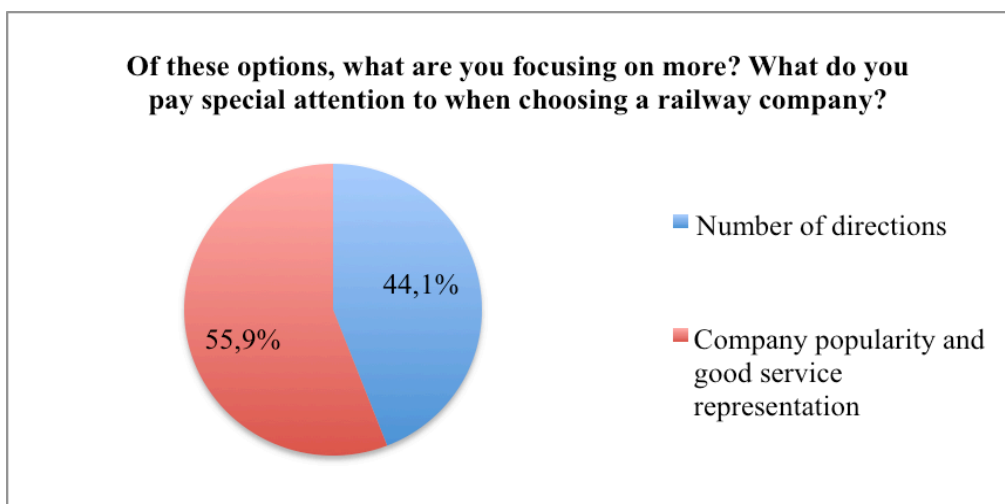
Figure 19 Railway companies most frequently used by the respondents (in%)



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 19 shows the results of answers to the question of which companies the respondents used most often. More than half of the respondents chose the ČD option (150 respondents). The RegioJet again occupies second place, it was chosen by 84 respondents. Leo Express is in third place and less than 5% of respondents chose this option (8 respondents).

Figure 20 Preference for the number of directions or the popularity of the company among the respondents (in%)

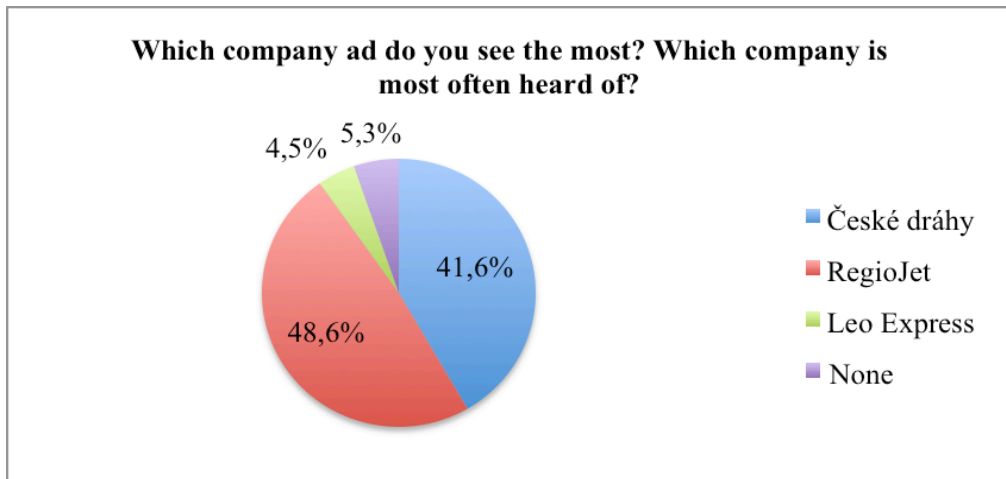


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 20 shows the result for the exact question, which does not have the "other" option, since it was important to focus the respondents' attention precisely on the proposed aspects. As can be seen in the diagram, more than half of the respondents (137 out of 245 respondents) give preference to the company's popularity and good service representation.

This conclusion already partially confirms the hypothesis set in this diploma thesis. But, also a significant number of respondents prefer the number of directions (108 respondents).

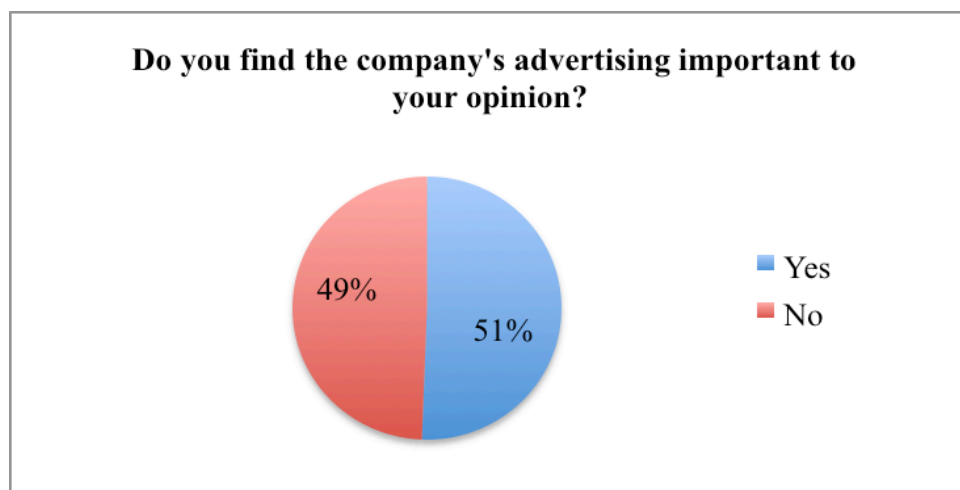
Figure 21 Advertising of the company, which is most often seen by respondents (in%)



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

České Dráhy and RegioJet are competing for the place of the most frequent advertising representative (see Figure 21). RegioJet is in the lead by a margin of 17 people, as 119 respondents answered that they have met this company's advertisement most often. The second place is taken by České Dráhy, as 102 respondents chose it. In third place is the option "None" (13 respondents), and only in fourth place is the answer "Leo Express" (11 respondents).

Figure 22 Attitude of respondents to advertising (in%)

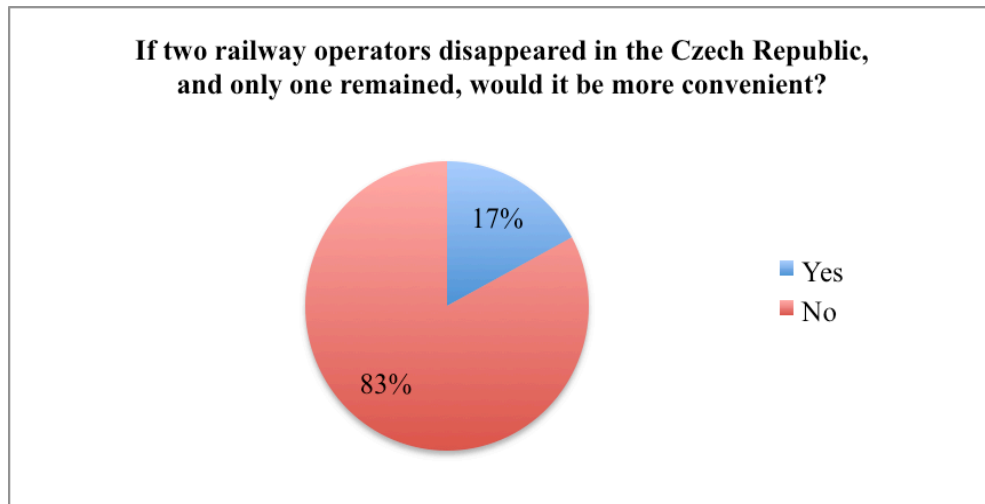


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

As for the attitude of respondents to marketing, the leading position is that marketing is still important for respondents (51% or 124 respondents). This also adds a share of confirmation of the hypothesis put in this diploma. It also adds partial support for

the hypothesis advanced in this diploma thesis. But, in turn, there is not a large gap in the responses, since marketing is not an important component for 121 respondents.

Figure 23 Attitude of respondents to monopoly in the railway sector (in%)

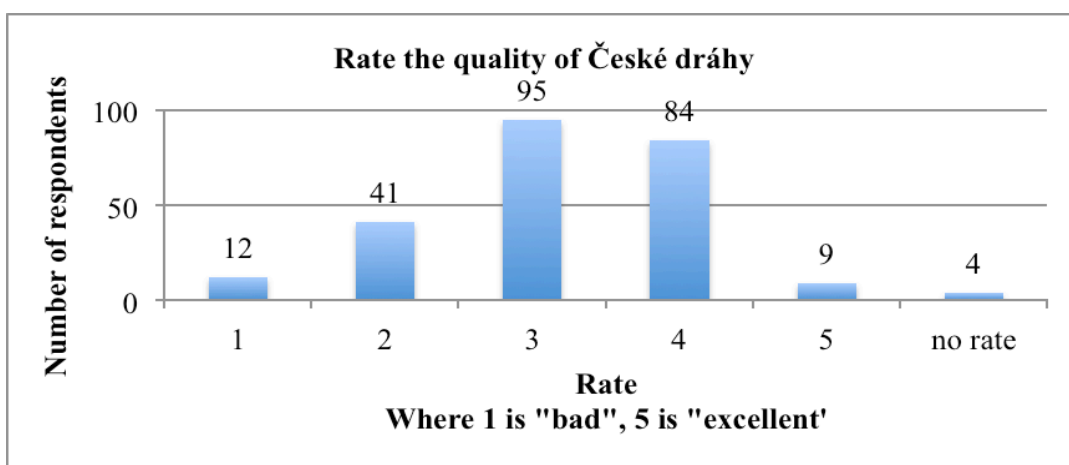


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Also, since one of the goals of this thesis is to understand how marketing influenced the previously monopolistic industry, it was also important to find out the passengers' opinion on this matter. 203 out of 245 respondents believe that if a monopoly in the field of railways was formed in the country again and only one company remained, it would be inconvenient for passengers. But there were also 42 responses for a monopoly in this industry.

Also, respondents were asked to rate three Czech railway companies on a five-point scale, where 1 is "bad" and 5 is "excellent". Figures 24, 25 and 26 show the results for all three companies.

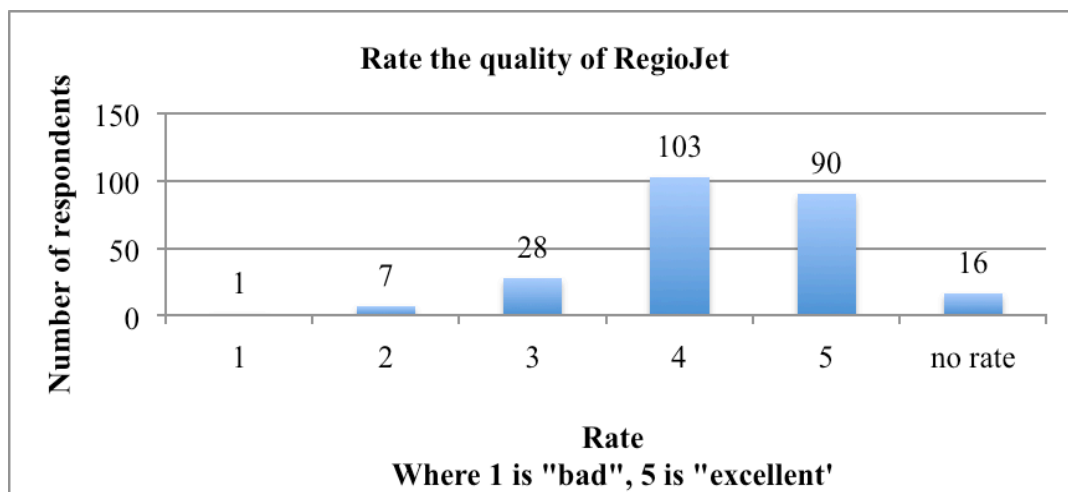
Figure 24 Company assessments by respondents - České Dráhy



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 24 shows that the majority of the respondents rated ČD at a score of 3, which means “good” (95 respondents). In second place are the answers of respondents who rated the company as “very good” (84 respondents). Also, 41 and 12 respondents gave negative assessments “2” and “1”, respectively.

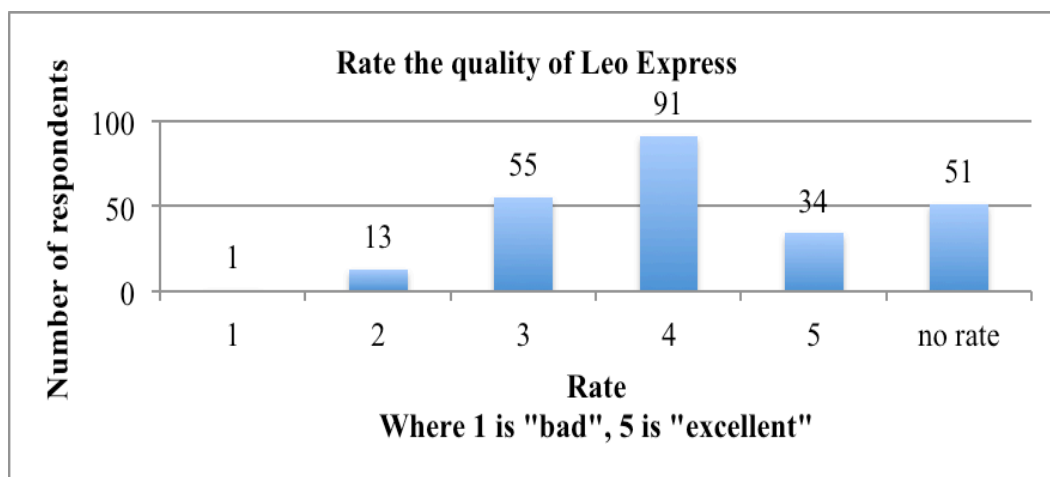
Figure 25 Company assessment by respondents - RegioJet



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 25 shows that the majority of the respondents rated RegioJet at a score of 4, which means “very good” (103 respondents). In second place are the answers of respondents who rated the company as “excellent” (90 respondents). 28 respondents rated this company as “good”.

Figure 26 Company assessments by respondents – Leo Express

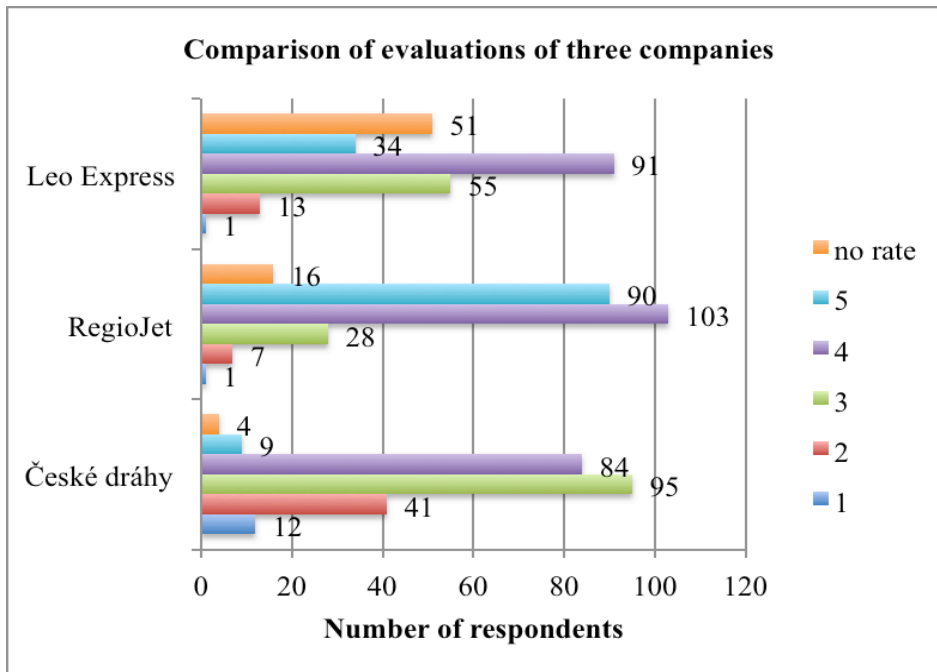


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 26 shows that the majority of the respondents rated Leo Express at a score of 4, which means “very good” (91 respondents). In second place are the answers of respondents who rated the company as “good” (55 respondents). 51 respondents did not

evaluate the company; most likely they did not use its services. In fourth place is the score of 5 – “excellent” (34 respondents).

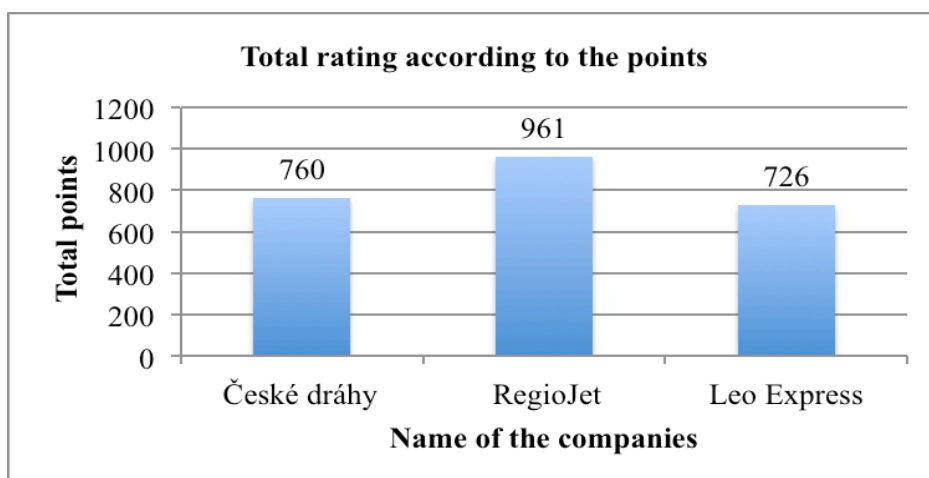
Figure 27 Overall comparison of the ratings of the three companies together



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 27 graphically presents the ratings for all three companies together, for ease of comparison. As can be noted, the largest number of people (241 respondents) assessed the ČD, but 229 respondents rated RegioJet gave more positive assessments of this company.

Figure 28 Overall assessment of companies, taking into account all assessments of respondents

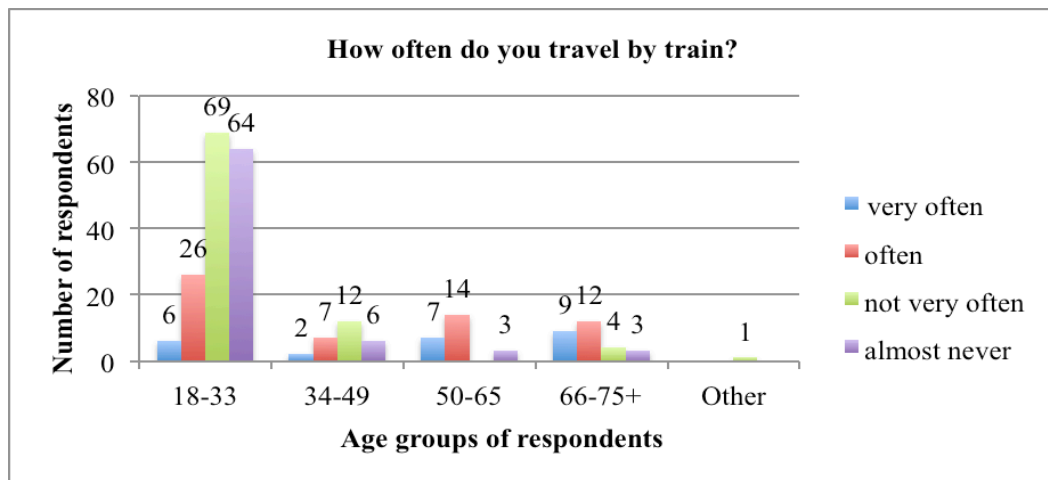


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 28 shows the overall ranking of companies by the respondents. This was achieved by calculating how many points each respondent gives to a particular company. As it can be seen, RegioJet received the highest number of points. The second place is taken by the ČD, the third place is taken by Leo Express.

Further, the dependences of some parameters on others were analysed. For example, it was analysed how age groups, different genders and people from different places of residence answer depending on the questions, and what they choose.

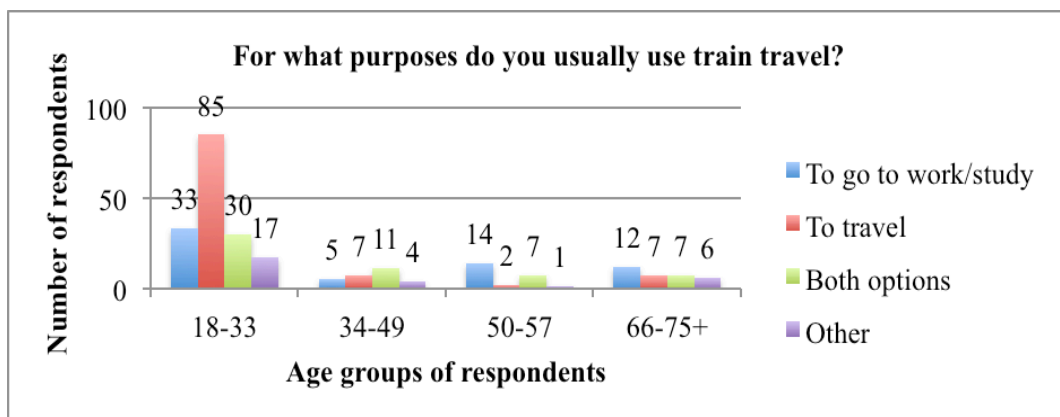
Figure 29 How often different age groups travel by train



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

As shown in Figure 29, people in the 18-33 age group generally travel not very often or almost never. People in the 34-49 age group do not travel very often either, but there are respondents who travel several times a week. Respondents in the 50-65 age group mostly travel often. As for the respondents in the age group 66-75+, they mostly travel often or very often (several times a week or every day). A person from the category "other" chose the answer "not very often".

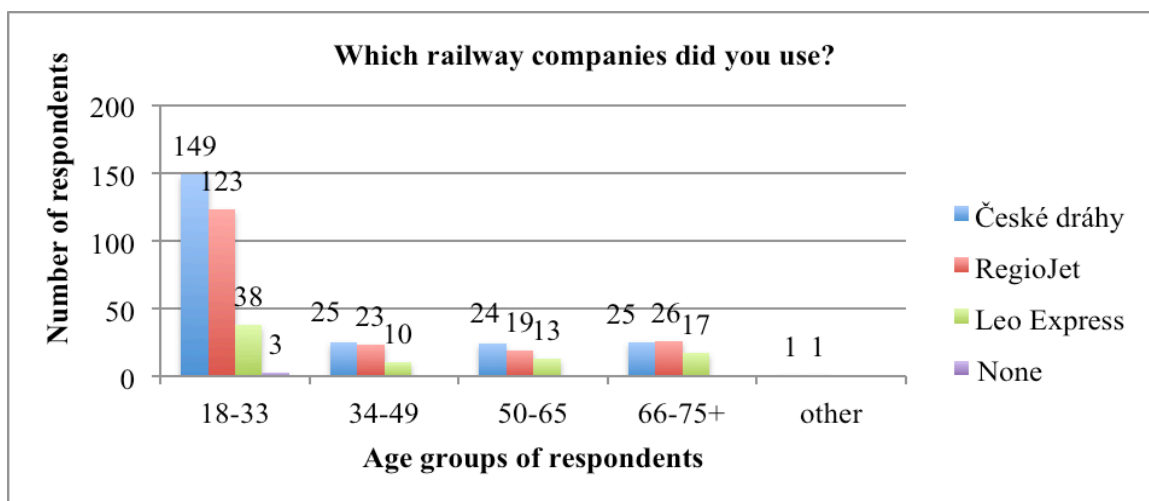
Figure 30 For what purpose different age groups of respondents travel by train



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

As for the dependence of different age groups and travel purposes, it can be seen from Figure 30 that respondents from the 18-33-age category use the train mainly for travel. People in the 34-49 age group mainly use the train for both options - to travel and to go to work. People in categories 50-57 and 66-75 mostly chose the "go to work" option.

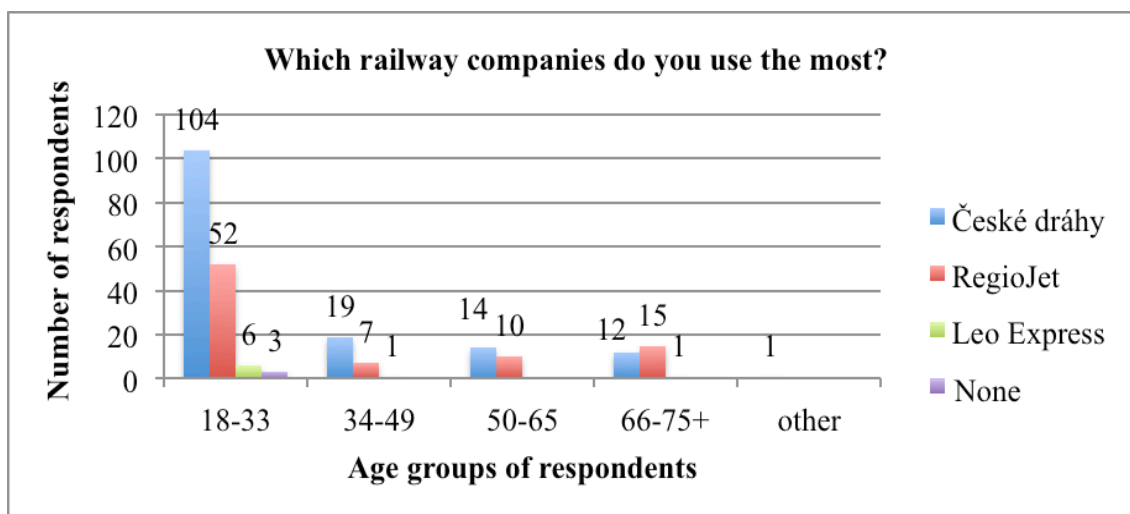
Figure 31 Which railway companies' services were used by different age groups of respondents



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 31 shows the dependence of the parameters of different age groups of people and which companies the respondents used. Basically, there is a tendency that the services of the ČD company were used mostly by people from all age categories, and in second place is RegioJet services. Leo Express is in third place.

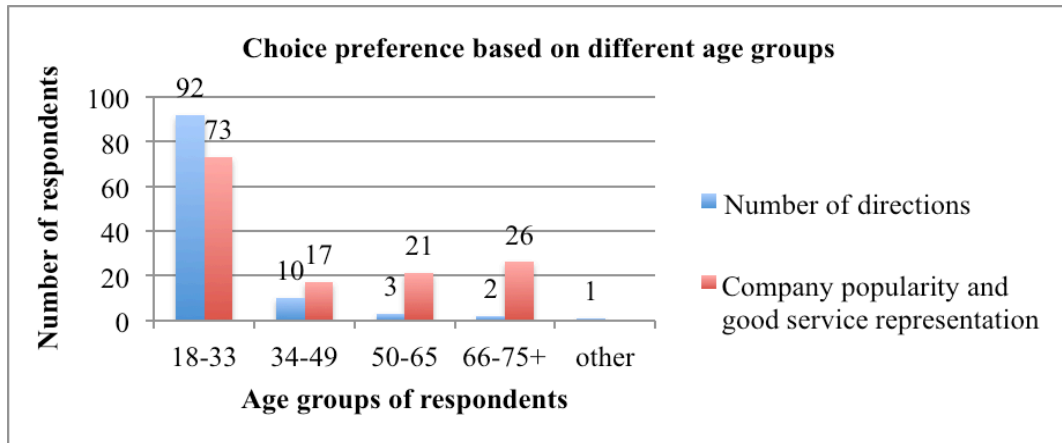
Figure 32 The services of which railway company were used by different age groups of respondents the most



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

A similar trend can be traced in figure 32, which analyses the relationship between the parameters "age groups of respondents" and "which company respondents used the most." In general, the first three age categories of people prefer the company ČD, and then RegioJet. In turn, respondents from the age category 66-75+ prefer RegioJet; perhaps this is partly due to the increased comfort on the trains of this carrier.

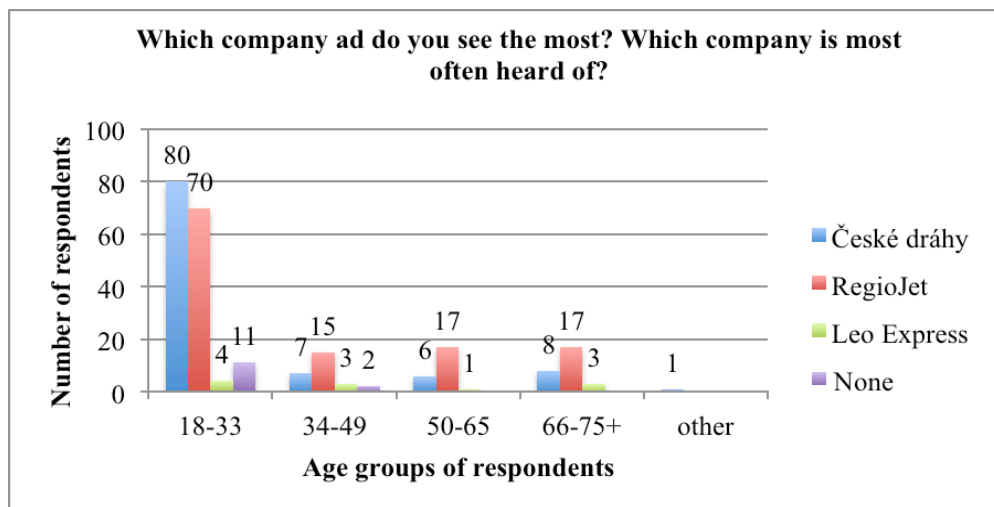
Figure 33 Choice preferences based on different age groups



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 33 shows an interesting relationship between different age groups and the preferences of the respondents. If the age category of people 18-33 is more interested in the number of directions of travel (and as it was previously revealed, this category most prefers to use trains for travel, which is logical), the rest of the categories of people from 34 years old and up to over 75+ prefer the popularity of companies and good service representation.

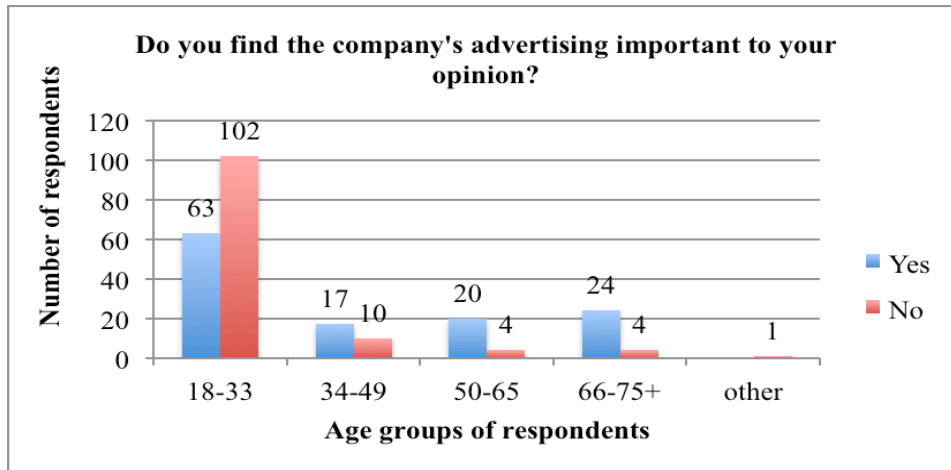
Figure 34 Which advertisement of Czech railway companies is most often seen by respondents of different age groups



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 34 shows the relationship of parameters between different age groups and the advertising of which company the respondents saw the most. The age category of people 18-33 and "Other" most often met with the advertising of České Dráhy and in second place with RegioJet ads; then the rest of the age categories of people mainly faced advertising for RegioJet.

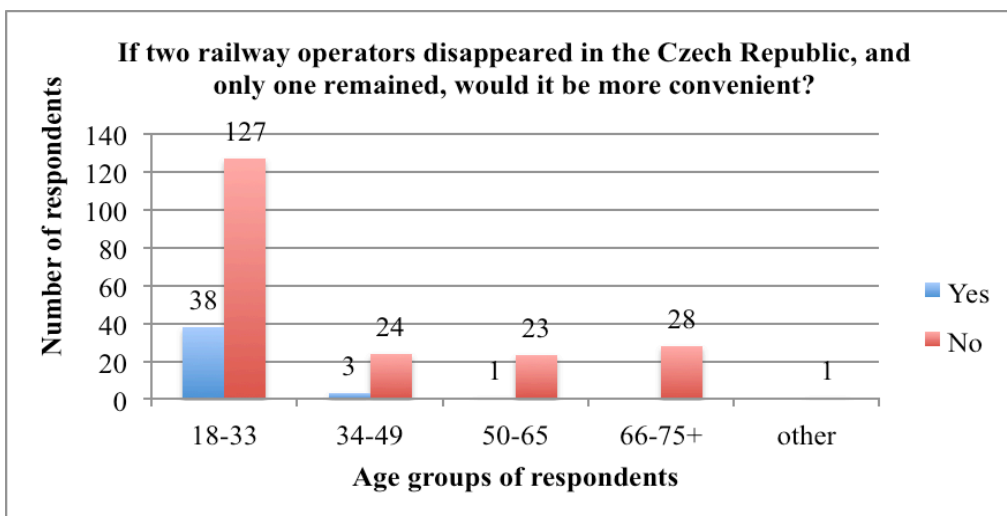
Figure 35 Attitude of different age groups to advertising



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

A very unusual relationship was found in the parameters "age groups" and "attitude towards advertising" (see Figure 35). Respondents in the 18-33 age group are sceptical about advertising and generally do not consider it important in their decisions. As for the rest of the age groups, the respondents answered that advertising is important and influences their opinion.

Figure 36 Attitude of different age groups to monopoly on Czech railways

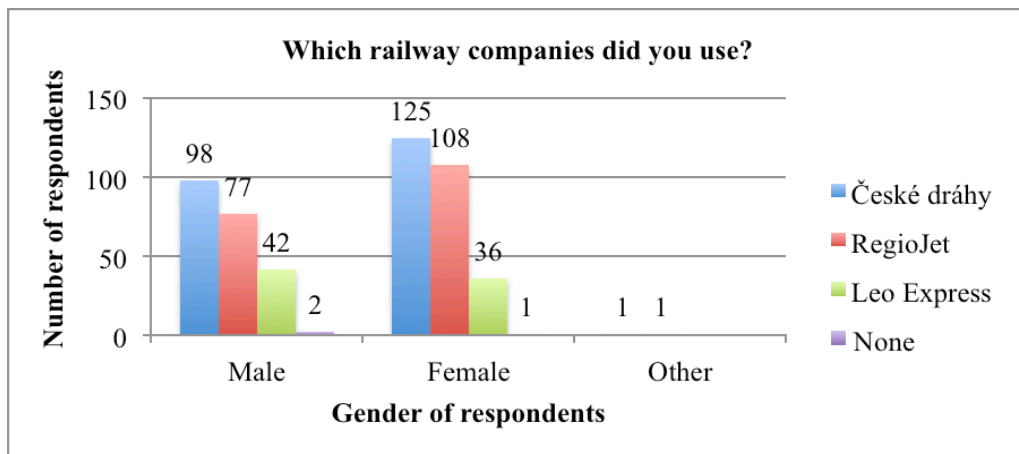


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 36 shows the attitudes of different age groups towards monopoly in the Czech railway field. Overall, neither age group considers the disappearance of two operators and the existence of only one railway operator to be a good opportunity, but 38 people in the 18-33 age group were identified who voted for monopoly and 3 people in the 34-49 category.

Further, it is also important to assess how the preferences of clients and their attitudes change, depending not only on their age but also on their gender.

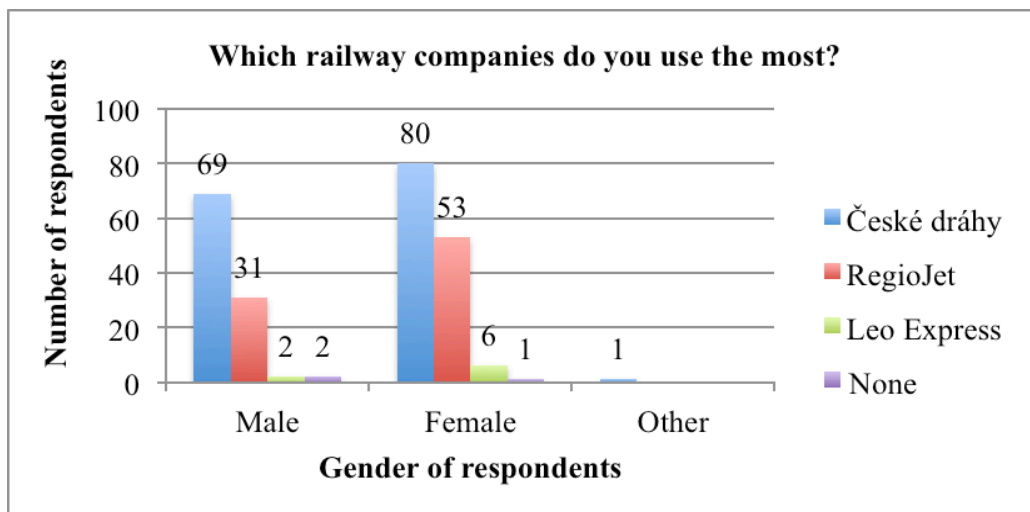
Figure 37 Which companies did the respondents use by gender



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

As can be seen from Figure 37, men and women, and the category "other" used the services of the ČD, in second place is RegioJet, and in third place is Leo Express.

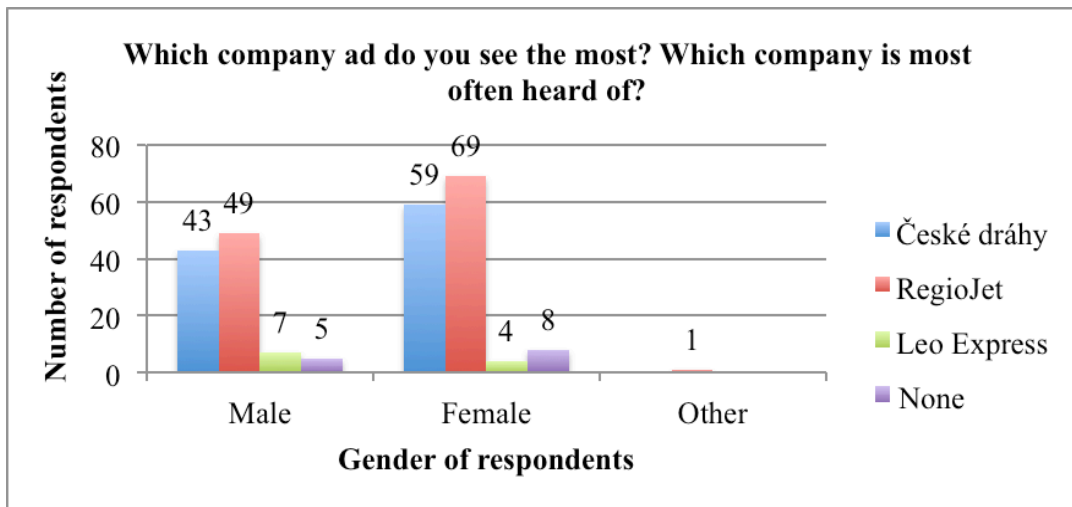
Figure 38 Which companies the respondents used most often by gender



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Most often, different genders used the services of the České Dráhy, followed by RegioJet (see Figure 38). This trend does not change in the case of the age categories.

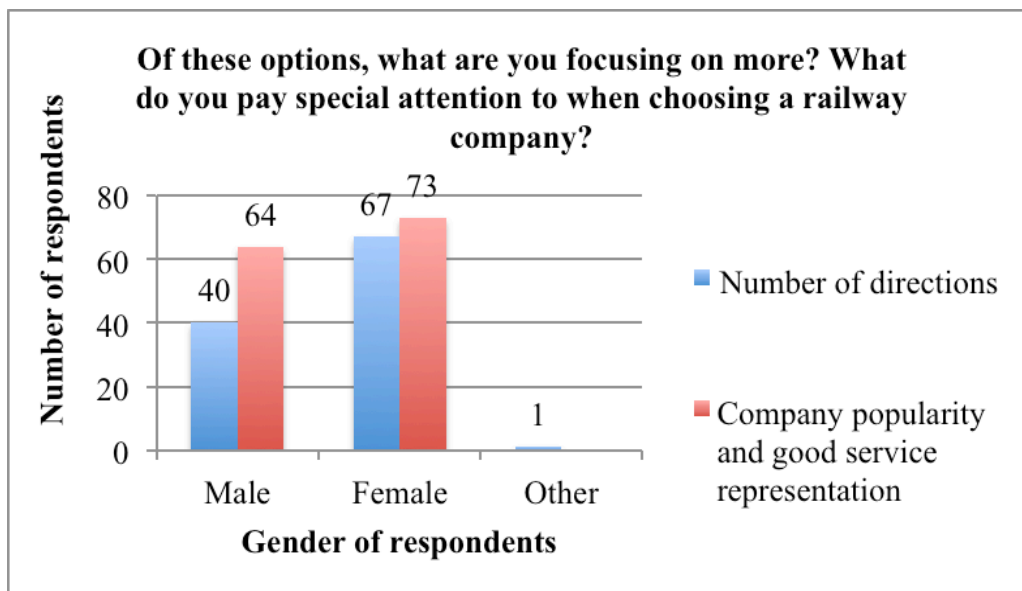
Figure 39 Which advertisement of Czech railway companies is most often seen by gender of respondents



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 39 shows the relationship between the parameters "gender" and "advertising of which companies have you met most often". In all three categories, the most frequently respondents saw RegioJet advertising. In the second place is the advertisement of the ČD. In third place for men is the Leo Express advertisement.

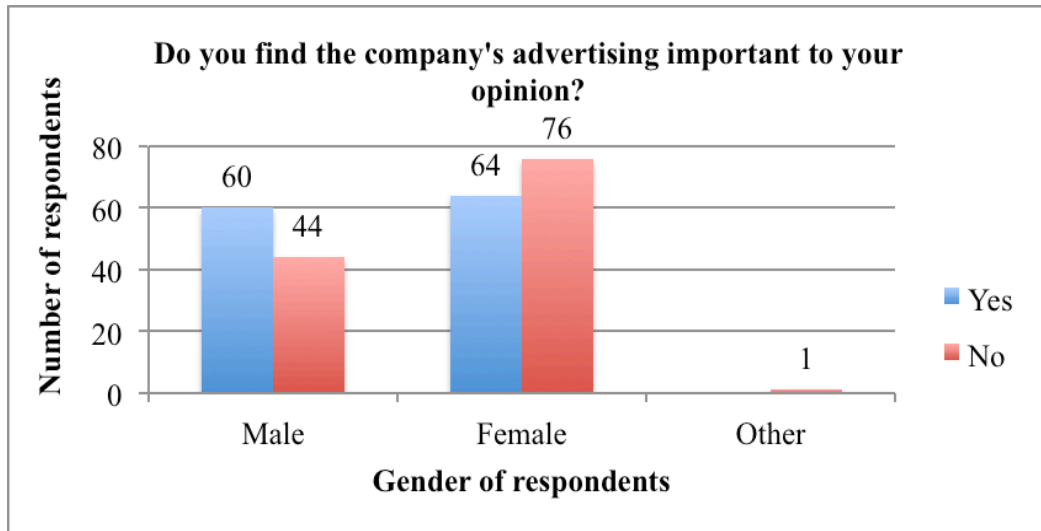
Figure 40 Choice preferences based on different genders



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 40 shows the preferences of different genders regarding the number of directions and the popularity of the company. The representative of the "other" category prefers the number of destinations. As for men and women, the popularity of the company and good service representation is important to them.

Figure 41 Attitude of different genders to advertising

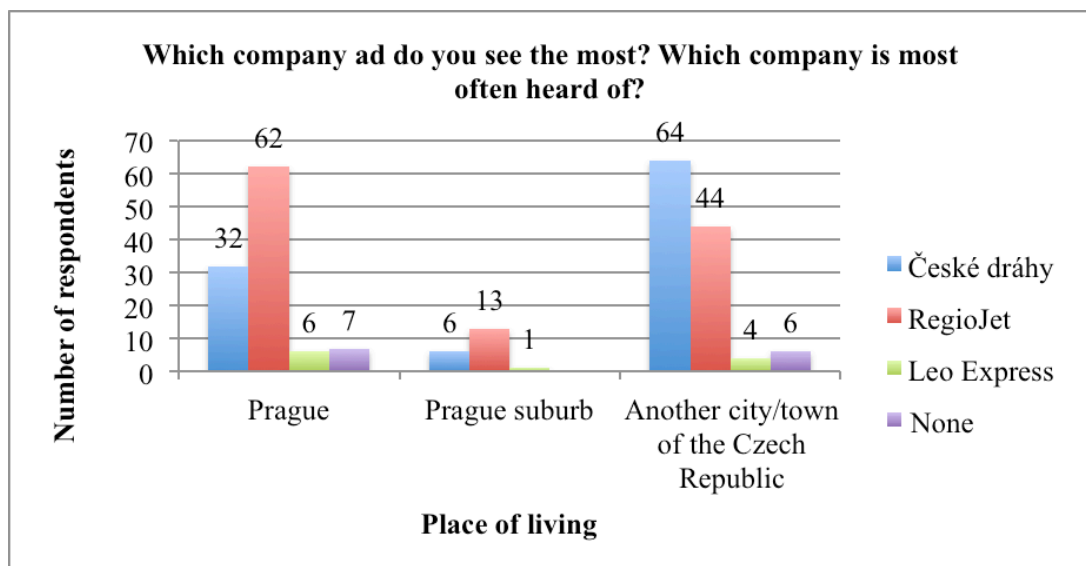


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

An interesting relationship was found in the ratio of the parameters of gender and respondents' attitude to advertising (see Figure 41). In general, women rated advertising as an unimportant factor in their opinion. In turn, the men rated advertising as an important criterion for their opinion.

Also, it is important to assess not only the difference in opinions of different age groups and different genders in this diploma thesis, but also to track how the respondents' opinion on some questions changes depending on their place of residence.

Figure 42 Which Czech Railway Company ad is seen more often depending on the location

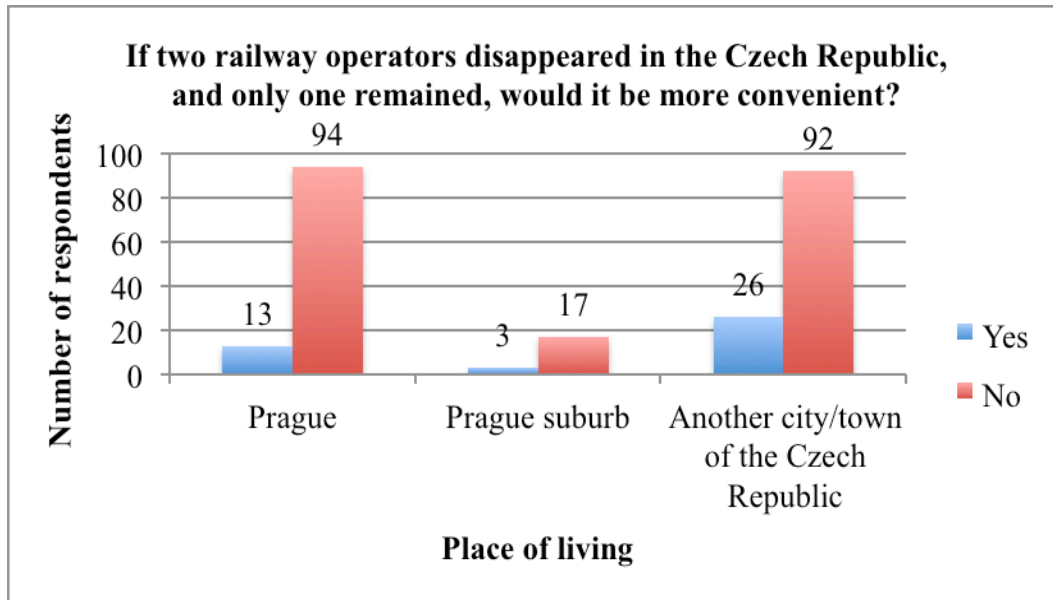


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Figure 42 shows how opinions in different Czech cities or towns change regarding advertisements for the three Czech railway companies. For example, respondents living in

Prague and the Prague suburbs indicated that they see RegioJet ads most often. In turn, the respondents living in other cities or towns of the Czech Republic answered that they most often see the advertisement of the ČD, and only in second place is RegioJet.

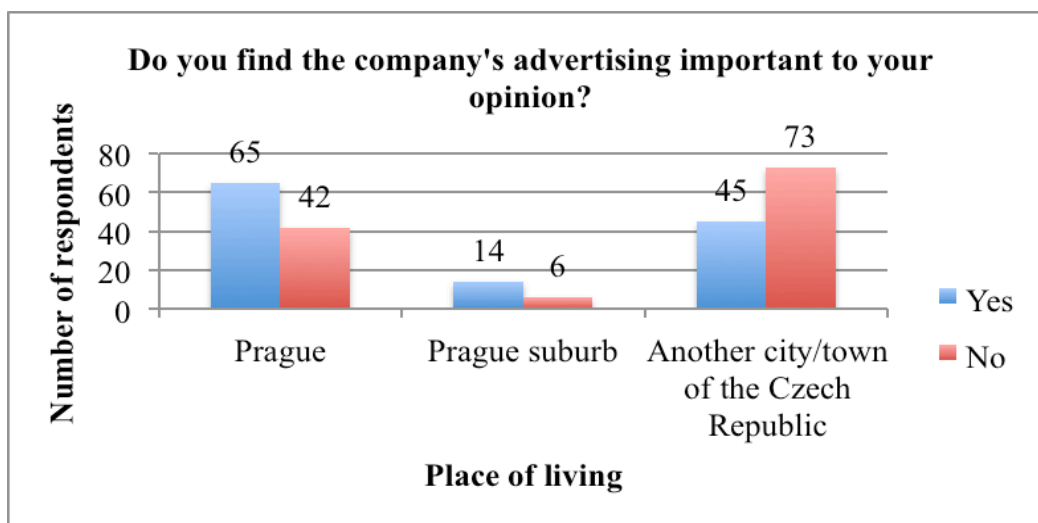
Figure 43 Attitude to monopoly on Czech railways depending on the location



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Based on the information presented in Figure 43, it can be concluded that respondents from different cities and towns of the Czech Republic are mainly against the monopoly. But the largest numbers of those respondents who are in favour of a monopoly in the Czech railway sector (26 respondents) live in other cities/towns of the Czech Republic.

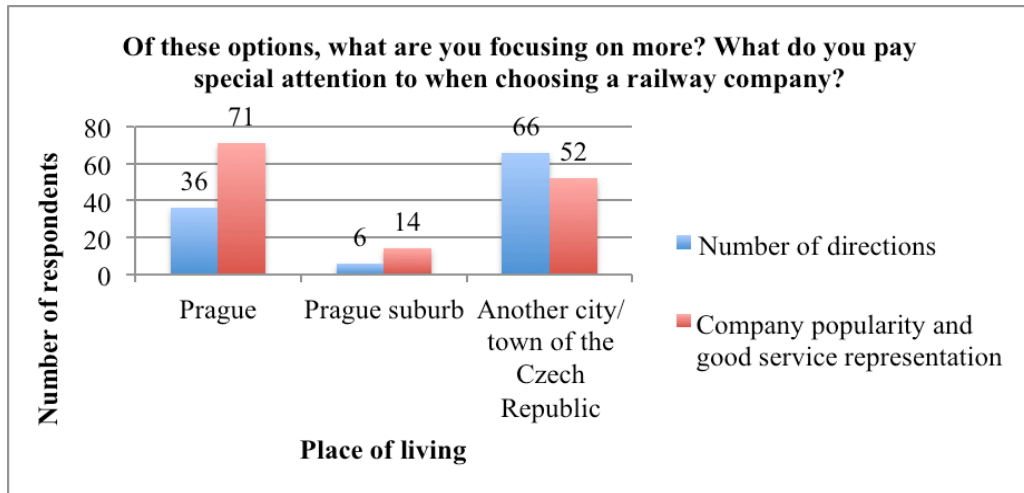
Figure 44 Attitude to advertising depending on the location



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Attitudes towards advertising vary depending on the place of residence of the respondents, which can be clearly seen in Figure 44. Respondents from Prague and the Prague suburbs consider advertising to be important for their opinion. In turn, respondents from other cities and towns of the Czech Republic consider advertising an unimportant parameter for their opinion.

Figure 45 Choice preference based on different location

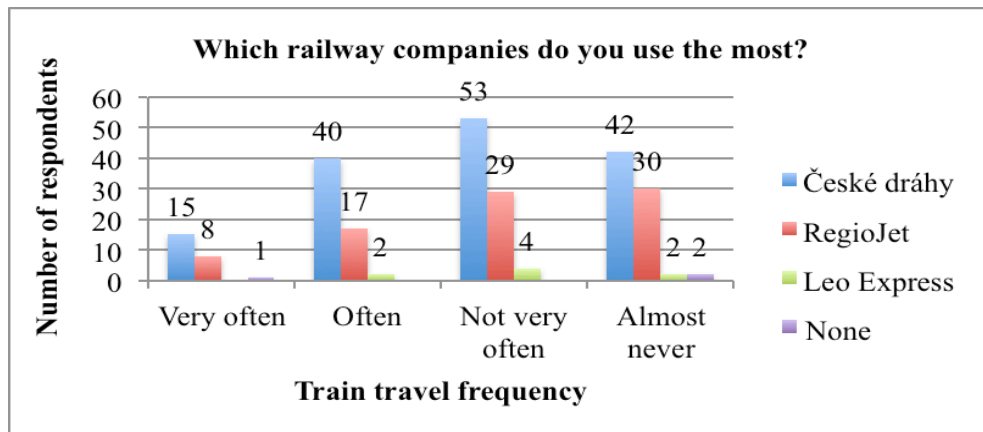


Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Depending on the place of residence of the respondents, their preferences also change. For example, for respondents from Prague and the suburbs of Prague the most important are the popularity of the company and good service representation, while respondents from other cities/towns in the Czech Republic answered that the number of destinations is more important for them (see Figure 45).

The dependence of such parameters as the frequency of travel by train and which companies the respondents choose most often were also assessed (see Figure 46).

Figure 46 Which companies use passengers depending on the frequency of train use



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

In this case, regardless of the frequency of travel by train, most often the respondents use the services of the ČD. In second place is RegioJet and in third place is Leo Express.

Also, as noted earlier, the dependence of several variables will be analysed, namely, how the preferences of the respondents change if they live in one place in the Czech Republic, and travel either to another city in the Czech Republic or through the territory of one city. The most interesting variations are presented in Table 11.

Table 11 - Passenger preference depending on the place of residence and place of work/study

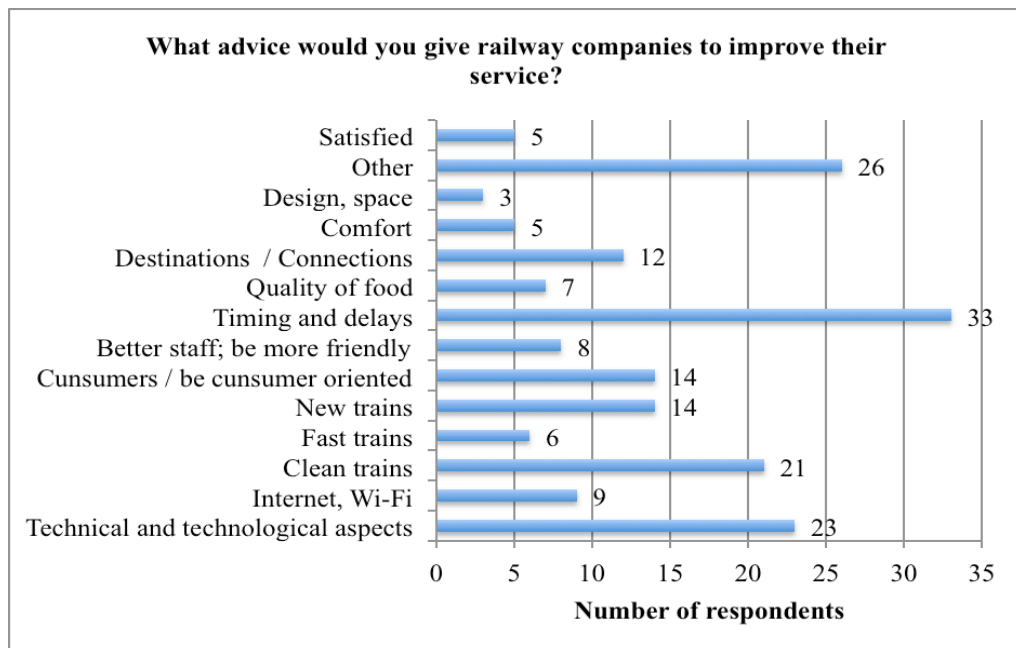
Place of residence	Place of work/ study	Of these options, what are you focusing on more?	
		Number of directions	Company popularity and good service representation
Another city/town of the Czech Republic	Prague and Prague suburb	6	10
Another city/town of the Czech Republic	Another city/town of the Czech Republic	54	36
Prague suburb	Prague	4	10
Prague	Prague	33	64
Prague	Another city/town of the Czech Republic	3	3

Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

As it can be seen from Table 11, if a passenger travels from another city in the Czech Republic to Prague or a suburb of Prague, in most cases, he/she is guided by the popularity of the company. In turn, it was logically revealed that if a passenger travels from one city of the Czech Republic to another Czech city, then he or she is more interested in the number of destinations than in the popularity of the company. If a passenger travels around Prague and the suburbs of Prague, then the respondents' answers indicate that the majority of the orientation is aimed at the popularity of the company and comfort. Regarding the route “Prague - Another city in the Czech Republic”, the opinion of the respondents has a weight of 50/50.

There was also an open-ended question in the survey “What advice would you give railway companies to improve their service?” to which the passenger was asked to briefly or in more detail describe what they would like Czech railway companies to improve in their services.

Figure 47 Tips for improving service from passengers



Source: own creation according to the survey, 2021

Although this question was mandatory, some respondents simply put a "-" sign, thereby avoiding this question. In this case, these answers were not counted as an option that the respondent is satisfied with everything in the services of the companies and that is why they cannot advise anything. Therefore, only 5 respondents stated that they are completely satisfied.

The most frequently encountered answers were categorized. Figure 47 presents a diagram for the main categories of advice given by respondents. As can be seen from the diagram, the most common answer related to timing and delays (33 respondents). The respondents noted this mainly in relation to ČD. Respondents are unhappy with train delays and advise Czech railway companies to pay attention to this and do their best to arrive on time. Some respondents also gave the advice to do better work with the information system, especially regarding delays/interruptions of connections, which, in part, can also be attributed to technical aspects.

This is followed by the option "other", these are the tips that were difficult to attribute to any of the categories presented. In this case, the respondents gave the following answers:

- 1) Better cooperation amongst the companies;
- 2) České Dráhy can invest in RegioJet - like an app to order on-board service online;

- 3) Be more creative;
- 4) To be inspired by RegioJet;
- 5) To improve the possibility of traveling for wheelchairs. It is impossible to order a train 24 hours in advance;
- 6) More security and safety;
- 7) The state should stop subsidizing ČD;
- 8) Lower prices;
- 9) More sales;
- 10) Improve the international offerings;
- 11) Universal ticket;
- 12) Better visible information on trains about the direction of travel, disconnected wagons;
- 13) Ticket sales only for train capacity and possible strengthening of connections, less business department;
- 14) To prevent overcrowding, etc.

In third place is the category "technical and technological aspects". This category included responses related to both the development of the website, the payment system and the improvement of technological equipment on board the train.

Tips for improving or adding equipment on-board trains

- 1) Provide USB connection to charge the devices;
- 2) Technical improvement of kits;
- 3) Introduce the sockets, speed up the ticket purchase system, streamline the selection of possible routes by price;
- 4) There are no opening windows; station buildings are being demolished or closed, toilets are closed, there is no staff;
- 5) Functional air conditioning;
- 6) Need of an automated ticket checker.

Also, a separate category "Design, space" can be attributed to this category. The following tips complement this: more legroom, modernization of the interior and more modern premises.

Tips for developing websites and payment systems

- 1) Convenient websites;
- 2) Ease of buying a ticket online;

- 3) Easier booking;
- 4) Better work with the information system, especially regarding delays;
- 5) Payment via credit card, etc.

Next comes the category “Clean trains” in which respondents ask Czech railway companies to pay attention to cleaning the train, especially toilets (21 respondents).

A fairly large number of respondents pay attention to the attitude towards the consumer (14 respondents) and the behaviour and quality of the staff (8 respondents). Respondents give the following tips: to be more customer-oriented, be nice to people, focus on customer’s needs and their complaints, provide better communication, have a more appropriate approach to the customer, listen to customers, and reflect their requirements. Also, respondents pay attention to: have more polite and friendlier staff, more helpful staff, more employees with excellent organizational skills, focus on people who are representing the company, etc. Also, very important comments were received, such as: the need to have space for pets not to walk among others (allergy sufferers) and focus on families with children. That is, it means being focused on consumers with different needs.

Further, there are such suggestions and advice as:

1) The introduction of new trains (this mainly concerned the ČD) - 14 respondents mentioned this aspect;

2) Creation of more destinations and better options for transfers and connecting routes (12 respondents), for example: better link-ups/connections, more frequent connections, more connections mainly on important days (more on Sunday in the direction of Prague, more on Friday from Prague). For RegioJet: to have more destinations by train. For ČD: better connections between smaller cities;

3) Better Wi-Fi and Internet connection (especially for the ČD) – 9 respondents mentioned this aspect;

4) Better quality of food, more free water and snacks (7 respondents);

5) The introduction of faster trains (6 respondents), for example, some respondents want to see very quick trains (300-350 km/h) in the Czech Republic as ICE in Germany;

6) Comfort (5 respondents): both in general and, for example, more comfortable seating.

Further, a set of different marketing strategies for the three Czech railway companies will be proposed, based on the opinions of customers and on the basis of the analyses done in this diploma thesis.

5 Results, Recommendations and Discussion

After an in-depth analysis, a number of marketing strategies were developed, which are offered to companies for use in order to increase their competitiveness. Since several types of analysis were carried out and all the various options were considered for each company separately, strategies will be presented below both for the Czech railway industry as a whole, and for each company separately.

Results and recommendations for České Dráhy

České Dráhy is the most frequently used company among passengers, as confirmed by a survey. But, despite its apparent popularity, this is most likely due to the fact that the company has been on the market longer than other companies, and many clients of different ages already know it very well. But, the survey showed that at the moment the advertising company RegioJet is the leader in Prague, and only in other cities of the Czech Republic do people see the advertisement of České Dráhy most often. This can be a problem in the future, as competition grows, competing companies develop rapidly and gradually take attention away from České Dráhy. But it is also related to the quality of services. As noted, competing companies are rapidly developing and improving the quality of their services, while ČD does not manage to improve the quality as rapidly. Based on the analysis of the survey of respondents, it was revealed that passengers are unhappy with frequent train delays, dirty train cabins, unfriendly employees, as well as the lack of high-quality technological equipment and comfort during the trip.

The main recommendations that can be given to ČD are the improvement of advertising and distribution not only mainly at railway stations and in ČD trains. The company should pay more attention to advertising in public places, especially in Prague. It is also important to be more customer-oriented, to listen to clients' wishes, and to establish itself not only as a company that has been on the market for a long time and has many directions but also as a quality service provider. Therefore, it is important to initially modernize and improve the quality of services, and then conduct a larger number of advertising campaigns, which will recommend the company as a comfortable and convenient carrier. In this case, if these strategies are applied, the company can really reach a new level and become the most attractive railway company in the Czech Republic. As it was revealed from the analysis, it is not so important to be the most frequently used railway operator, but at the same time to have a low rating and negative reviews. It is much

more important to focus more on service quality and customer needs in order to be a winner and beloved railway operator.

As the representative of the company, Bc. Radka Turková, noted, in a situation with a global pandemic, it is important not to lose contact and communication with potential customers. It is important to show clients that you care about their health, want to help, and always be in touch with them. By applying the whole range of these measures, the company can really become much more positive in the eyes of consumers.

Results and recommendations for RegioJet

RegioJet has established itself as a company that provides comfort and quality services. As the company itself represents on its website and pages in social networks, the services of this company are indeed the most comfortable for passengers. Based on the analysis, it was revealed that despite the fact that not all passengers have had time to get acquainted with this company, RegioJet is pursuing a very correct marketing policy in relation to advertising and attracting customers. More and more people notice the company's advertising, especially in Prague. Customers who have already used RegioJet's services note the convenience, comfort and well-spent time while traveling by trains of this company. As the company representative, Ing. Filip Rivola, noted in an interview for this diploma thesis, free seat reservation, free cancellation 15 minutes before departure, excellent service, free Wi-Fi, comfort and convenience are the main advantages of the company.

In general, based on several analyses carried out, it was found that the company as a whole is applying effective marketing strategies. But, in the case of RegioJet, there is a slightly opposite situation to ČD. If České Dráhy has a greater number of directions, then RegioJet does not yet have so many railway directions, since the company is also engaged in bus passenger transportation. Some respondents also noted in the survey that they would like to see more railway destinations from RegioJet, as well as more frequent schedules on existing routes. In turn, this is exactly what a company representative noted in an interview when it came to the application of future strategies. He noted that in the shorter term, the company plans to introduce new lines and maintain existing ones.

Although the survey revealed that the number of destinations is not in the first place in the needs of consumers and it is more important to pay attention to the popularity and good demonstration of services. RegioJet has already established itself as a carrier with high-quality services, so in this case, it is worth continuing to expand and at the same time

improve the quality or keep it at a high level. Also, some respondents noted a shortage of high-speed trains. Most likely, RegioJet should pay attention to this too, because if it is possible to subsidize high-speed trains under the brand name of this company, RegioJet will become, perhaps, the best carriers in the Czech Republic, both in quality and in terms of passenger use.

Results and recommendations for Leo Express

Leo Express also proves itself as a company with high quality of services provided. But, at the same time, it was revealed that a very small percentage of respondents have ever used the services of this company, and generally saw an advertisement for this company. That is why there is a tendency that the main competition is between ČD and RegioJet. Leo Express should be a more active company and market actor, both in advertising (online and offline) and in customer orientation. Otherwise, the company will not be able to withstand the competition at all, or it will remain at the same level and will not be able to expand.

It is important to pay special attention to advertising. What is also very important, and what some respondents also noticed, Leo Express has a very low level of communication with customers. In modern times, it is very important to be customer-oriented, which was also revealed through the survey. Therefore, the main recommendation for Leo Express will be to increase communication with customers, more active interaction with them, as well as the promotion and use of more advertisements and integrations. By applying these strategies, the company will be able to compete with other Czech railway companies.

General results and recommendations for the Czech railway sector

In general, the Czech railway sector is developing and this is largely due to competition. As it was revealed through numerous analyses, clients want to receive quality services from these companies and hope for greater cooperation. But there is a problem with the use and preference of personal kinds of transport over the use of rail transport. Therefore, the Czech railway companies are faced with the task of attracting customers with high-quality services. And also apply some marketing and advertising campaigns that pay attention to the environment and the current problem of pollution in the world. The impact of the pandemic has also negatively affected the Czech railway companies. Therefore, in modern times, it is very important to provide customers with information about safety on board trains, keep order and cleanliness, and stay in touch with customers.

6 Conclusion

Marketing is an essential integral part of any company. The reputation of the company and its competitiveness depend on what marketing plans and strategies will be developed. Marketing influences competition, thereby it stimulates the market and creates the best conditions for both customers and the company in terms of its development. Therefore, it is worth emphasizing once again the importance of this diploma thesis and the relevance of the chosen topic. This diploma thesis examined how marketing affects the previously monopolistic Czech railway transport industry and demonstrates through several analyses how important the role of marketing is in shaping the correct competitive position in the marketplace. In general, as it was presented in the theoretical part, many authors of various marketing studies have made a fundamental contribution to the development of the theoretical basis of marketing. The analysed works of the authors provide an expanded understanding of what tools can be used to analyse companies and on the basis of what methods to conduct a marketing assessment. A high level of interest in marketing theories and the depth of study by other authors allows analysing the marketing environment, strategies, tools, etc. in the most extended way.

Through the study of the theoretical foundations of marketing practices, complexes of marketing analyses were carried out and several marketing tools were applied to build the most effective marketing strategies for three Czech railway companies – České Dráhy, RegioJet and Leo Express. In this diploma thesis, analyses were carried out based on a marketing mix, an analysis of the external environment, a complex marketing research of the strengths and weaknesses of enterprises, an analysis of marketing strategies based on interviews with representatives of Czech railway companies, as well as an analysis of consumer opinion based on a survey. Analysis of the external marketing environment made it possible to once again highlight the development trends of the railway industry in terms of political, economic, social and technological characteristics. It was the assessment of the external environment that became the basis for further analysis, which focuses on the companies themselves. In turn, the marketing mix made it possible to analyse the company from the point of view of its current characteristics, assessing the quality of services and the role of marketing in the three Czech railway companies. Since in this diploma thesis an extended marketing mix was applied, the analysis of the companies was very detailed and visual, which further allowed determining the strengths and weaknesses of the companies in more detail.

An important part of the analysis was interviews with representatives of Czech railway companies, as well as an analysis of the survey among respondents, which further allowed adjusting the marketing strategies for České Dráhy, RegioJet, and Leo Express. Based on it, it was revealed that the development of the marketing strategies of Czech railway companies plays an important role in the functioning of the company. For example, it was revealed that because of the high-quality services and the right advertising campaigns, RegioJet is becoming more and more popular among consumers and an increasing number of passengers are starting to prefer the services of this particular railway operator. Thus, the objectives of the diploma thesis were achieved, and it was revealed how the operators of the previously monopolistic public transport industry are using marketing to increase their competitiveness. Also, complexes of marketing strategies were prepared for each company, based on the performed analysis, which can become a good basis for further analysis and for the application of these strategies in practice.

It was also found that the correct representation of the company and its services leads to a stable position in the marketplace and more satisfied customers. In addition, it was clearly identified that marketing has a strong impact on different groups of consumers, both depending on age categories and in the case of genders and place of residence of the respondents. Most of the respondents are guided by the marketing presentation of the company and what services the company provides. A minority of respondents note the importance of the number of directions. This confirms the assertion that the competition in the Czech railway sector is fuelled by marketing and not by the expansion of the proposed directions. If the services of one company are improved and competently presented to the client, this will increase the popularity of the company and the passenger traffic. Thus, it can be emphasized that the hypothesis set in this diploma thesis was confirmed, especially according to the analysis of consumer preferences.

The Czech railway sector is developing, and most of this is due to competition. The competitive environment encourages companies to improve their services, focus on the customer, and listen to the surrounding marketing environment. In turn, marketing allows competently positioning the services of companies and attracting more new customers. Thus, a favourable environment for the development of companies is created, as well as an accessible industry for customers with a good price-quality ratio. All this is evidence that marketing has an important role in the functioning of companies, and also allows companies to strengthen their position in the marketplace.

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8 Appendix

8.1 Appendix 1: Questionnaire survey in English

České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express - what is your choice?

This survey is part of the Master's Thesis. Your answers are very important. Answer the questions below based on your experiences and opinion. Thank you very much in advance!

* - Mandatory questions

1. What is your age? *

- a) 18-25 b) 26-33 c) 34-41 d) 42-49 e) 50-57 f) 58-65
g) 66-75 h) 75+ i) other

2. What is your gender? *

- a) Male b) Female c) Other

3. Where do you live? *

- a) In Prague b) In Prague suburb c) In another city/town of the Czech Republic

4. How often do you travel by train? *

- a) Very often (every day)
b) Often (several times a week)
c) Not very often (several times a month)
d) Almost never (several times a year)

5. Where do you work/study? *

- a) In Prague
b) In Prague suburb
c) In another city/town of the Czech Republic
d) Other

6. For what purposes do you usually use train travel? *

- a) To go to work/study b) To travel c) Both options d) Other

7. If you chose "other" in the previous question, write what you mean: _____

8. Which railway companies did you use? * (Several options are possible)

- a) České Dráhy b) RegioJet c) Leo Express d) None

9. Which railway companies do you use the most? *

- a) České Dráhy b) RegioJet c) Leo Express d) None

10. Of these options, what are you focusing on more? What do you pay special attention to when choosing a railway company? *

- a) Number of directions b) Company popularity and good service representation

11. Which company ad do you see the most? Which company is most often heard of?

*

- a) České Dráhy b) RegioJet c) Leo Express d) None

12. Do you find the company's advertising important to your opinion? *

- a) Yes b) No

13. If two railway operators disappeared in the Czech Republic, and only one remained, would it be more convenient? *

- a) Yes b) No

14. Rate the quality of České Dráhy

where 1 is “Bad”,

5 is “Excellent”.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Rate the quality of RegioJet

where 1 is “Bad”,

5 is “Excellent”.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Rate the quality of Leo Express

where 1 is “Bad”,

5 is “Excellent”.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. What advice would you give railway companies to improve their service? *

8.2 Appendix 2: Questionnaire survey in Czech

České dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express - Jaká je vaše volba?

Tento průzkum je součástí diplomové práce. Vaše odpovědi jsou velmi důležité. Odpovězte na níže uvedené otázky na základě vašich zkušeností a názoru. Předem moc děkuji!

* - Povinné otázky

1. Váš věk? *

- a) 18-25 b) 26-33 c) 34-41 d) 42-49 e) 50-57 f) 58-65
g) 66-75 h) 75+ i) Jiný

2. Vaše pohlaví? *

- a) Muž b) Žena c) Jiný

3. Kde bydlíte?*

- a) V Praze
b) Na předměstí Prahy
c) V jiném městě České republiky

4. Jak často cestujete vlakem? *

- a) Velmi často (každý den)
b) Často (několikrát týdně)
c) Ne příliš často (několikrát za měsíc)
d) Téměř nikdy (několikrát ročně)

5. Kde pracujete / studujete? *

- a) V Praze
b) Na předměstí Prahy
c) V jiném městě České republiky
d) Jiný

6. Za jakým účelem obvykle cestujete vlakem? *

- a) Jít do práce / studovat
b) Cestovat
c) Obě možnosti
d) Jiný

7. Pokud jste v předchozí otázce zvolili „jiné“, napište, co máte na mysli:: _____

8. Které železniční společnosti jste použili? * (je možné několik možností)

- a) České dráhy b) RegioJet c) Leo Express d) Žádný

9. Které železniční společnosti využíváte nejvíce?*

- a) České dráhy b) RegioJet c) Leo Express d) Žádný

10. Na co se z těchto možností více zaměřujete? Na co věnujete zvláštní pozornost při výběru železniční společnosti? *

- a) Počet destinací b) Popularita společnosti a dobré zastoupení služeb

11. Kterou reklamu společnosti vidíte nejvíce? O které společnosti je nejčastěji slyšet? *

- a) České dráhy b) RegioJet c) Leo Express d) Žádný

12. Považujete reklamu společnosti za důležitou pro váš názor? *

- a) Ano b) Ne

13. Pokud by v České republice zmizeli dva železniční operátoři a zůstal pouze jeden, bylo by to pohodlnější? *

- a) Ano b) Ne

14. Ohodnot'te kvalitu Českých drah

kde 1 je „špatný“,

5 je „vynikající“.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Ohodnot'te kvalitu RegioJet

kde 1 je „špatný“,

5 je „vynikající“.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Ohodnot'te kvalitu Leo Express

kde 1 je „špatný“,

5 je „vynikající“.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Jakou radu byste dali železničním společnostem, aby zlepšily své služby? * _____

8.3 Appendix 3: Google survey form in English



České dráhy, RegioJet, LeoExpress - what is your choice?

This survey is part of the Master's Thesis. Your answers are very important. Answer the questions below based on your experiences and opinion. Thank you very much in advance!

* Mandatory

Your gender *

- Male
- Female
- Other

Your age *

- 18-25
- 26-33
- 34-41
- 42-49
- 50-57
- 58-65
- 66-75
- 75+
- other

How often do you travel by train? *

- Very often (every day)
- Often (several times a week)
- Not very often (several times a month)
- Almost never (several times a year)

Where do you live? *

- In Prague
- In Prague suburb
- In another city/town of the Czech Republic

Where do you work/study? *

- In Prague
- In Prague suburb
- In another city/town of the Czech Republic
- Other

For what purposes do you usually use train travel? *

- To go to work/study
- To travel
- Both options
- Other

If you chose "other" in the previous question, write what you mean:

Which railway companies did you use? *

- České dráhy
- RegioJet
- LeoExpress
- None

Which railway companies do you use the most? *

- České dráhy
- RegioJet
- LeoExpress
- None

Of these options, what are you focusing on more? What do you pay special attention to when choosing a railway company? *

- Number of directions
- Company popularity and good service representation

Which company ad do you see the most? Which company is most often heard of? *

- České dráhy
- RegioJet
- LeoExpress
- None

Do you find the company's advertising important to your opinion? *

- Yes
- No

If two railway operators disappeared in the Czech Republic, and only one remained, would it be more convenient? *

- Yes
- No

Rate the quality of České dráhy

	1	2	3	4	5	
Bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

Rate the quality of RegioJet

	1	2	3	4	5	
Bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

Rate the quality of LeoExpress

	1	2	3	4	5	
Bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

What advice would you give railway companies to improve their service? *

8.4 Appendix 4: Official e-mails with interview questions for České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express

Pomoc při ekonomickém výzkumu pro diplomovou práci

Gabdrahimova Iuliia <xgabi003@studenti.czu.cz>

Tue 2/16/2021 12:14 PM

To: info@cd.cz <info@cd.cz>; press@cd.cz <press@cd.cz>; O27sek@gr.cd.cz <O27sek@gr.cd.cz>

České dráhy, a.s.

Nábřeží Ludvíka Svobody 1222

110 15 Praha 1

Vážení,

ráda bych Vás touto cestou poprosila o pomoc při výzkumu pro mou diplomovou práci.

Jsem studentkou 2. ročníku magisterského oboru "Ekonomika a management" na ČZU a ve své diplomové práci zkoumám marketingovou roli v konkurenčním prostředí železniční dopravy v České republice. K tomu bych potřebovala Vaše odpovědi na otázky uvedené dole, jež jsou pro mou práci velmi důležité.

Byla bych Vám moc vděčná, kdybyste mi vyhověli. Ostatně jsem provedla průzkum mezi potenciálními klienty českých dopravců a po dokončení práce ráda bych Vám poslala výsledky výzkumu, kdyby o to byl zájem.

Otázky:

1. Jaké marketingové strategie se ve společnosti používají k propagaci Vašich služeb? Jaké druhy reklamy se používaly nejvíce?
2. Jaké konkurenční výhody podle Vás společnost má?
3. Jaké marketingové strategie plánujete v budoucnosti realizovat?
4. Pokud existují a jsou dostupné tyto informace, mohli byste uvést hlavní náklady na marketing a reklamu?
5. Mohli byste mi prosím poskytnout informace pro finanční analýzu? Nebo kde je můžu najít?

Všem mnohokrát děkuji za pomoc a přeji pěkný den

Bc. Iuliia Gabdrahimova

8.5 Appendix 5: Translation of the official e-mails with interview questions for České Dráhy, RegioJet, Leo Express

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to take this opportunity to ask you for help with research for my diploma thesis.

I am a student of the 2nd year of the master's field "Economics and Management" at the CULS and in my diploma thesis I research the marketing role in the competitive environment of railway transport in the Czech Republic. To do this, I would need your answers to the questions below, which are very important for my work.

I would be very grateful for your cooperation. After all, I conducted a survey among potential clients of Czech carriers and after finishing the work I would like to send you the results of the research, if you are interested.

Questions:

- 1) What marketing strategies are used in the company to promote your services? What types of advertising were used the most?
- 2) What competitive advantages do you think the company has?
- 3) What marketing strategies do you plan to implement in the future?
- 4) If this information exists and is available, could you indicate the main costs of marketing and advertising?
- 5) Could you please provide me with information for financial analysis? Or where is it possible to find the information?

Thank you all very much for your help and have a nice day!

Best regards,

Bc. Iuliia Gabdrahimova

8.6 Appendix 6: Survey Results

Table A - Respondents' answers

Person	Age	Gender	How often do you travel by train?	Where do you live?	Where do you work / study?	For what purposes do you usually use train travel?	Which railway companies did you use?	Which railway companies do you use the most?	Of these options, what are you focusing on more?	Which company ad do you see the most? Which company is most often heard of?	Do you find the company's advertising important to your opinion?	If two railway operators disappeared in the Czech Republic, and only one remained, would it be more convenient?	Rate the quality of České Dráhy	Rate the quality of RegioJet	Rate the quality of Leo Express
1	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	4
2	18-25	male	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	4	4	-
3	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	5
4	34-41	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	3	-
5	26-33	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	4	2
6	26-33	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	5	4	-
7	75+	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Other	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	-	3	-
8	66-75	male	almost never	Another city	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	3	-	-
9	Other	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	4	-
10	50-57	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	4	5	-
11	34-41	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, LeoExpress	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	Yes	4	4	4

12	18-25	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	4	3
13	66-75	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	3	4	3
14	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	4	-	-
15	42-49	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Other	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	5	3	3
16	50-57	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	4	4	-
17	26-33	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	3	4	4
18	26-33	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	None	No	No	3	3	3
19	34-41	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	-	-
20	34-41	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Both options	RegioJet, LeoExpress	LeoExpress	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	2	4	5
21	58-65	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Other	ČD, LeoExpress	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	4	4	4
22	58-65	female	very often	Prague suburb	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	1
23	18-25	male	often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	Yes	4	4	-
24	26-33	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	3	4	5
25	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	4	4
26	26-33	male	often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	5	2
27	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	5	5	5

28	26-33	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	5	5	4
29	18-25	male	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	2	2
30	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	4	4	3
31	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	4
32	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	4
33	26-33	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	1	4	3
34	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	4
35	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	4	4
36	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	LeoExpress	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	2	3	4
37	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	4	4	3
38	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	RegioJet, LeoExpress	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	2	4	4
39	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	4	2
40	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	4	4
41	66-75	female	almost never	Another city	Other	Other	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	4	4
42	26-33	male	not very often	Prague suburb	Prague suburb	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	2	4	4
43	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	1	4	2
44	26-33	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Other	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	1	4	3
45	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	4

46	18-25	male	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	None	None	Number of directions	None	No	No	3	3	3
47	42-49	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Other	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	1	5	3
48	26-33	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	3
49	26-33	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Other	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	4	4	3
50	26-33	male	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	3	4	3
51	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	3	2	4
52	34-41	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Other	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	4	4	3
53	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	4	4	-
54	34-41	male	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	None	No	No	1	4	3
55	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	2	5	4
56	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	None	Yes	Yes	4	3	3
57	26-33	female	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	4
58	18-25	male	almost never	Another city	Other	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	2
59	26-33	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	4	3
60	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	5	-
61	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	5	5	5
62	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	3	5	4
63	26-33	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	None	None	Company popularity	None	No	No	3	3	3

64	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	5	-
65	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	-
66	18-25	male	almost never	Another city	Other	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	2
67	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	-	-	-
68	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	4	4	4
69	18-25	female	often	Prague	Prague	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	None	No	No	-	5	-
70	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	4	4	4
71	26-33	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	3
72	18-25	male	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	Yes	5	5	5
73	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	4	4	4
74	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	5	-
75	26-33	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	4	2
76	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	4	5	4
77	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	4	5	4
78	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	None	Yes	Yes	4	3	3
79	58-65	male	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	-
80	66-75	female	very often	Prague suburb	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	4	5	-
81	26-33	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Go to work or	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	4	4

						study										
82	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	-	-	-	
83	26-33	female	almost never	Prague suburb	Prague	Other	ČD	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	Yes	4	4	4	
84	66-75	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	4	
85	75+	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	5	
86	66-75	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4	
87	66-75	female	very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5	
88	66-75	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	5	4	
89	66-75	male	very often	Prague	Prague suburb	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5	
90	58-65	male	very often	Prague	Prague suburb	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4	
91	58-65	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	2	5	4	
92	58-65	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4	
93	58-65	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	5	5	
94	58-65	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	4	4	
95	50-57	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	4	5	4	

96	50-57	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5
97	75+	male	often	Prague	Prague suburb	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5
98	50-57	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	LeoExpress	Yes	No	3	5	4
99	42-49	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4
100	50-57	male	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5
101	42-49	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	5	4
102	42-49	male	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	4	4
103	42-49	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5
104	50-57	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5
105	58-65	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	3	5	4
106	42-49	male	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	1	5	4
107	66-75	male	often	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	LeoExpress	Yes	No	2	4	4
108	58-65	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5
109	75+	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	LeoExpress	Yes	No	3	5	4
110	66-75	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4
111	58-65	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5
112	75+	male	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	5	5

113	75+	male	often	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5
114	66-75	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5
115	58-65	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4
116	58-65	female	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	5	4
117	26-33	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	5	4
118	26-33	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	2	3	3
119	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	4	5	5
120	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	Yes	4	4	4
121	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	4	5	5
122	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	3	-	-
123	18-25	female	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	Yes	2	4	4
124	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Other	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	3	-	-
125	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	4	-
126	18-25	male	often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	3	4
127	26-33	female	often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	4	4
128	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	5	3

129	34-41	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	3	4	4
130	26-33	female	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	3	4	4
131	26-33	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	3	5	4
132	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	3	4	2
133	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	2	3	-
134	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	4	5
135	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	4	-
136	26-33	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	3	4	3
137	26-33	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Other	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	4	4
138	18-25	male	often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	4	3
139	26-33	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	3	4	4
140	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	5	4
141	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	4
142	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	4	-
143	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Other	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	4
144	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	LeoExpress	No	No	3	4	2
145	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	2	4	4
146	26-33	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4

147	18-25	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	4	3	3
148	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	4
149	18-25	female	not very often	Prague	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	None	No	No	3	5	-
150	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	All 3	LeoExpress	Company popularity	LeoExpress	Yes	No	2	4	5
151	18-25	male	very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	3	3	4
152	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	3	3
153	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	5	3
154	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	3
155	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	3	3	4
156	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	3	5	3
157	34-41	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	Yes	1	2	2
158	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	3	-	-
159	18-25	female	very often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	1	3	4
160	18-25	female	very often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	2	4	3
161	18-25	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Other	All 3	LeoExpress	Company popularity	LeoExpress	Yes	Yes	3	4	4
162	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	4	-

163	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	4	4
164	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	3	3	3
165	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	Yes	2	4	4
166	18-25	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	3	5	-
167	18-25	female	often	Prague	Another city	Other	RegioJet, LeoExpress	LeoExpress	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	5	4
168	34-41	male	not very often	Prague suburb	Another city	Other	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	5	-	-
169	26-33	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	5	2
170	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, LeoExpress	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	2	3	4
171	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	4	5	-
172	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	4	2	3
173	26-33	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	2	4
174	26-33	female	almost never	Another city	Other	Other	RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	4	3
175	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	3
176	18-25	female	almost never	Prague suburb	Prague suburb	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	Yes	1	4	4
177	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	4	4
178	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Other	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	None	No	No	3	4	-
179	18-25	female	often	Prague	Prague	Other	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	None	No	Yes	4	4	3
180	18-25	male	often	Another city	Another city	Other	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	3	3

181	18-25	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4
182	34-41	male	very often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	4	-	-
183	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	Yes	3	4	3
184	18-25	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	LeoExpress	No	No	2	4	4
185	18-25	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	4	3
186	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	4	3
187	18-25	female	often	Another city	Other	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5
188	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	4	3
189	18-25	female	often	Another city	Other	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	5	-
190	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	4	4
191	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	Yes	2	-	-
192	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Other	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	5	3
193	18-25	other	not very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	4	4	3
194	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Other	Other	None	None	Company popularity	None	No	No	3	3	3
195	18-25	female	almost never	Prague	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	1	5	-
196	26-33	male	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	3	3	3
197	26-33	female	not very often	Another city	Other	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	3	4

198	26-33	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Other	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	Yes	4	4	3
199	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	1	5	-
200	26-33	male	very often	Prague suburb	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	4	4
201	26-33	male	very often	Another city	Another city	Both options	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	2	2
202	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	None	No	Yes	4	5	4
203	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	4	4
204	26-33	male	often	Another city	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	-	-
205	26-33	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Other	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	3	3
206	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Other	Travel	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	3	3	3
207	42-49	female	not very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	LeoExpress	Yes	No	3	4	4
208	26-33	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	5	-
209	26-33	male	almost never	Prague	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	Yes	4	3	3
210	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	No	No	1	4	3
211	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Other	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	Yes	4	5	4
212	18-25	female	often	Prague	Prague	Other	All 3	LeoExpress	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	2	4	5
213	18-25	male	not very often	Prague	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	4	4
214	34-41	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	Yes	4	-	-
215	18-25	male	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	3	4	-

216	18-25	female	often	Another city	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	Yes	3	4	3
217	18-25	female	often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	3	4	-
218	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Other	Other	All 3	LeoExpress	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	3	1	5
219	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	4	-	-
220	34-41	male	almost never	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Number of directions	None	No	No	4	2	4
221	18-25	female	almost never	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	Yes	3	3	3
222	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	No	No	2	3	3
223	18-25	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	Yes	3	4	3
224	26-33	female	not very often	Another city	Another city	Travel	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	RegioJet	No	No	3	-	-
225	50-57	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5
226	42-49	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	4
227	66-75	male	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	2	4	5
228	75+	female	often	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5
229	42-49	male	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	4
230	50-57	female	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4
231	75+	female	often	Prague	Prague	Go to work or study	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	4	5	-
232	34-41	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	5	5	-

233	42-49	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	Leo Express	Yes	No	3	5	-
234	66-75	female	very often	Prague	Prague suburb	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	4
235	50-57	male	often	Prague	Another city	Travel	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	2	5	4
236	66-75	male	almost never	Prague suburb	Another city	Both options	ČD, RegioJet	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	4	4
237	75+	male	very often	Prague suburb	Another city	Go to work or study	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	ČD	No	No	2	4	5
238	66-75	female	not very often	Prague suburb	Another city	Travel	All 3	LeoExpress	Company popularity	Leo Express	Yes	No	5	5	5
239	34-41	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Both options	All 3	RegioJet	Number of directions	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	4
240	66-75	female	not very often	Another city	Prague	Go to work or study	RegioJet	RegioJet	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	5
241	42-49	male	not very often	Prague	Prague	Travel	All 3	ČD	Number of directions	Leo Express	Yes	No	3	5	3
242	66-75	female	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Go to work or study	RegioJet, LeoExpress	RegioJet	Company popularity	ČD	Yes	No	2	5	-
243	50-57	male	very often	Prague suburb	Prague	Both options	ČD	ČD	Number of directions	ČD	Yes	No	4	-	-
244	42-49	female	often	Prague	Prague	Both options	ČD	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	3	5	5
245	66-75	male	often	Prague suburb	Prague	Both options	All 3	ČD	Company popularity	RegioJet	Yes	No	4	5	3

Source: own creation, 2021