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DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETITIVENESS OF COMPANY
DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETITIVENESS OF COMPANY

MASTER'S THESIS
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Charakteristika problematiky úkolu:

Introduction
Goals of thesis and methods
Theoretical review of problem
Analysis of contemporary situation
Proposal of solution
Conclusion
References
Appendixes

Cíle, kterých má být dosaženo:

The main aim of thesis is to design a viable branding strategy for a company. The theoretical partconsists of interpretation of branding and strategic brand management. The analytical part examines brand building strategy and position of the company in the market as well as its competitors andpotential clients. Based

on analysis, a branding strategy proposal is suggested in order to create a competitive and successful brand of the company.

Základní literární prameny:

CAMPHER, H. Creating a sustainable brand: A guide to growing the sustainability top line [online].London: Dō Sustainability in association with GSE Research, 2014 [cit. 2017-04-01]. ISBN 9781910174067.

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of thesis is to design a viable branding strategy for a company. The theoretical part consists of interpretation of branding and strategic brand management. The analytical part examines brand building strategy and position of the company in the market as well as its competitors and potential clients. Based on analysis, a branding strategy proposal is suggested in order to create a competitive and successful brand of the company.

KEY WORDS

Brand, branding strategy, competitiveness, travel agency

ABSTRAKT

Hlavním cílem této práce je návrh životaschopné brandingové strategie pro firmu. Teoretická část sestává z interpretace brandingu a strategického řízení značky. Analytická část zkoumá strategii budování značky a pozici společnosti na trhu stejně jako její konkurenty a potenciální klienty. Na základě analýzy je vypracován návrh strategie za účelem vytvoření konkurenceschopné a úspěšné značky firmy.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Brand, brandingová strategie, konkurenceschopnost, cestovní agentura

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DECLARATION

By this statement, I declare that this diploma thesis is original written entirely by me, without use of any sources other than those indicated and without use of any unauthorized resources.

In Brno 19.7.2017

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Student's signature

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CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, global competition is on rise and it is increasingly more challenging for a new company to succeed in the market. It is necessary to devise a right strategy and differentiate itself from the competitors. Therefore, companies are more and more in need of using brands as a form of their strategy, distinguish themselves in the market and create their competitive advantage. Consequently, the company can build and maintain relationships with their customers creating a value to the customer and form a long-term advantage by using the brand.

To compile this thesis, I chose a British travel agency Wenhua Travel, which focuses on providing tailor-made holiday to Chinese customers with desire to travel across Great Britain. During my stay in Great Britain, I worked for this company as a student ambassador at Nottingham Trent University and my main task was to spread the word about the company, therefore to spread its brand awareness. The main aim of this thesis is to provide proposals for the company focused on strengthening the brand and its competitiveness in the market.

GOALS OF THESIS AND METHODS

The main goal of the thesis is to create proposals for strengthening brand of Wenhua Travel company and its competitiveness in tourism market.

The theoretical part is focused on term brand and branding, followed by theoretical backgrounds of branding strategy, positioning and communication of a brand and specifics of branding in People's Republic of China.

The analytical part consists of Wenhua Travel's current situation clarification and comparison with its competitors in the industry. To further understand how the brand and its services are perceived by potential customers, the market research survey was carried out, accompanied by in-depth interview. To summarize my findings, I executed SWOT analysis derived from the outcomes of analytical methods mentioned above.

The results of the analytical part are used for design of proposals suggesting several areas of improvement for the company, together with estimated difficulty of implementation. Besides the literature stated in the reference part, I used my own experience and knowledge gained while working for Wenhua Travel company.

1. THEORETICAL PART

1.1. Branding

1.1.1. Branding strategies and management

There have been major disagreements from different individuals over the aspect of branding over the past years (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). However, when it is taken from a broader context it encompasses both intangible and tangible benefits associated with the identified products and consequent services. It is therefore important for companies and organizations to implement policies involving branding strategies. It is because branding strategies are identified as the cornerstones of the aspect of marketing. Branding strategy is identified as a long term associated with the development of an appropriate and successful brand with an aim of achieving particular goals. It is evident that a well-defined and also a perfectly executed brand strategy impacts all aspects associated with business and has a direct connection to the needs of the consumers, respective emotions and competitive surroundings (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

1.1.2. What is brand?

A brand is identified as a product, concept or a certain service that is usually publicly differentiated from other similar products, services or concepts with an aim of enhancing easy communication and marketing (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). A brand name is the name related with the distinctive concept, service or product. Brands are in most cases secured from utility by other individuals by accessing a service or trade mark from an agency that is authorized. In most cases, it is usually a government related agency. Before the application of a trade mark it is vital and necessary to establish that it does not already exist (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). The investigation can be done personally or in advanced situations, it can be carried out by a law firm that is known for specializing in performing trademark searches and management associated with the application process.

Brands are usually expressed in various forms like logos, and graphic representations of the actual brand. In addition, there is a recent brand application known as the Information inside label (KAPUTA, C., 2012, 75). It is provided by the manufacturers that are associated with utilizing information's microchips. A company's or an organization's brand in relation to the public awareness of the company is usually utilized as a factor in the evaluation of an organization. In some occasions, corporations hire market research associated firms to carry out the study of public recognition of various brand names together with attitudes associated with the brand (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

In addition, brand can be viewed as an accumulation of associations involving emotions and functions. In other words, it is a promise which states that the mentioned product will carry out its duties as per the expectations of the customer. Brand shapes the expectations of the customer in regard to the product (NEVEN, S., 2014, 88). Nonetheless, there is a trademark that protects or secures brands from being utilized by other individuals. Furthermore, a brand is associated with giving specific information about a certain company, product or service and distinguishes from others found in the market place. Brand usually carries an assurance about the identified features that make the mentioned product or service appear unique (NEVEN, S., 2014, 88). In addition, it acts as a representation of what the organization in question offers.

Brand can be interpreted differently by both the consumer and the seller. They both have their own definitions and interpretations about what a brand is (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). To a consumer a brand means and signifies source of the product or service, quality symbol, and lower risk. In addition, it means less search related cost, symbolic associated device, either a deal or a pact with the associated commodity manufacturer. Nonetheless, it means and signifies delegating responsibility to the respective manufacturer in relation to the product. Brand simplifies purchase decision associated with the consumer (KAPUTA, C., 2012, 75). Over a span of time, the consumers make discoveries in relation to the brands that satisfy their needs. In this case, it is easy for such consumers to make quick decisions in relation to purchase of the product and hence save time (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). In addition, they end up saving search costs in relation to the product. Consumers therefore remain loyal and committed to such a

brand when they gain a firm belief that it will wholly satisfy and fulfil their expectations in a consistent mannerism.

On the other side, to a seller a brand means and signifies the basis of a competitive benefit, ways of financial returns, sign of quality to the respective satisfied consumer, way of legal security of unique features associated with a product (NEVEN, S., 2014, 88). In addition, it means a way of bestowing products that have unique associations and also it is a way of identification in relation to easy handling. Therefore, a brand in short when viewed from a seller's perspective it can be defined as a promise by the seller to provide a unique set of features, benefits and appropriate services to the consumers in a consistent manner (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). In addition, it is a term, symbol, name, sign or a combination of all the mentioned in order to distinguish the products or services of a single seller or even a group of sellers from those associated with their competitors (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

A brand makes a connection among the four most crucial and important elements of an enterprise that is the customers, employees, shareholders and the management. It is an assortment of memories that are painted and created in the mind of a consumer. Brand is a representation of various values, personalities and even ideas (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Nonetheless, it is a set of rational, functional and emotional associations and advantages which have possessed the minds of the target market. Associations are considered to be images and symbols that are associated with the brand or the brand advantages (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

Nonetheless, brand is viewed as a company's most valuable and treasured asset. Brand acts as a representation of the face of the organization. It is the recognizable logo, slogan or mark of identity that the respective public uses to associate itself with the organization or company. Brand is a tool that carries with it a crucial monetary value usually in the stock market. In addition; brand can be defined as the full visual position that is created by a powerful and strong brand identity (KAPUTA, C., 2012, 75). Furthermore, customer service and experience of the client are part of the definitions of a brand. Nonetheless, it is appropriate to view a brand as a combination of the way an individual or a company defines and promotes it and also how other people define and view it.

1.1.3. What is branding?

If a brand comes about from a set of perceptions and also associations created in the minds of people, then it is justified to say that branding is an attempt that aims at harnessing, generating, influencing and controlling these associations in order to assist the business, company or organization to perform appropriately and better (DAVIS, M., 2009, 87). Branding is the act of promoting a company or a business in an area by putting it in a better position or place as compared to others of a similar type. Nonetheless, it is the act of advertising, marketing and intelligent utility of a corporate culture with an aim of generating a set of associations in the minds of people that are essential in benefiting a specific organization. Branding is the most vital aspect associated with any business or organization. Branding is the aspect that makes a business outstanding by appearing to offer something that is unique and in a, memorable way (KAPUTA, C., 2012, 75).

There are different views that are present in relation to the art of branding. It is viewed or considered to be strategic (DAVIS, M., 2009, 87). It is greater than any of the known marketing related effort that is it is involved in determining whether a company will become loyal to a customer or not. It is believed to be what sticks in the mind of consumers in association with a certain product, service or a company. Branding is built from a variety of things especially a lived experience (DAVIS, M., 2009, 87).

Nonetheless, branding is viewed as the aspect that makes loyal consumers and advocates for those individuals involved in the purchasing act (DAVIS, M., 2009, 87). Branding is a cost centre but the return associated with it is loyalty from the respective consumers who finally become advocates of the business, employees who stay for longer periods and work efficiently (DAVIS, M., 2009, 87). Furthermore, branding is viewed to be as important to the success associated with a particular business or even non-profits as possessing coherence, possessing a vision associated with the future or even possessing quality and efficient employees. It is considered as being the foundation of a successful operation (DAVIS, M., 2009, 87).

1.1.4. Characteristics of a Brand

With the current situation where the volume of competition experienced by businesses in the market, it is very crucial and important to stand out by being unique through the development of a unique identity and a suitable value proposition through strategic branding (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Branding that is considered being effective and appropriate is the heart of most organizations that they thrive in. Brand is the perception held by individuals about certain companies, services, concepts or products (NEVEN, S., 2014, 88). There are a variety of features that are associated with a brand. If a company or organization puts in mind the features, it is likely to stand out in a unique way. First and foremost, brands have audience knowledge. They possess a thorough and clear comprehension of the demographics associated with their target market. They identify and put into consideration the interests and the communication aspects of their demographics. This feature provides a sense of direction for the tone associated and the reach in relation to the marketing campaign (NEVEN, S., 2014, 88).

A brand should be distinctive which means that it should possess uniqueness in order to provide a distinguishing feature in the minds of its target audience that is the consumers. Establishment of a brand identity necessitates something that is distinctive (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). For example, Apple is prominent because of their innovative products and aesthetic and minimalistic appealing features. Creating such an identity through brand requires possessing a single special thing that brings about the separation from its competitors. It does not require a revolutionary idea. Brand should be presented in a unique way for it to enhance recognition (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

Nonetheless, a brand should be suggestive of quality. It should be associated with the art of superiority or an aspect related with great personality. It should be able to attract attention by possessing or utilizing a distinct class or experience. It should be promising by giving assurance and hope. In addition, it should be appropriate (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It is because many products and services are entangled by a certain mystique that is formed in the minds of the consumers. The brand related with a certain product should be suitable for the identified service or concept.

Nonetheless, brands should be appealing and should be easy to remember. It should be remembered able to the target audience. For example, when issuing a brands name it is essential to choose a name that is clear, precise, easy to pronounce and spell like Sony (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). In addition, a brand should be carried out of passion in order to be able to sustain it in the long run and to avoid it vanishing in a short period of time. Passion in a brand assist businesses and companies to persevere through several inevitable setbacks and hence they are able to sustain the brands for a long time without giving up (FLOOR, 2006, 97). Passion creates enthusiasm about the brand to both the sellers and the consumers. Nonetheless, a brand should be consistent in that when consumers get back to the same type of business or organization, they are welcomed by the same set of associations through good products, concepts or services that fully satisfy their needs and cater for their expectations wholly (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). A good example of an industry that ought to possess this characteristic of a brand is the food industry as the quality and service associated with them is very crucial. Nonetheless, a brand should be adaptable or flexible that is it should be able to accommodate changes in the future in relation to new products. In addition, brand is associated with the art of trust that is trust entrusted on the products by the customers (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

1.1.5. Brand Equity

Brand equity is a phrase utilized in the market industry to refer to a certain value premium that a business generates from a specific product with an identified or a recognizable name in comparison to a generic equivalent aspect (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). Brand equity is viewed from two different angles or perspectives that are the cognitive psychology perspective and the perspective of information economics. In accordance to cognitive psychology, brand equity is known to lie in the awareness of the consumer in association with brand characteristics and also associations (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). On the other hand, according to information economics, a powerful brand name acts as a credible signal in relation to the art of product quality. Brand equity is involved in playing a major role in the act of determining the price structure. Brand equity is among the factors that are involved in increasing the financial value

associated with a brand to the owner of the brand (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). Organizations can create brand equity for their commodities by making then superior in terms of quality and also reliability, memorable and easily recognizable. In addition, mass marketing related campaigns assist companies in the creation of brand equity (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

Brand equity is considered to possess three fundamental components which are customer perception, either negative or positive impacts or the outcome value. First and foremost, the art of brand equity is believed to be constructed by consumer perception (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). Consumer perception includes both experience and the art of knowledge in association with a brand and its commodities. The perception that is held by a certain consumer is involved in bringing about direct positive or negative impacts (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). If the brand equity turns out to be positive then the company and its products will definitely benefit from a variety of related advantages and the opposite applies (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

At the final stages, the mentioned impacts are considered to either turn into tangible or intangible value. If the impact is positive, there is a realization of tangible value like increases in profits and revenues. On the other hand, intangible value is attained in form of marketing as awareness or as goodwill (FLOOR, 2006, 97).Consequently, if the impacts are negative then both tangible and intangible value is going to be negative (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).For example, in a situation where the respective consumers are willing to contribute more payments for a generic commodity that one that is branded then such a brand is said to possess negative brand equity(KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).It can happen in cases where the company or business in question is involved in major environmental distractions or great product recalls (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

A general example that involves a situation where brand equity is considered to be vital is in cases when an organization or a company wants to enhance expansion of its product line. If the brand equity turns out to be positive then there is a high likelihood of the consumers purchasing a new product of the company by comparing or associating the new product with an already existing and successful brand (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

There are various elements that can be included in the valuation aspect associated with the art of brand equity like profit margins, the art of changing market share, customer recognition in relation to logos and also other related visual elements, the aspect of brand language related associations composed by customers and customers' perceptions involving quality (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

Consumers' knowledge in regard to a brand is utilized as a government to how manufacturers market the associated brand. Brand equity is formed through the art of strategic investments associated with communication channels and also market education (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). It appreciates through the art of economic growth in association with profit margins, prestige value, critical associations and market share (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). The strategic investments usually appreciate over time and consequently delivered a return on investment. Brand equity can also undergo appreciation without the art of strategic direction. The concept associated with brand equity is vital in the comprehension of competitive dynamics and also the art of price structures associated with business to business markets (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). In the industrial markets, the art of competition is usually based on distinctions associated with the performance of a product. Firms can however participate in the charging of premiums that usually cannot be solely described in terms associated with technological superiority and also performance-related advantages. Such types of price premiums portray a reflection of brand equity associated with reputable manufacturers (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

Brand equity prominently challenging when it comes to quantifying it but it is a crucial aspect (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). There are two types of brand equity that is quantitative and qualitative brand equity. Quantitative brand equity is comprised of numerical values like market share and profit margins. However, it fails to capture the elements associated with qualitative aspects like prestige and set of associations of interest (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

Brand equity is important and has a purpose in metrics which is the measurement of the value associated with a certain brand. A brand involves the name, image, perceptions and logo that are used to enhance identification of a certain product or service. It takes shape in the art of packaging, marketing communication channels and advertising. It

therefore becomes the focus of the relationship that exists in consumers (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). Progressively; a brand finally embodies a promise in relation to the good it identifies. A promise about performance, value dimensions, or quality influences the choices of consumers among other competing services or products (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). When a promise associated with a specific brand extends beyond a certain product, the associated owner may leverage it to venture into new markets. Therefore, due to all of the mentioned reasons, a brand is liable to possessing a tremendous value that is brand equity (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

Brand equity is the positive impact associated with the brand on the distinction between the prices that are acceptable to the respective consumer in occasions when the identified brand is known in comparison to the value associated with the advantage gained. Negative brand equity can occur in cases where there is occurrence of catastrophic events in relation to the brand like a broad product recall or progressive negative press related attention (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). Negative brand equity is a term that can be utilized to explain a service or a commodity in cases where a certain brand possesses a negligible impact on the level of an identified product in comparison to a private label commodity (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).The higher a company's or an organization's brand equity is the higher the probability that it will use a strategy associated with family branding rather than a strategy associated with individual branding(KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).It is because the art of family branding gives them an allowance to leverage the associated equity accumulated in the identified core brand. Aspects involved in brand equity are brand loyalty, perception associated with quality, association and awareness (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

Brand equity in a practical way is usually difficult to measure due to the fact that brands are considered to be crucial assets. However, there are several contemplated ways that have been devised to measure the value associated with brand equity (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). There are ten attributes associated with a brand that can be utilized in the assessment of its strengths which are loyalty, distribution coverage, market share, brand personality, differentiation, perceived quality, perceived value, brand awareness, market price, leadership, and organizational associations (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78). A brand requires to be managed in a careful and consistent manner so that its value cannot

depreciate. It is therefore vital to reinforce brand equity by continuously conveying the meaning of the brand in terms of products, needs and advantages and also the meaning of brand in terms of differentiation of products (KELLER, K L. 2012, 78).

1.1.6. Internal Branding

Internal branding is a continuous process put in place which ensures that the identified employees comprehend the concept of who and why behind a certain put in place business related proposition (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). In addition, it is a cultural shift that exists within an organization, company or business where the respective employees attain more customer focus and become more business focused. It plays a very important role in the contribution of success to a business. Internal branding can assist an organization or a business to translate the various elements of the associated brands into the aspect of physical employee mannerisms. When the art of internal branding is done in a proper and appropriate way it creates a good and virtuous cycle (HEALEY, 2012, 192). It attracts employees who admire and adore the brand and consequently such employees will be involved in the communication of that brand to partners and consumers that is they will act as communication agents and therefore will strengthens such a brand and hence attract better and more competent employees.

There are various effective internal branding related tactics or strategies that are crucial during the implementation of internal branding (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). These strategies are internal communication, leadership practices, reward and recognition programs, training support, and recruitment practices. Under the art of internal communication, it is essential to possess clear, precise and consistent tactics that are utilized in conveying brand values to the relevant employees. However, this is proving to be a challenge to most organizations (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). An appropriate and effective internal communication strategy involves the creation of a two way dialogue that exists between managers and employees. There are a variety of channels that can be used to accomplish this art of effective internal communication which are through emails, social media, displays, intranet, internal messaging and office posters (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

In addition, it is vital to train, motivate and align employees. Offering training support to the relevant employees is among the various ways of offering motivation to them. Possessing an official or formal training related process that is associated with matching a certain brand commences at the on boarding stage (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Employees require adequate and appropriate training to improve in their performance and promote efficiency. This is the initial step in promotion of internal branding to an organization or a business. In addition, on the art of leadership practices, it is essential to consider it as it plays a major role in modelling the internal branding process of a company. It is important for leaders to shape their organization's products and teams by encompassing them around a powerful aspect associated with brand values (FLOOR, 2006, 97).

Nonetheless, in the process associated with internal branding, it is essential to offer recognition to those employees involved in acting in accordance to the standards of the brand in question. In addition, such employees can be rewarded through a variety of ways like being given bonuses or being issued increments in their salaries (LEVENTHAL, 1996, 55). Furthermore, every component associated with the operations of the organization should reveal a reflection of the internal brand. Those are among the ways of coming up with an effective way of strategizing a positive internal branding in an organization or business. Successful internal branding is associated with lifting brand equity, shareholder related value and customer focus. There exists a significant correlation between efforts associated with external branding, internal branding and shareholder equity. Internal branding should be noted that it is a process driven and a long-term proposition. Internal branding is involved in following a sequential step process (LEVENTHAL, 1996, 55). In this case employees attain internal branding success. It should be understood that there exists a difference between the following three concepts; communicating a certain message, getting it comprehended and transforming mannerisms. Internal branding that is carried out well and appropriately gives the employees an allowance to transition from the act of being informed to the act of comprehension of the Intel to finally becoming committed (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

The concept associated with internal branding involves the art of believing in oneself. If the associated employees associated with a company or organization are considered to

be cynical in regard to its product or lack confidence on the company itself then it becomes challenging to convince the purchasers on buying of the identified product. Therefore, it is essential to deal with skepticism early and adequately to avoid future inconveniences. Internal branding is considered to be a vital channel that exists between the creation of a strategy and its consequent successful execution (HEALEY, 2012, 192). Open and adequate communication assists in the elimination of dissatisfaction and incompetence. It is involved in touching several spheres like operations, strategies, frontline management, marketing, brand management and human resources. In most cases, it is usually the responsibility of the associated marketing practitioner to look out for the aspect of internal branding because they are often directly involved between the respective buyers and the company. In addition, the executive department also handles internal branding due to the fact that they are directly responsible for the concept associated with sales figures (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

Internal branding is very advantageous in association with a particular brand. It cements the relative foundation associated with a company (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). In addition, it helps the associated company to progress together with its respective employees. Nonetheless, in case where there is detection of deficiencies they can be easily rectified and amended at earlier stages of training and hence this makes the end teams emerge as strong and powerful individuals who are efficient and reliable (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Training helps in reminding the respective employees about the put in place values, vision and the mission of the company or business. Furthermore, interactions that exist during the training sessions create stronger bonds that exist amongst the associated employees hence important in the development of a feeling of familiarity and also ease. Nonetheless, the workshops assist in the gaining of a better and clear perspective in regard to the brand and its associated products (LEVENTHAL, 1996, 55). The right to exposure assists the related employees in gaining confidence that is important in their performance of duties. Furthermore, self-confidence creates a positive effect on the daily activities that are internal (HEALEY, 2012, 192).

It goes without saying that every coin has two sides and so does internal branding. It has its disadvantages as well. In most of the cases, the organizations fail to pay proper and adequate attention to the art of internal branding which contributes to lack of good

guidance and consequently impacts the attitude associated with the respective employees negatively (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). The chief shortcoming associated with internal branding is that it can easily lead to favouritism and groupies. Therefore, it can lead to a high likelihood of occurrence of chaos and also confusion. Nonetheless, internal branding is considered to possess an indirect effect on the art of external branding. Therefore, if it is carelessly handled or if it is not handled appropriately it is prone to causing far reaching outcomes on the associated brand because both are considered to be intricately connected with one another (LEVENTHAL, 1996, 55).

Internal branding has over the years accomplished in making a positive effect on the art of external branding related activities (HEALEY, 2012, 192). The confidence attained during such sessions has assisted in making the teams in becoming healthier and being involved in enhanced performance which consequently leads to an increase in the related sales figures and also gaining of higher profits. Any organization that carries out the art of internal branding is liable to among huge returns and profits however, it should be done in an appropriate way to avoid interference with the external branding that might lead to inconveniences and inefficiencies (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

1.1.7. Process of Building a Brand

The process of building brand is considered to be an integral aspect associated with personal and business development (AAKER, D., 1995, 45).It is not only associated with increasing the voice and the awareness of a certain brand to a consumer but it also gives such a brand an identity and worth, The advent associated with participatory and also interactive platforms has given a lot of businesses and organizations the chance and opportunity to enhance the art of brand awareness and equity (AAKER, D., 1995, 45).It is an essential aspect that cannot be ignored by any organization seeking to remain aloft in the competitive market and when carried out in the right away it greatly helps such an organization in keeping up a positive image among its customers (DOYLE, P., 1990, 75).

The process of building brand is concentrated around seven fundamental phases which are brand team development, business related analysis. Brand positioning, audience

analysis, creative and messaging associated development, maintenance and measurement, and implementation (DOYLE, P., 1990, 75). Successful branding associated initiatives commence with the formation of the art of brand team. Brands are developed from various imperatives formed by the businesses associated leadership (AAKER, D., 1995, 45). However, they are articulated and performed by individuals who are involved in making up the company or organization. Pulling together an identified cross-sectional team to form the brand not only assists in the provisions of valuable insights into the company but it also makes the practice of launching and maintenance of the brand easier and efficient through their initial indulgence and participation (AAKER, D., 1995, 45).

In addition, by having a clear comprehension of what the related client hopes to attain, their various strengths and weaknesses, their competition, and their associated surrounding in which they are involved in the conduct of their business, designers can commence in the development of meaningful solutions (HATCH, M J, & SCHULTZ, M., 2008, 56). It can be a challenging issue because accessing clients who are willing to express their various needs is usually difficult (AAKER, D., 1995, 45). Clients is in some occasions considered to have a close association with their task to be objective. On the other hand, designers end up misdirected or getting partial Intel as an outcome. However, through the art of questioning, designers can assist clients in discovering various brand related solutions which are aligned in relation with their business set goals (AAKER, D., 1995, 45).Business associated analysis centres on their major areas which are mission, business surrounding and competition(DOYLE, P.,1990, 75).There are usually plenty of business associated analysis tools which can be adopted by the various designers in order to gather valuable insight into the identified areas including, vision, PEST analysis, goal prioritization, and SWOT analysis and mission statements. The mentioned tools are involved in the provision of a common language that exists between designers and also business owners (AAKER, D., 1995, 45). In addition, they assist in framing discussions usually around strategic questions.

Individuals are the reason that organizations exist and ultimately they are involved in the determination of whether a company succeeds or faces failures in the market place. As companies look toward the art of branding in relation to a strategic benefit a greater

emphasis is put on comprehension of how a brand design motivates the relevant audiences. Furthermore, it is essential to enhance the development of brand positioning (AAKER, D., 1995, 45). It is because positioning communicates to the relevant competitive nature associated with a certain brand. By enhancing the provision of a unique value to the respective audiences, companies carve out a price in association with the market place which they strive to own and also sustain. Determination of the company's point in association with the art of differentiation is considered to be the core of the process of branding (CAI, L. A., GARTNER, W.C., ET AL, 2009, 78). In addition, position communicates to the associated promise that a certain organization makes with its associated audience. It entails the definition of a unique value to the associated audience and thereafter making sure that it is involved in the consistent delivery on the given assurance. The ability associated with the organization in following through on the given promise is essential in making or breaking the relationship that exists between the organization and the audience.

Nonetheless, it is important to create a consistent associated messaging and visual style (CAI, L. A., GARTNER, W.C., ET AL, 2009, 78). The visuals design and also messaging that is associated with going along in relation to a certain brand is considered to play a major role in the general branding process. The visual and also the verbal elements that speak the art of brand position are involved in attracting, convincing and intriguing the identified audiences to engage with the related brand. In other words, they are considered to be the culmination and articulation associated with the brand positioning and also promises (AAKER, D., 1995, 45). Verbal elements in this case include the vision and mission statements, brand positioning statements, name associated with the brand and the tagline. On the other hand, the visual elements are the logo, shape, overall appearance, colours, typography and the feel associated with the art of communication and surroundings (DOYLE, P., 1990, 75).

Furthermore, it is essential and vital to launch and evaluate the brand in question. There are various challenges associated with the act of brand positioning but the greatest of all is the act of getting the company to purchase into the direction, adopt the Intel and creative direction that is prescribed (DOYLE, P.,1990, 75). For this reason, it is extremely vital to make the process of branding as collaborative as possible through

invitation of all the areas associated with the organization to engage in defining the appropriate direction (AAKER, D., 1995, 45). Individuals are known to support whatever they assist in supporting. Implementation involves the act of communicating the art of brand position and brand verbal and the visual assets to the identified internal audience. Along with various style guides and online access in association with brand assets, this phase necessitates brand education to occur. Once the act of implementing the identified brand, it is essential to shift the focus from the practice of creation to that of maintain the brand. It is because the commonly faced challenge is that associated with the act of degrading associated with the brand that occurs with time (NEVEN, S., 2014, 88). It happens in a progressing manner whereby the company becomes exhausted of the same messages and also the same utilized designs. It is vital to be aware of the various subtle changes that exist in the competitive surroundings that are essential and need to be put into consideration as the process of brand building is not a one-day activity but a progressive activity and is a long-term goal (AAKER, D., 1995, 45).

1.1.8. Building a Branding Identity

A brand identity is considered to be more than a logo. In addition, it is considered to be more than a brand related style guide (CAI, L. A., GARTNER, W.C., ET AL, 2009, 78). Furthermore, it is considered to be an appropriate Way to distinguishing oneself from others in a competition. A brand identity is associated with influencing one's consumers' experience usually at every touch point. It subconsciously impacts the mannerism in which customers view everything associated with one's industry (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It is the sum of how one's brand looks or appears feels and communicates to them. In other words, it is the elements that assist them to make decisions associated with engaging with one.

Some brands are associated with elevated the art of brand identity to a related art. On the other hand, others have made it in entering the playing field (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). No matter one's organization, it should present its brand identity in the front and centre way. However, the practice of building brand identity is not easy at all and comes along with various challenges. One needs a solid foundation that is flexible. It is an identity

that is grounded in one's roots but anticipating for the future. It seems like a process that is hectic and surely it can prove to be. It needs deep thinking and also the art of foresight. However, the end results are beneficial and good (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

Brand identity is the total composite associated with various elements that are involved in shaping how a certain brand is viewed or perceived. Some of the brand identities are often tied to the identified practical elements like designing and packaging (Cai, L. A., Gartner, W.C., et al, 2009, 78). In addition, some venture into the realm of senses like how it feels smells, sounds and even tastes, for example cosmetics like perfumes. Visual elements associated with brand identity are logo, design system, colour palette, iconography, and graphics and typography.

A logo and a colour pallet are not enough to conclude that an organization has a good brand identity but a god brand identity is appropriate and well thought (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It is distinct in that it stands out among other individual organizations in the competition. In addition; it is attractive and captures the attention of the respective audience. Furthermore, it is memorable as it makes a visual effect. Nonetheless, it is consider being scalable and adaptable in that it can grow, develop and evolve with the associated brand (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Moreover, a good and a well thought brand identity is considered to be cohesive that is it possess pieces that adequately and appropriately complement the identity of the brand. Finally, it is easy when it comes to its application as it is intuitive and also clear and precise for the respective designers.

Whenever, those individuals involved in the organizational building of branding identity, they commence with a branding project (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). They approach each associated phase from an angle involving philosophical and also a greatly critical standpoint or perspective. They usually want to carry out inspection, poke and produce till they arrive at the core of the involved brand. First and foremost, there is the practice of research and discovery. It hands down the most tedious and laborious stage in the building if branding identity (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It often takes a lot of time, manpower and energy. However, it is very crucial in the building of foundation upon which the identified visual language stands. In this stage, there is learning that takes place that involves everything that entails the brand in question. It assists in the creation of a comprehensive image of what the brand is, and a brand associated persona. There is

usually a lot of questions sin this stage for example who is the audience in this case, what is the brand that is in existence, and finally who is the competition (CAI, L. A., GARTNER, W.C., ET AL, 2009, 78). It so important to comprehend what consumers associated with the brand would love to engage with. This means getting a solid comprehension of the needs, values and wants of the related customers. Beyond the primary audience, there is the secondary audience who are other brands in other organizations and potential employees who are as important as the primary audience. In addition, it is vital to carry out an assessment on the current state associated with the existing brand identity (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It helps to understand how the current brand is perceived from both internally and externally. It includes undertaking conversations with employees, customers and higher us. Here, the research assist the organization involved in viewing the identify brand from every angle. It should be noted that building of a brand identity entails differentiation that is making a certain brand visible, unique and relevant (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). A firm can only achieve this by comprehending the competitive landscape it is associated with.

In addition, there is the visual ideation which comes after the research and discovery stage (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). In this stage, the organization is adequately informed about ideation that arises from the art of competitive analysis, internal surveys and customer feedback. In this stage, the text based information is analysed and translated into visual concepts (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). The Intel that the organization has is usually steeped in the concept of emotional language in relation to the brand's values, personality and goals (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It is important to figure out or come up with a series of ideas on how to speak and enhance the relevant sentiments through the art of visual concept. Teams can be brought in order to brainstorm word related clouds. The goal of the stage is to bring life into the associated words. Thereafter there is the selection of specific elements that usually elicit the most powerful emotional response. In addition, they trigger additional imagery. Furthermore, they assist in building a visual playground.

Nonetheless, after the second stage of visual ideation, there is usually the production stage (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). This entails the logo, typography, iconography and the design systems creation. Last but not least we have the building of the brand style guide.

In this phase, there is the inclusion of clear, precise and easy to utilize guidelines that are associated with every part of the identified brand identity. It includes various examples and use-cases. It can also entail practical details that demote as much Intel as possible that are needed in assisting the user in the replication of the associated brand identity in a successful manner. A strong visual language should bring out a clear reflection of one's brand (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It is essential to strive for the art of consistency and look for various ways that are useful in the application of a good design that exists at every level of one's organization. In addition, it should be understood that brand identity construction is not all about beautiful colours or amazing logos but it entails building an identity that is considered to resonate with one's customers and give them type urge to continue working with such an organization. Furthermore, progressive refining and analysis of one's brand identity is very important as it helps ensure that an organization is delivering what it promises (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

1.1.9. Positioning of a Brand

Brand positioning is also known as positioning strategy, brand positioning statement or brand strategy. The chief aim of brand positioning is the creation of a unique impression in the minds of the associated customers in order to enable the consumer to associate a specific thing and on that is desirable with one's brand that is considered to be distinct from others that exist in the market (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). In simple terms the art of brand positioning is identified as the process of positioning one's brand usually in the minds of one's consumers (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). The idea involved in this case is identifying and attempting to possess a marketing niche for a certain brand, service, and product by utilizing a variety of strategies or tactics including promotion, pricing, competition, packaging and distribution. It has its basis on the concept that the art of communication is considered to take place only at the appropriate time and under the right circumstances (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). Positioning of a brand takes place where or not organization is involved in being proactive. However, it is the responsibility of the management to ensure that a positive brand positioning is attained. Positioning is the place that a certain brand occupies in relation to the mind of the

consumers and how such a brand is differentiated from products associated with the competitors (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53).

There are three kinds of positioning concepts which are symbolic, experiential and functional position. Functional positions are associated with the resolution of problems and challenges that come about. They are involved in the provision of advantages to the relevant customers or access favourable and suitable perception in relation to investors and also lenders. Symbolic positions are associated with addressing self-image related enhancement, social meaningfulness, affective fulfilment and image enhancement (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). On the other hand, experiential positions are involved in the provision of sensory and cognitive associated stimulations. Brand positioning must ensure that is sustainable in that it can be delivered constantly and in a consistent manner across all associated points of contact in relation to the consumer. In addition, it should be helpful when it comes to assisting the organization in attaining its stated financial goals and objectives (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53).

In order for an organization to create a perfect positioning strategy, it has to first identify one's brand uniqueness and also determine what distinguishes it from one's competition. It is good to determine how one's brand is at the current time position itself (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). In addition, it is good to identify one's direct competitors, comprehend how the associated competitors are positioning their brands (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). Furthermore, it is essential to bring out a comparison of one's positioning with that of their competitors in order to identify ones' uniqueness. Nonetheless, it is good to come up with a distinct and also a value based related positioning idea. Furthermore, it is also vital to craft an associated positioning statement and carry out testing of the efficiency of the associated brand positioning statement (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53).

A brand related positioning statement is identified as a single or a double sentence associated declaration that speaks about one's uniqueness in relation to the value aspect in association with their brand to the respective customers when related to one's main competitors. There are various elements associated with a positioning statement that should be put into consideration that are essential (HATCH, M J, & SCHULTZ, M., 2008, 56). First and foremost, it considers the target consumer as it entails the concise

summary associated with the attitudinal and also the demographic description associated with the target customers. In addition, it entails the market definition that is what category are one's brand associated with competing in and the relevance associated with one's brand (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). Furthermore, it entails a brand promise or assurance and a reason to believe by providing entice on the delivery of the issued brand promise.

In order for a distinctive place to be created in the market, there has to be choosing or selection of a niche market in a careful way. In addition, a different benefit has to be formed in the minds of the consumers. Therefore, brand positioning is considered to be a medium through which a company can portray its consumers what it desires to attain for them and what it desires to mean to them. It creates views of the associated customers and also their opinions. It involves identification and determination of various points of similarity and differentiation in order to ascertain the most appropriate brand identity and also to create an appropriate brand image. It is the key associated with marketing strategy (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). There are several positioning errors involved in the art of brand positioning like under positioning, over positioning, double position and confused positing. Under position is identified as a scenario whereby the customers possess a blurred and unclear idea associated with the brand while over positioning is identified as a situation whereby the respective customers possess limited awareness in relation to the brand (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). Confused positioning involves a scenario whereby the associated customers possess a confused opinion with regards to the brand. Double positioning involves a situation in which the relative customers deny the various claims associated with a certain brand.

To be successful in a specific market, a brand must occupy a distinct, proper and an explicit place usually in the minds of the consumers (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). It should be relative in comparison with other rival products that are in the market in the competitive concept. Visibility and recognition is all that entails the art of positioning of a brand. The process of brand positioning involves three fields which are segmentation, positioning and targeting (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53). There are various approaches associated with the art of positioning which are positioning against a certain competitor, positioning within a specific category, positioning in accordance to a brand attribute,

positioning for utility occasion, positioning associated with a user, positioning along various price lines, positioning involving various cultural symbols (CAMPHER, H., 2014, 53).

1.1.10. Communication of a Brand

Communication is a very essential and important aspect that is necessary in each and every organization in order to enhance the development and growth of such an organization. Communication assists in fostering the image of an organization in relation to the art of a brand (HATCH, M J, & SCHULTZ, M., 2008, 56). Likewise, it is important to develop tactics associated with the communication of a brand because it enacts various necessary changes on the behaviours of the consumer with an aim of tightening the bond that exists within the brand in mannerism that lead to brand power and profit. Effective and appropriate communication channels associated with construction of a brand's reputation is very essential (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Brand communication happens each time a certain client or customer interacts with a brand in relation to a certain organization or company. There are various ways in which the art of brand communication is effected like during the period when consumers spot one's logo, whenever they are involved in viewing the product in question, occasions when consumers view brand details like on social media, and even when the customers meet the brand in person for example when they contact the office (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It is important to ensure that consistency prevails in the communication of a branding addition, it should be noted the reputation of a certain brand is built every time a consumer meets the brand. The perfect brands are associated with creation of a memorable effect. They should aim at inspiring and engaging with the relevant audience. It begins with tactic clarity. It is essential to be clear and precise on what one's brand represents. It can be successfully attained by passing on to the customers a clear and direct message (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

Always aim at delivering the right and appropriate message at the right time and to the right individuals. One's brand message is likely to be received if it portrays a demonstration of expertise in association with relevant information, if it is likeable, if the brand is prominent and if it originates from an expert organization. Therefore, it is

vital to come up with reliable ways that will ensure that they effectively reach their consumers (HATCH, M J, & SCHULTZ, M., 2008, 56). Development of brand related communication strategies is considered to be an investment in a company or business. A clear communicated message is a unifying factor among one's team members and also the relate employees. It is good to define the associated goals as the main aim and goal of communication of a brand is to move the associated consumers or even the prospects from being just interested to being in a state of acquisition. Communication can be utilized to emphasize the emotional advantages of one's commodity service (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Current news related references, empathy and humour are some of the aspects that should be included in communication of a brand so as to increase visibility and bring about entertainment to the respective customers. Brand communication should be developed in relation to the context of an organization's goals. In addition, it is vital to broadcast a clear advantage in relation to the brand being communicated to the public. In addition, it is vital to capture and keep attention among the audience.

It should be noted that a strong brand communication strategy usually takes a lot of time and for this case it is considered to be a long-term investment (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Every organization should ensure that they transmit messages that ate thoughtful, genuine and focused. It is important while undertaking this activity to at all time base one's focus on the core target message. Through a deep comprehension of neurological, psychological and social theories, an organization is able to learn the thinking capacity of respective consumers in relation to their subconscious mindset and how their emotions impact their decisions (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Gaining deep insights in relation to the underlying driving forces associated with the consumers' preferences enables an organization to translate their insight into the art of communication which leads to better engagements with the desired audience in relation to a brand. Therefore, it is very essential for an organization to understand its audience so that it can enhance the communication of its brand and to avoid inconveniences. During this process of communication of a brand, it is important for the management to put itself in the shoes of the associated customers in order they can improve their communication skills and to relay the message in the most suitable and appropriate way that is favourable to the enhancement of the image of the brand in question (SINGH, B., 2012, 44).

During the communication of a brand, it is important to put into consideration a variety of things like who are the target consumers (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). It will help the organization understand the needs of such a consumer and hence communicate effectively and accordingly in reason to such a consumer. Definition of the insights associated with the consumer assist in bringing life to such a consumer. In addition, it is good to consider what one's organization is selling. In this case, it is good to hold a brainstorming session that will assist in getting insights associated with the respective consumers and hence can easily match them with the best characteristics associated with a brand or a product. During the communication, of a brand, it is essential to give a firm reason to the public as to why they should believe and trust in one's brand. Furthermore, it is vital to put into consideration the place where the message being communicated about a certain brand will be delivered (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). Therefore, it is essential to link up a variety of media choices in order to pass the message about a brand in a wide range of area and to drive the bond associated with the errand, profit and power in changing the mannerism of the consumer (SINGH, B., 2012, 44). In the case of a positioning statement, the brand benefit is usually the conclusion and hence during communication of a brand, the organization should base its focus on the conclusion part by giving a reason to believe which acts as the supporting premise.

1.1.11.   Strategic Branding Management

Strategic brand management is associated with the identified design and relevant implementation of various marketing identified programs and several activities involved in building, measuring and managing the art of brand equity (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). Strategic brand management is considered to possess four basic steps which are identification and the development of brand related plans, designing and effective implementation of brand associated marketing programs, relevant measurement and interpretation of brand related performance, growing and sustainability of respective brand equity.

Strategic brand management process is known to commence with a clear and precise comprehension of what the brand in question is involved in representing. In addition, it expresses' how the specific brand should be positioned with regards to the competitors

in the market (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). Brand planning involves brand positioning model that is involved in the description of how to guide a certain integrated marketing in order to maximize various competitive benefits, brand resonance model that is involved in the description of how to create intense, activity related loyalty relationships with the associated customers, and the brand value chain that is consider to be a way of tracing the value associated certain process in association with brands, to enhance comprehension of the financial impact associated with brand marketing related expenditures and investments (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65).

The next step is implementation of various brand marketing programs. it is a step that is dependent of various factors like the initial choices associated with the brand elements that make up the brand and the manner in which they are combined, various marketing associated activities and also supporting related marketing programs, and other associations that are indirectly transfer to or considered to be leveraged by the identified brand as an outcome of joining it to other related entity (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). There are several considerations associated with the factors mentioned above. It is essential to select brand elements. The most common elements are brand names, logos, slogans, URLs, symbols and characters (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). The best test associated with the brand-building contribution in relation to brand element is the thinking perceived by consumers in relation to the product or the service. Different elements usually have different benefits hence marketing managers utilize a subset of all the associated possible brand related elements. In addition, it is good to integrate the associated brand into various marketing activities and also the associated supporting marketing program. Despite the fact that the judicious choice associated with brand elements is involved in making some contributions to the art of building of brand identity, the greatest contribution originates from several marketing activities that are related to the specific brand. Last but not least it is good and essential to leverage secondary associations (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). It is the final way that is used in building brad equity. Brand associations can by themselves be joined t other entities that are associated with possessing their won associations hence certain the associated secondary associations. The brand may be joined to certain related source factors like the organization through the art of branding tactics, nations through the art of channel tactics, as well as other identified brands through the art of ingredients or that of co-branding, characters

through the art of licensing, spokespeople through the art of endorsements. The brand in question becomes identified with another associated entity even if such an entity may not be directly related with the associated product or service related performance (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65).

To manage the relevant brands in a profitable manner it is vital for the respective managers to successfully carry out designing and also implementation of a brand equity measurement associated system. A brand equity measurement identified system is considered to be a set associated with research related procedures that are designed to provide appropriate, timely, actionable, and accurate Intel for the relevant marketers in order to amended the best possible strategically decisions especially in the short run and also in the long run (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). Implementation of such a system requires three major steps which are conducting of brand audits, designing of brand tracking associated studies and the establishment of a brand equity management associated system (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65).

The task associated with the determination or evaluation of a certain brand in relation to the art of positioning usually benefits from the art of a brand audit. A brand audit is identified as a comprehensive examination associated with a good involving the assessment of its health, uncovering of its various sources of equity, and suggestions of manners to improve and also leverage the identified equity (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). Once marketers have been involved in the determination of the brand associated positioning strategy, then they are adequately ready to put into place the real marketing associated program in order to create, strengthen, and maintain various brand associations. Brand tracing associated studies gather Intel from associated consumers usually on a routine basis over time. On the other hand, a brand equity associated management system is identified as a set of various organizational processes that are designed in order to improve the comprehension and the utility of the associated brand equity connect that is found within a firm (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65).

Maintenance and expansion of brand equity can at times be difficult. Brand equity management related activities usually take a broader and a wider perspective in relation to the brand's equity that comprehends how various branding strategies should reveal a reflection of corporate concerns and also be adjusted (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). The

brand's architecture associated with the brand are usually involved in the provision of general guidelines that are associated with the art of branding strategy and also in which brand elements appear in the application across all the distinguished products that are sold by the firm (KAPFERE, J., 2012, 65). In addition, it is good to ensure that the brand equity is managed consistent over time and it should involve geographic boundaries, market associated segments and cultures. It should be noted that the art of strategically brand management is not a single step activity but it entails a variety of steps and also several factors that ought to be put into consideration in order to enhance success and bring about efficiency associated with a brand in relation to the particular organization. Reputation of a brand is very important in relation to the organization and the art of profit making (LEVENTHAL, 1996, 55).

1.1.12.   Branding of Products versus Branding of Services

There are a variety of researches that have been carried out with regard to the art of branding of products. Recently most of the economies have transformed into majoring on service dominated economy (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68). Therefore, a stream of researches has emerged associated with service branding. The massive growth associated with service has an implication that the serve created sector, service enterprises and also service industries are fields with a high potential in regard to further economic growth, employment and development (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68). Rapid growth of services is currently being considered as the new economy. Services are considered to be processes and customers are considered to be co- creators of services. There are various characteristics that are unique in association to services and these features influence the art of branding of services. These features are intangibility, heterogeneity associated with perish ability and quality, inseparability in relation to the art of production and consumption (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68). The core argument in this case is that the act of production and consumption in services usually take place at the time hence it becomes challenging to carry out assessment of the quality associated with services in advance. In order to enhance the art of precision, there is a new definition of a brand which includes services in the claim. However, despite the fact that thee a variety of definitions that have been implemented in regard to a brand, the

rationale associated with a brand in relation to fast moving goods and services is considered to be the same (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68). It is because the essence is to leverage the art of brand equity with an aim of building a strong and powerful relationship that exists between the associated brand and its related stakeholders, specifically the customers. It should be realized that branding associated with services very different from that of a product for a variety of reasons like products are considered to be made while services are usually delivered, products are utilized while on the other hand services are usually experienced (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68). In addition, products are usually tangible whereby services are intangible in that they are emotional. Products are identified as impersonal and physical items that can undergo evaluation before they are purchased while on the other hand services are considered to be personal as the respective customers usually purchase the experience that comes along with such services. Furthermore, services usually are not in existence until individuals' purchase them therefore trust is essential in such a case in association with the customer purchasing the service (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68).

While the extensive knowledge associated with academic knowledge in relation to consumer brands appears to be comprehensive and very rich, research involving the art of service related brands is consider to be less developed and is taken to be more fragmented (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68).Actually, research associated with service branding is considered to be as a relatively new stream in relation to research that exists within the service marketing and the various management related disciplines and hence there is need to carry out mo0re research on service branding. Initially, service branding was considered to encompass branding issue that exist in service enterprises, however currently service branding has also become vital in consumer related industries (AARSTAD, J., 2015, 76). It is because service components are usually added to the core physical commodities. For example, a car manufacturer needs to offer various supplementary service components in association with the core offer in order to appear competitive. It makes such a manufacturer appear attractive to other potential car purchasers (SKAALSVIK, H., 2014, 68).

A corporate service brand is considered to be not a static entity but it is considered to be subject to various changes (AARSTAD, J., 2015, 76). For example, the air-line industry,

the preferences of the air travellers usually change over time. Therefore, it is evident that development associated with service brand is required by the implementation of particular new brand associated values and also promises that are utilized in a firm's market related communication mix. Nonetheless, it is evident that in the current age, service branding is relevantly significant as the art of product branding and should be put into consideration due to the emerging economy that is dominated by service related enterprise. Researches should be directed to the art of service branding.

1.1.13. Branding of Travel Agency Services

The job associated with travel agencies is to get the best and most appropriate deals for its associated clients to get them to the best destinations possible (CHRISTOU, E., 2015, 99).With the associated proliferation in relation to the travel agents that are swarming the market, it is important for a single particular travel agency to set itself apart by ensuring it makes a difference in providing unique services (HA, H. ,2016, 70).Travel agency services are an important aspect in the daily lives of individuals and should be handled with care. In order to grow and develop their businesses, it is vital for such travel agents to identify and also draw on their key influencers. There are various steps that can be taken in such a case to ensure that they adequately and appropriately brand their services to ensure continuity and success in the associated businesses. First and foremost, it is vital to commence with the act of positioning (CHRISTOU, E., 2015, 99). Niche positioning is considered to be the foundation of powerful brand. They should ask themselves on what challenges are available and identify the various solutions that can be utilized to deal with the issue (HA, H., 2016, 70). In addition, they can look for unique opportunities that they can use in order to provide to their target public. In order to enhance an articulation of a niche, agents are required to begin by thinking about their relative ideal consumers (CHRISTOU, E., 2015, 99).

In addition, they should strive to create a compelling message that describes their value in a concise manner and also in a compelling way that is associated with resonating with the identified target public (CHRISTOU, E., 2015, 99). It is usually considered to be an elevator speech and is associated with having three components which are what one's organization does, the value it provides and the evidence. Furthermore, it is necessary

for such a travel agency to articulate their associated brand strategy. It can be effectively accomplished by defining one's expertise, functional value and experience (CHRISTOU, E., 2015, 99). Thereafter, it can be iced by using emotional connection in relation to the travel agency's likability, image, core values and trust factor. In addition, it should be noted for success to be attained, the organization in question should define its ecosystem in association with the influencers. Last but not least, it the steps of creation of a suitable and favourable plan that will ensure that the respective customers get delighted in the brand experience. It will help in creation of loyalty among the customers (HA, H., 2016, 70).

It should be noted that the best brands have a way of being memorable in the minds of the customers and hence such agents should strive in producing an impact in the minds of its customers. The fast-paced nature in relation to the aspect of the travel industry usually entails the art of bringing new and reliable concepts and encouraging innovation in order for survival to take place (CHRISTOU, E., 2015, 99). If you want to be the travel agent that exists in the minds of most consumers, it is necessary that you establish a good set of appropriate elements that are designed to counter competition. Branding in the current age associated with disruption and massive competition assists one keep aloft and it also ensure that one's business associated messages are convenient and get to the right audience in a consistent and effective manner (CHRISTOU, E., 2015, 99).

1.2. Chinese specifics

1.2.1. History of branding in China

According to Holt (2002), modern branding system focused mainly on development of new brands through psychological and scientific principles. However, brand development in China went through completely different path of the process. Due to the fact that it was originally not affected or related to capitalism, both the consumers and the government were included in the process of branding development. (ECKHARDS & BENGTSSON, 2010, 211) Therefore, brands in China have not developed as a commerce tool only. It also serves social purposes, such as indicating the worth of a family name, etc. (ECKHARDS & BENGTSSON, 2010, 213) Regarding to the history

of the branding development in China, it is necessary to take into account the difference in perception of branding basis itself – the understanding of brand. There are at least four different terms in Chinese which relate to the definition of brand, as it is understood in English. These terms are *biaoji*, *hao*, *paizi* and *pinpai*. *Biaoji* refers to the name of the producer or a group of merchants. *Hao* can be specified as a brand of a retail outlet with long history and a great reputation. These two terms are considered more as historical terms, while there are two more modern terms related to branding – *paizi* and *pinpai*. While *paizi* is an informal term used for brands of legal status, *pinpai* is its formal version, probably the closest version of English understanding of brand. (ECKHARDS & BENGTSSON, 2010, 30(3)) Considering the fact that we identify a brand as a signifier that identifies and differentiates a product, a company needs to identify a branding strategy to promote its products and services. In China, this process is deeply affected by its government, as it encourages the companies to pursue a strong branding strategy in case they are perceived as having a capable position and potential in the marketplace (ECKHARDS & BENGTSSON, 2010, 215).

From the historical point of view, Chinese society has been deeply influenced by Confucian philosophy, and consequently, all the marketing activities along with branding were looked down upon. Accordingly, brands were promoted by word of mouth in earlier times. In post-imperial times, these practices changed. Together with these changes, another aspects identifying this period of time in terms of branding are mainly antiforeign branding campaigns and national patriotism in brand preferences of the consumers (ECKHARDS & BENGTSSON, 2010, 217). Later in the history, especially later in the twentieth century, the perception of brands turned into an instrument which provided status and stratification. What is more, unlike in western understanding of brand, where it differentiates competing products in the marketplace, in China it has also additional value, as it is often used to represent family status and endorse traditional values (ECKHARDS & BENGTSSON, 2010, 219).

1.2.2. Chinese Outbound tourism

The potential of Chinese tourists in terms of international inbound tourism has been increasing recently. In many world's destinations, not excluding the UK, the number of

Chinese tourists has been significantly on rise (Visit Britain, 2016). This trend is encouraged by several aspects - namely personal wealthiness, rising wages and investments into transportation such as building new airports like in Beijing or Shanghai, and high-speed trains which enable uncomplicated transfer to the departure points.

When we take into consideration Chinese tourists, we need to be prepared for this specific segment of customers. The group on which the major interest is focused is created of holiday tourists. Nevertheless, other segments, such as Chinese international students and those who visit their family members and friends - who are also referred to as VFR-linked travellers (Visiting Family and Friends), are also essential.

When thinking of attracting Chinese tourists to the United Kingdom, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that specific touring patterns are typical for them. Usually, their journeys include multi-country tours during one holiday. Therefore, it is crucial to set up a tailor-made program which is attractive and variable enough for the tourists to stay in one country, in case of Wenhua Travel, the UK. Chinese tourists, especially on their first trip to Europe, tend to visit several countries located close to each other (ProtoView, 2017). Due to the fact that Chinese like to travel especially during the Chinese New Year and the summer holidays, the nature of the tourism is also highly seasonal.

1.2.3. Laws and regulations of outbound tourism of China

In terms of outbound tourism source markets, China has been the fastest growing one since 2012. Chinese tourists are also ranked as top spenders in international tourism and China has become the country with the most dominant force in international tourism.

Tourism itself is not seen as freely as it is in European countries, though. The system applied in China is created by a unique policy. There is a national tourism development strategy led by government, which means all the laws, regulations and policies concerning tourism and mobility of citizens are regulated by government. Furthermore, it was only in 1986, when tourism was declared as an economic activity by the government. Prior to this promulgation, tourism was regarded only as a part of foreign

affairs and the main scope of activities was created by political delegations. In 2001, when outbound tourism gained significance as a result of government policy support and rising household disposable income, State Council carried out three major legislations. They are composed of Regulation on Travel Agencies, Administrative Regulation on Tour Guides and Administrative Measures on Chinese Citizens' Outbound tourism. Therefore, the process of Chinese citizens travelling outside of their country is subjected to strict rules. Chinese tourists are only allowed to travel to a country approved by Chinese government. What is more, this is only possible by joining a package group organized by tour operators who are approved by both sending and receiving governments. Tour group which obtains the permission to travel abroad, will be received by inbound tour operators in the destination, which are approved by the government as well. Taking these rules into consideration, foreign travel agencies focusing on Chinese tourists are deriving benefits from this system, as tourist visas are granted only to people who are travelling in approved groups. Foreign destinations are selected based on various criteria, such as whether the country has a positive orientation towards China and its government in terms of politics, whether it is able to cater Chinese tourists or whether it has tourism resources attractive enough for the tourists. Therefore, the whole sector of tourism is strictly controlled by the government and thus for travel agencies it is significantly difficult to operate in this sector. This fact is even more perceptible on international level. Regarding to the possibility for setting up an international travel agency, the registered capital is stipulated on RMB 1,5 million, which is even RMB 1,2 million more than for setting up a local travel agency (ProtoView, 2017).

1.3. Summary of the theoretical part

The theoretical part of my thesis deals with the concept of brand and branding in general and I used Balgopal Singh and Catherine Kaputa's publications as the main source of different understandings of brand meanings and concepts with additional information provided from publications written by Seric Neven and Melissa Davis. To indicate and differentiate the components and characteristics of a brand, I again turned to resources written by Balgopal Singh, Ko Floor and Seric Neven. I will use their

descriptions of brand characteristics as a main pattern for determination of Wenhua Travel company brand's aspects in the following analytical part of my thesis.

Internal branding is not used in Wenhua Travel firm, nevertheless, I included this chapter in order to provide theoretical base for the future growth of the company, I drew the information from Balgopal Singh, Matthew Healey and Richard D. Leventhal's literature sources. As Wenhua Travel is a young company with short time of operation in the market, I also included a part dealing with building of a brand identity, relying mainly on David Aaker and Peter Doyle's expertise.

The positioning of the brand has a significant importance for the brand, therefore I explained the positioning strategy using primarily Henk Campher and Mary Jo Hatch & Majken Schultz's articles. Wenhua Travel is a young brand therefore its communication and the means of it are the key components towards building and maintenance of relationship with customers. I provided an extensive theoretical background using Balgopal Singh and Mary Jo Hatch & Majken Schultz literature.

Wenhua Travel is a travel agency, accordingly I needed to find resources for the specifics of branding for travel services, which I identified in Hugo Skaalsvik, Evangelos Christou and Hong-Youl Ha's publications. In the last three chapters, I focused specially on China and the particulars of branding and outbound tourism and its regulations typical for this country.

The branding is certainly an extensive topic, for this reason I selected only the very basic and essential assumptions to support my further analysis of Wenhua Travel company brand.

2. ANALYTICAL PART

2.1. About the company

Travel agency Wenhua Travel Ltd. is a young company set up in 2016 by Ian Mowbray-Williams. It is based in the United Kingdom and specializes in offering tailor-made holidays for citizens of People's Republic of China who want to visit the United Kingdom and Ireland. Its unique selling proposition is tailor made holidays created by UK country specialists with first-hand experience of the product they are selling. The product Wenhua Travel sells is exclusive for high-end Chinese clientele who wishes to savour flexible itinerary. The company offers holidays and trips which are custom made to suit the tourist individually, with locations and accommodation which are chosen based on desire of the customer. The company differentiates from other UK based travel agencies with focus on Chinese clientele by first-hand knowledge from specialists who are passionate about UK, by complete flexibility with required itinerary and tailor-made offers, honest advice based on company's opinions of hotels and places company employees seen personally, financial security considering the usage of PTS trust account protection and finally the ability to cater wide range of budgets.

2.2. Essential information

Certificate of Incorporation of a private limited company available from the register of Companies House features following public information about the company:

Company name: Wenhua Travel Limited
Category: Private Limited Company
Incorporation date: 28.1.2016
Registered address: Homeland St. Johns Road

Oakley

Basingstoke

Hampshire

England

RG23 7JN

Country of origin: United Kingdom

Office registration number: 09975568

Managing director: Ian Mowbray-williams

Statement of capital: GBP 1

(Companies House, 2017)

2.3. Branding strategy of a company

This part deals with the branding strategy and brand aspects of Wenhua Travel company, such as visual features, positioning or communication of the brand. This information was obtained from the owner of the company and company materials.

2.3.1. Aspects of Wenhua Travel brand

NAME OF THE BRAND

The name of the brand was chosen in order to capture exactly what the company provides. It is composed of two words, one in Chinese and one in English language. Wenhua, "文化", means culture in Mandarin. Therefore, the name formulates the product - journeys with cultural experience.

LOGO

Logo of the company consists of its name in English and Chinese phrase which further explains the nature of the company. The phrase is "文化英伦旅行社", which in translation means "Wenhua - English London travel agency". The colour of the English part is beige, the Mandarin part is red.

Picture 1:Wenhua Travel's logo

(source: www.wenhuatravel.cn)

VISUAL SIDE

Wenhua Travel uses unified colour style consisting of beige background and red aspects. This is clearly visible on their logo and website as well as on various marketing products such as flyers and brochures.

2.3.2. Benefits of the brand

First-hand knowledge from specialists who are passionate about the UK

To make sure the company offers high quality services with honest advice based on opinions of hotels and places they have seen, its employees get first-hand knowledge of the journeys and locations. Hence, they obtain an experience on their own and are better prepared to cater for needs of their customers.

Tailor made holidays

The trips are tailor made in order to satisfy discerning travellers who wish to travel around the UK and Ireland with their own requirements. The itinerary is completely flexible and the possibility to cater for a wide range of budgets enables the company to suit each client individually.

Unique product

Wenhua Travel offers a wide range of unique products in its portfolio, such as local experiences, i.e. traditional food like fish and chips in a restaurant, drink at a local pub, etc., various locations and activities such as hot air balloon ride in Bath and Bristol, the

longest zip line in Europe, steam train journeys or sports packages. It also offers locations which are usually difficult to reach by a solo traveller due to lack of transportation services on the place.

Financial security

Wenhua Travel uses Protected Travel Services account protection. Usage of this secure method enables customers to pay but their "money is held in a secure account which is administered by independent trustees" (Protected Travel Services, 2017).

English Mandarin Speaking Guides

The company is focused on Chinese tourists in particular, therefore it needs to provide tours with Mandarin speaking guide who will suit the need of the customers. The guide is fluent in both Mandarin and English to be able to communicate in the UK and with the tourists.

2.3.3. Positioning of the company

TARGET GROUP

The company's target group is created by Chinese travellers who fulfil certain traits. Typical client is a wealthy, educated and well-travelled person who typically has specific interests, such as culture, history, sport, etc. Wenhua Travel aims to sell their products especially to clients who are 35-50 years old and come from 1st tier cities in China, like Beijing, Shanghai or Guangzhou. The emphasis lays on attracting the high-end clientele which can afford tailor made trips with character accommodation and experiences rather than prepared packages.

TARGET PLACE

The primary market of the company is the People's Republic of China. However, the company also has student ambassador scheme functioning in the UK therefore it targets potential customers in China by their Chinese friends and relatives studying or living in the UK as well.

DIFFERENTIATION FROM THE COMPETITION

Wenhua Travel managed to find a market niche differentiating it from its competitors in providing the tailor-made holiday. This unique service offered in the UK for Chinese tourists, as well as specific local experiences are further strengthening the competitiveness of the company.

REASONS FOR PURCHASE

The fundamental reason to purchase from the company is the uniqueness of offered services and its high quality, along with high level service and value for money. Once the client express interest of the service, individual attention is provided by the company from same specialist from start to finish and specialists get rated on their service. Opinions of clients are highly valuated, there are pre- and post- trip calls and questionnaires. All the information obtained is used for further improvement of the service.

2.3.4. Communication of the brand

WEBSITE

The problem to find somebody to operate during daylight hours in China, when most enquiries are posted, because of the time zone difference.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

The company uses Facebook and Twitter for communication in the western world. However, as primary target clients of Wenhua Travel are Chinese travellers, it is necessary to take into account they come from a country where some social media, such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram are forbidden. Therefore, the company uses widely popular social media in China - WeChat. Nonetheless, there are multiple obstacles when using Chinese social media for setting an official profile for a foreign business. Certainly, this can be substituted by setting a personal profile, however it will not facilitate all the functions and possibilities as the business profile.

STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Wenhua Travel has a student ambassador scheme which helps them to promote their brand. The company hires a Chinese Mandarin speaking student from selected universities across the UK. Their work is commission based per booking. Student ambassadors are also entitled to a discount on holidays for their family and friends. Their tasks comprise various range of activities, such as handing out flyers around communal areas where Chinese students tend to be present frequently, attending events organised by Chinese societies at their university to get in touch and interact with Chinese students and raise awareness of the company among them, promote Wenhua Travel on social media, run prize draw for Chinese students to enter in exchange for their contact details or organize a focus group which manager of the company can attend to discuss with students what would encourage them to book with the company. Furthermore, it is advisable to contact local Chinese organisations in the city and attend events. This way, student ambassador is always available for the Chinese students at local university to help them with their enquiries and spread the world about Wenhua Travel. The team of student ambassadors is further encouraged in their activities by organised meetings with the manager where they can share their experiences and success stories.

SPONSOR EVENT

The company plans to sponsor event organised by Chinese society at selected university approximately once every three months.

2.4. Market research

Market research for the company Wenhua Travel was focused on detection of Chinese citizens' general interest in travelling to the Great Britain, on discovery of how this country is perceived as a destination for holiday abroad, and on brand development of the company. Wenhua Travel is a young company with little history of operation in tourism sector, therefore has many opportunities to evolve and make further progress in future. Consequently, the aim of the survey created was to find out about possibilities

for the future and potential customers' perception of the destination and brand aspects of the company Wenhua Travel.

2.4.1. Research method

The method used for the marketing research was a questionnaire containing three main sections. The purpose of the first part was to obtain a general information about the responder, such as gender, age and the province of China they originally come from. The second section was focused at travelling interest of the interviewee, trying to find out general opinions and interests about the Great Britain, what kind of holiday they prefer, how much would they spend or how long would they stay. The last section was aimed at branding aspects of Wenhua Travel, such as logo or name, trying to find out respondents' opinions. Furthermore, another objective of this part was to determine what criteria related to travelling and travel agnecies the interviewees consider important. In summary, the questionnaire consists of 16 questions, including closed, opened and multiple-choice questions.

2.4.2. Market research process

The market research was carried out the 28th of June 2017, by handing out questionnaires translated to Chinese language to students of Xiamen University in Xiamen, Fujian province in China. In the end, 148 filled questionnaires were gathered. The data obtained were analysed in the following section.

2.4.3. Market research outcomes

The market research outcomes were translated back to English, put into electronic form, analysed, and interpreted question by question as follows.
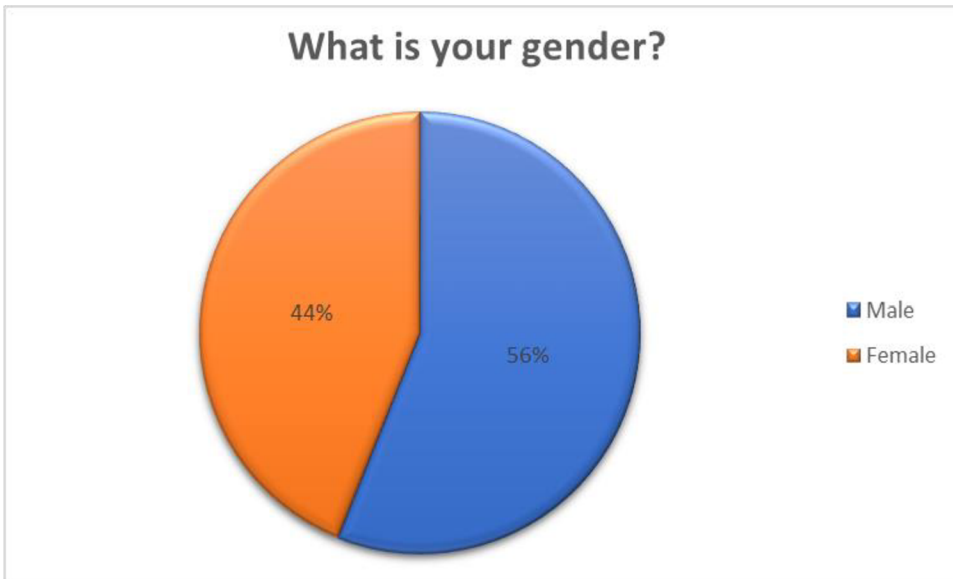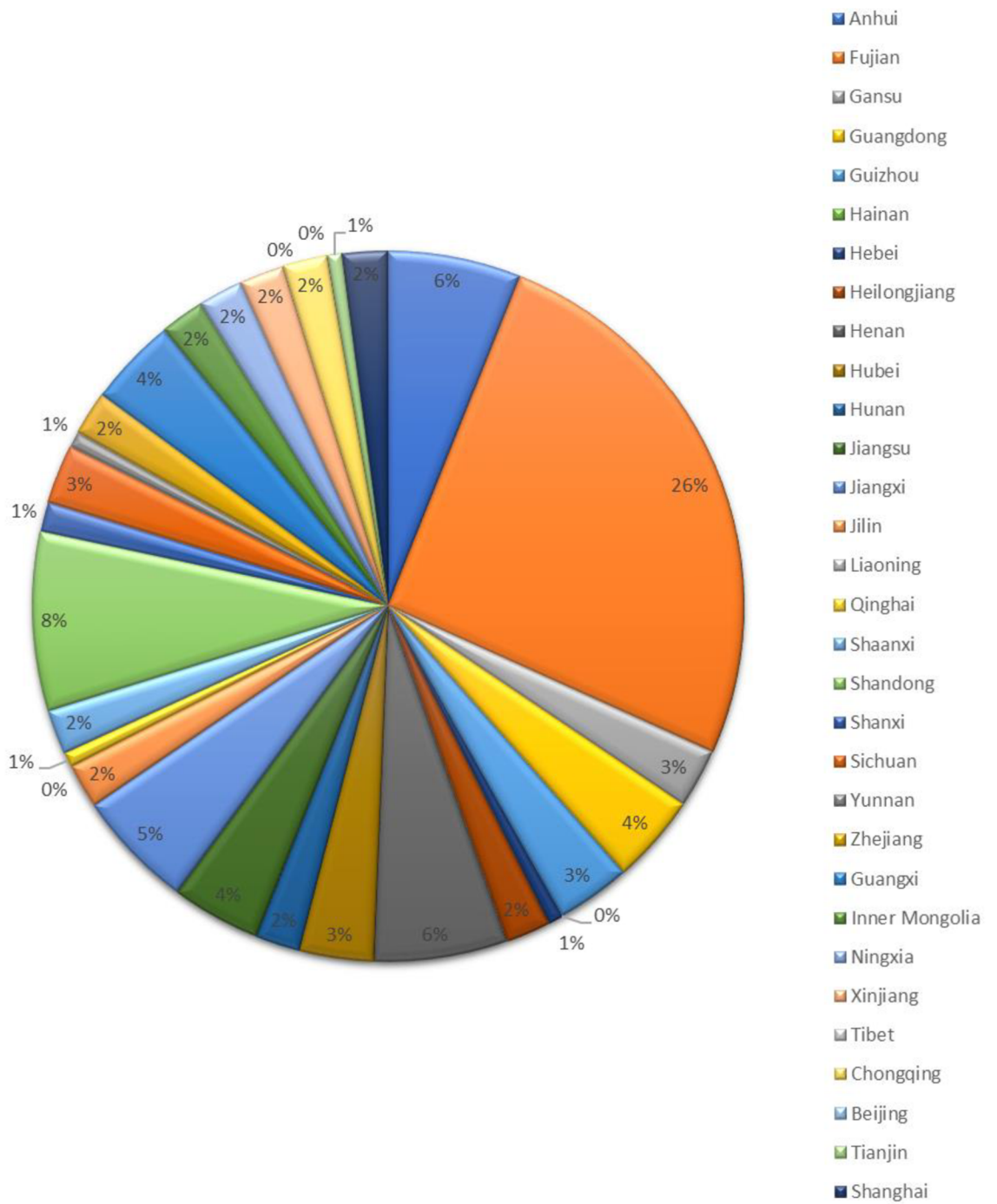
Graph 1: Gender

The first section starts with a question: "What is your gender?" Out of 148 respondents, 83 were men, creating 56% of the interviewees and 65 women, creating 44%.
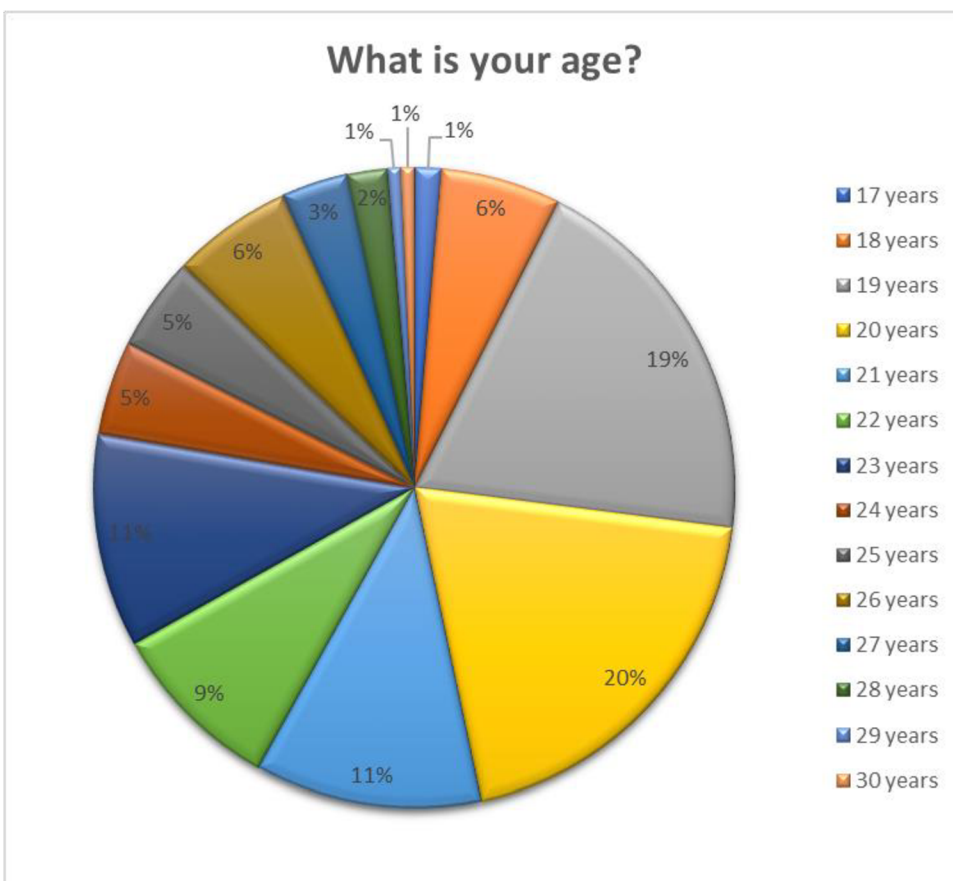

Graph 2: Age

The next question was draft to ask the subjects about their age. The youngest answerer was 17 years old, the oldest 30 years old. 40 people belonged to the -teen age group, consisting of 17, 18 and 19 years old interviewees. This age group created 27% of the total number. The next age group, from 20-24 years old, contained 82 responses, which is 55,4%, hence the largest age group. The last age group consisted of people older than 25 years, counting 26 answerers, together 17,6%. According to (Visit Britain, 2017), half of half of Chinese visitors coming to travel across the Great Britain in 2015 were in 25-44 age group, making 17,6% of this questionnaire respondents the target group for the company and 55,4% of the respondents in the age group soon entering the targeted age group. Out of 26 interviewees from the targeted age group, 19 were males and 7 females.

Which province do you come from?

Legend:
- Anhui
- Fujian
- Gansu
- Guangdong
- Guizhou
- Hainan
- Hebei
- Heilongjiang
- Henan
- Hubei
- Hunan
- Jiangsu
- Jiangxi
- Jilin
- Liaoning
- Qinghai
- Shaanxi
- Shandong
- Shanxi
- Sichuan
- Yunnan
- Zhejiang
- Guangxi
- Inner Mongolia
- Ningxia
- Xinjiang
- Tibet
- Chongqing
- Beijing
- Tianjin
- Shanghai

Graph 3: Chinese province

The third question's aim was to find out which China province the interviewees come from. 38, hence one quarter of the respondents come from Fujian province, which is also the place where the market survey was carried out. The next most numerous group was created by answerers from Shandong, counting 12 people, creating 8,1%. The third and fourth most numerous groups came from Anhui and Henan, both separately counting 9 people, hence 6,1% of the total number of the answerers.
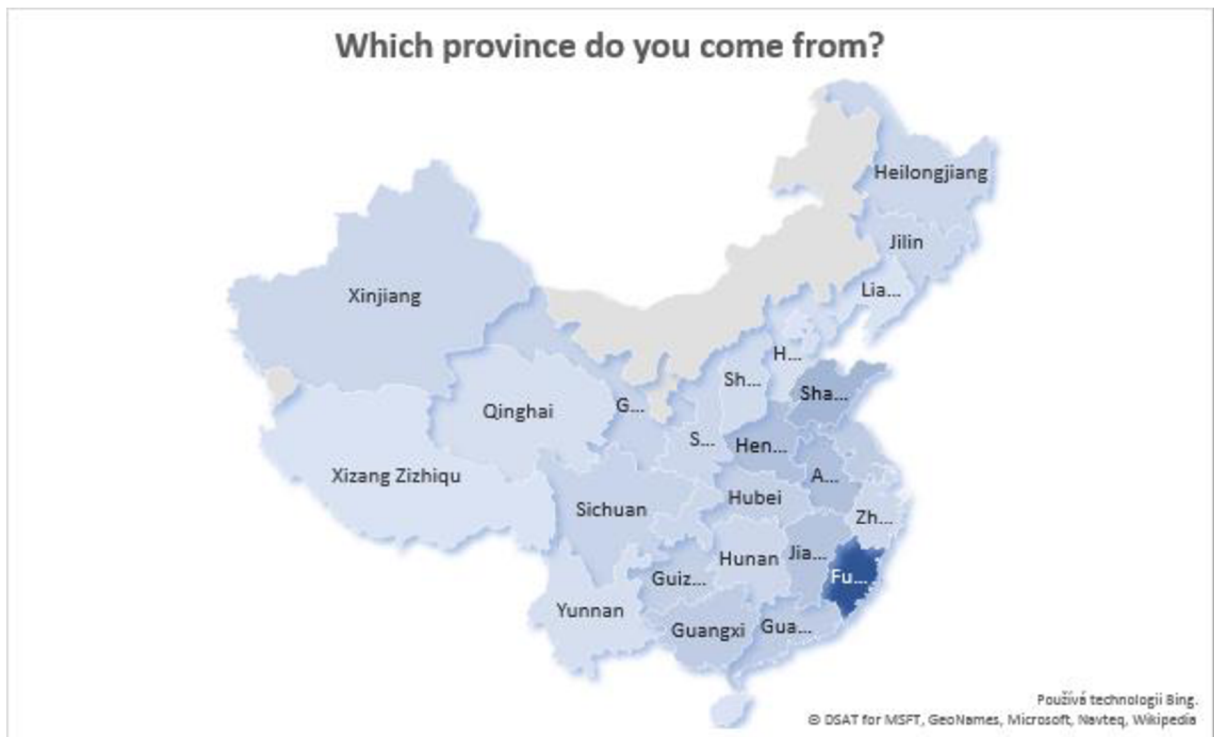
Graph 4: China provinces map

The map shows provinces in China coloured according to the number of questionnaire's respondents. The darkest colour represents province with the largest amount of answerers.
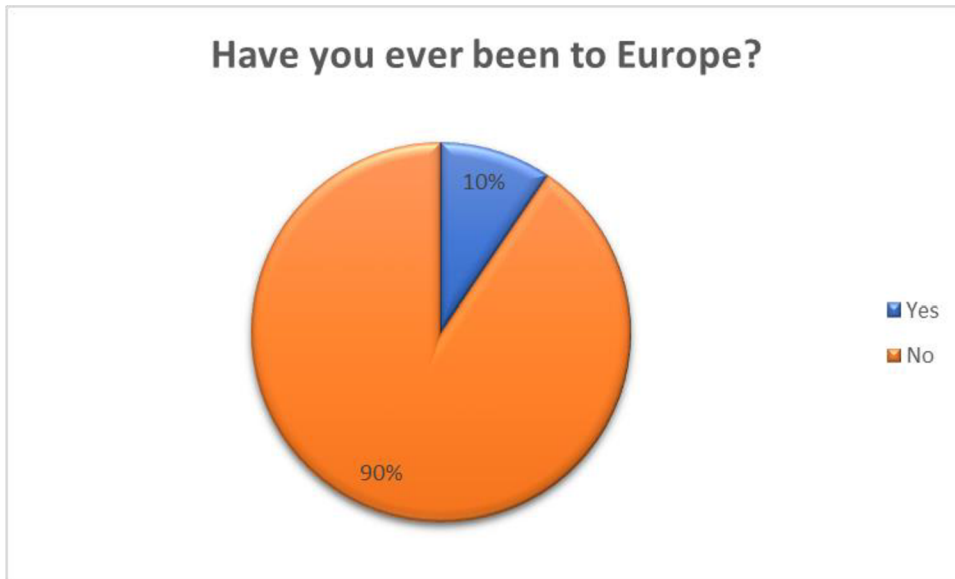
Graph 5: Visits to Europe

The following set of questions was designed to find out more about travelling interests of the interviewees. The first question, "Have you ever been to Europe?" had 14 positive answers, creating 10% and 133 negative answers, hence 90% of the answerers have never visited Europe in their lives.
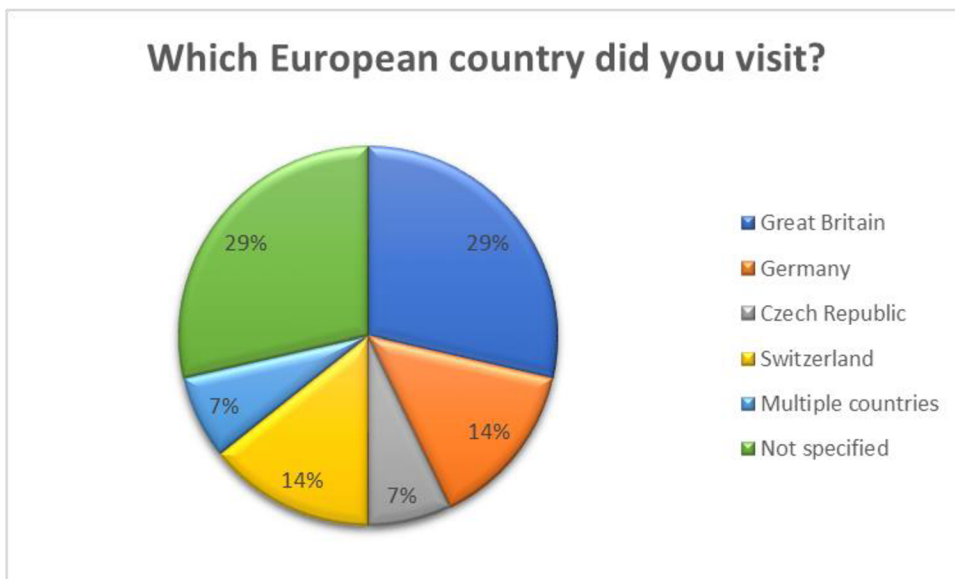
Graph 6: Visits to European countries

Out of the 10% of respondents who visited Europe, most of them visited the Great Britain, counting 29% of the visitors, following countries of the visit were Germany, Switzerland and the Czech Republic. 7% of the answerers have visited multiple

countries, one of them even 22 European countries. 29% of the respondents also decided not to specify their answers further.
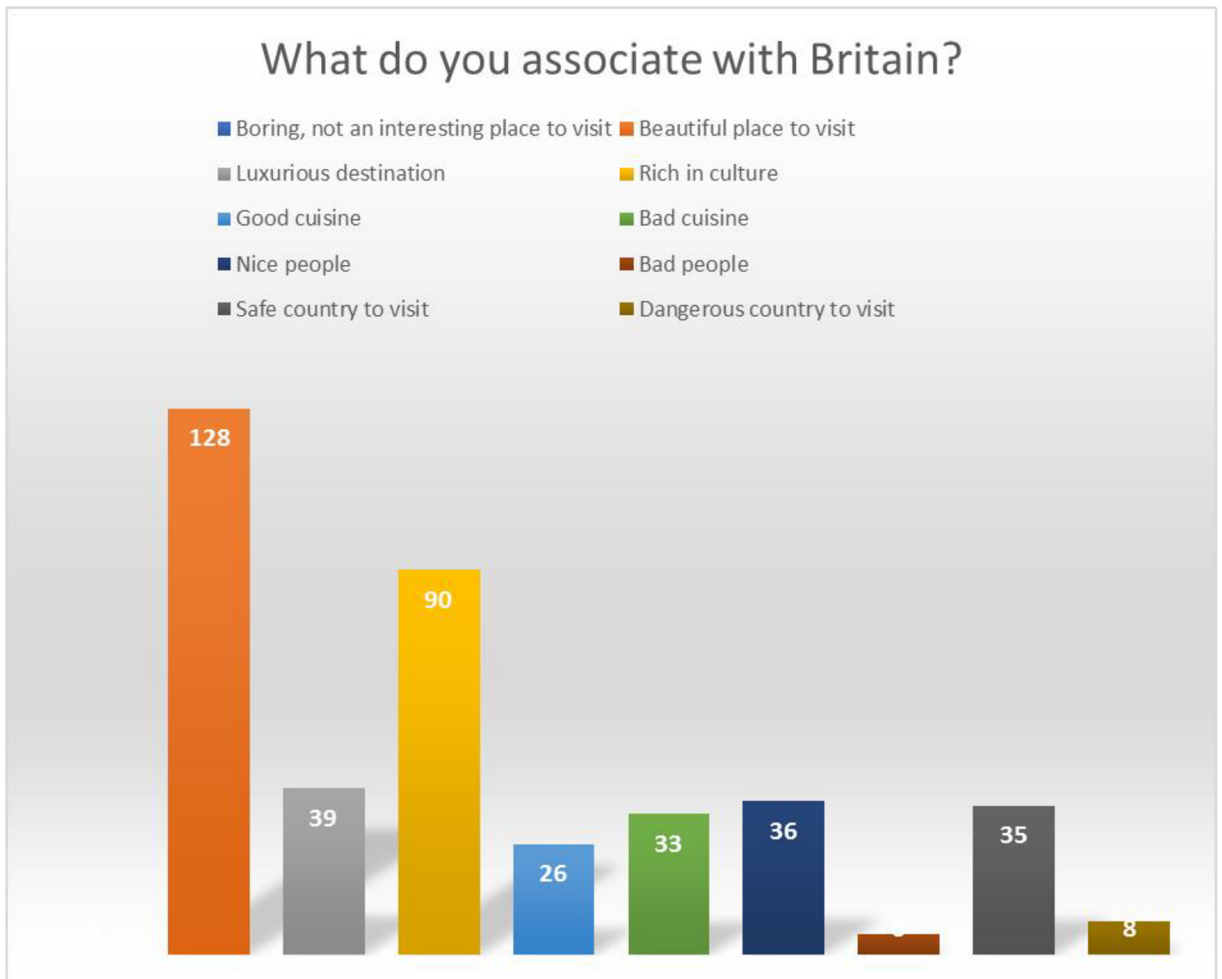
Graph 7: Associations with Britain

The second question of the set was "What do you associate with Britain?", enabling the interviewees to choose multiple answers. The most popular association was that Britain is considered as a "Beautiful place to visit", with 128 people, hence 86,5% of the respondents. The second most ticked answer was that Britain is "Rich in culture", with 90 responses, creating 60,8% of the total number. The third question with the most votes sounded "Luxurious destination". 25,4%, therefore 39 respondents agree with this statement. Other positive assumptions about Britain, such as "Good cuisine", "Nice people" and "Safe country to visit", were mentioned with the same order by 17,6%, 24,3% and 23,6% of the answerers. Regarding to the negative statements, the assumption that Britain has a "Bad cuisine", is the leading claim with the negative

characteristics, with 33 people assuming this opinion, thence 22,3%. That is 4,7% more respondents than those considering British cuisine as tasty. The rest of the negative assumptions, such as "Bad people" and "Dangerous country to visit", were chosen by 3,4% and 5,4%. With respect to the "Boring, not an interesting place to visit" claim, none of the respondents chose it. In the end of the multiple choice there was an open field for the answerers to add their other associations. "Football" was mention by two of the respondents. Other answers were related to the culture, such as "Museums", "Fish and chips", "Accent", "Gentlemen", "Impressive architecture" and "Expensive brands". The answers which can be considered neither positive, neither negative, were "There is more and more Muslims" and "They are too liberal and openminded". With reference to negative comments, there was "Recently it is getting more and more dangerous" and one of the answerers described Britain as a "Rotten country".
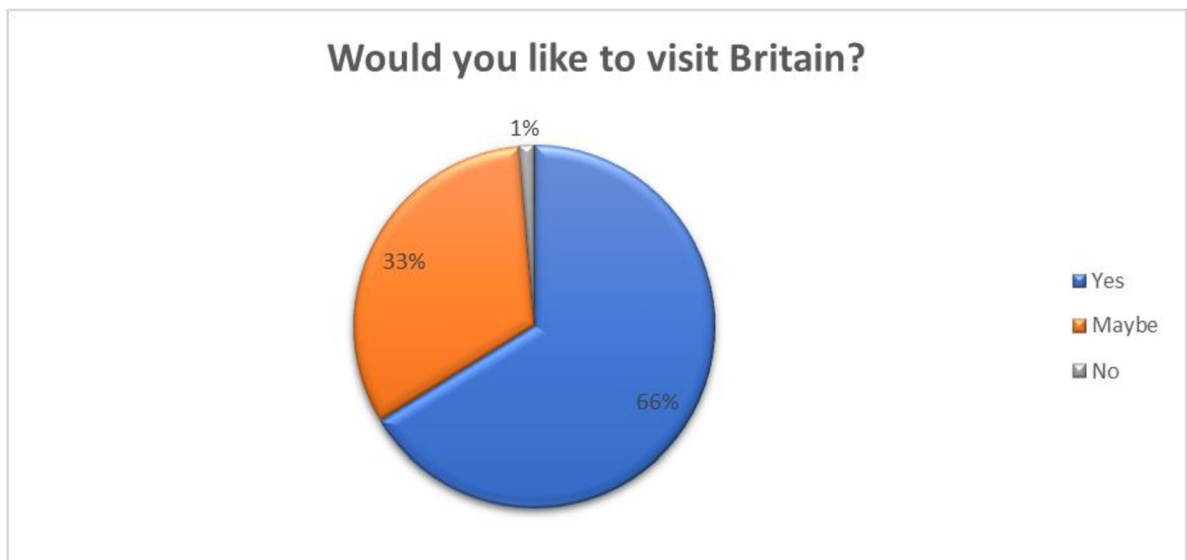
Graph 8: Britain visit interest

The following question, "Would you like to visit Britain?" counted 98 (66%) positive answers, 48 (33%) answers claiming the answerer was not sure or have not decided yet and only 2 respondents would not like to visit Britain, creating 1% of the interviewees.
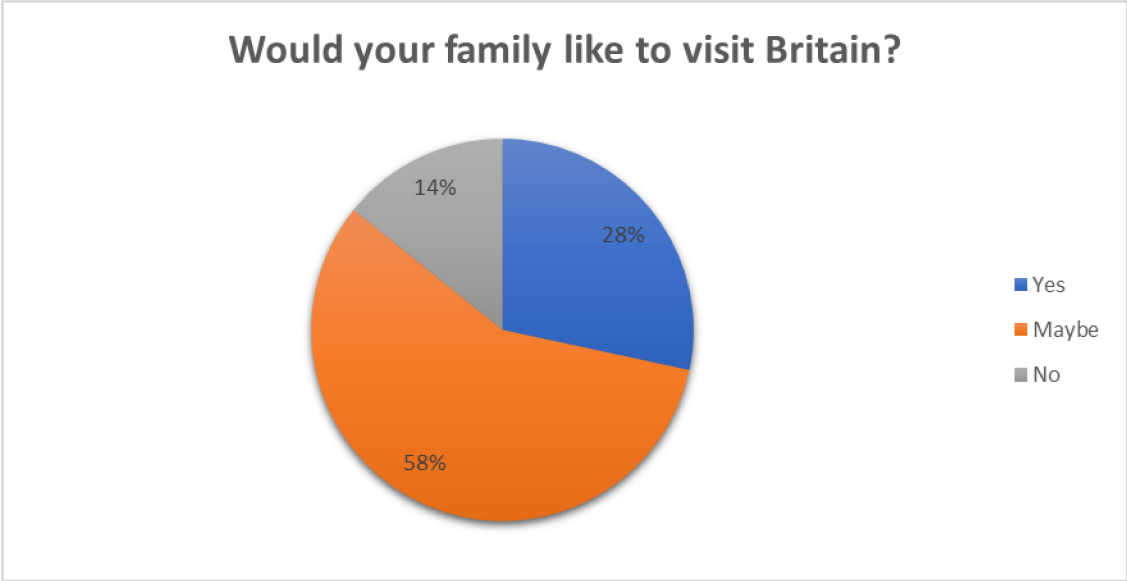
**Graph 9: Britain visit extended interest**

With regards to respondents, the author also wanted to know their families' general interested in going to Britain. The positive answer was 38% lower than when asking only the respondents. 42, hence 28% of the interviewees replied that their family would like to visit Britain, 85 (58%) answerers as "Maybe" and 21 (14%) would not visit.

Graph 10: Holiday aim in Great Britain

The next question's aim was to find out the aim of answerers' holiday to the Great Britain. The leading answer was "Cultural holiday" with 75 (50,7%) answers, followed closely by "Relaxing" purpose with 73 (49,3%) answers. "Walking and nature" was chosen by 56 (37,8%) answerers. "Beach holiday" and "Eco-tourism" both separately were ticked by 43 (29%) respondents and "Honeymoon" by 40 (27%) of them. "Festival" purposes were mentioned by 29 (19,6%) answerers. The rest of the questions received only minor number of interviewees, with "Active holiday" by 15 (10,1%), "Nightlife" by 10 (6,8%), "Spiritual holiday" by 4 (2,7%), "Family visit" by 2 (1,35%) and "Diving" by a single one respondent.
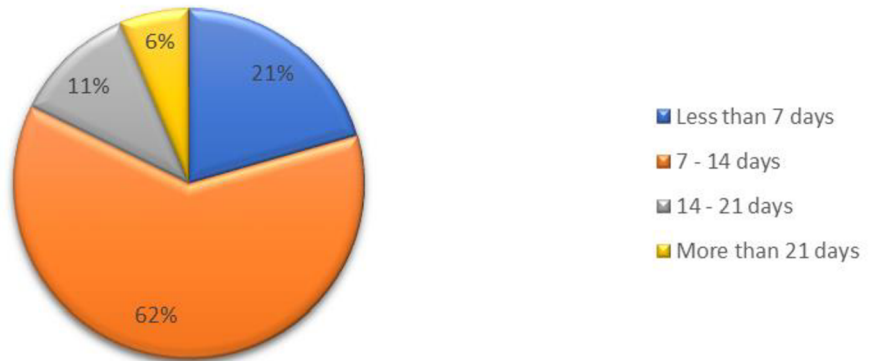
Graph 11: Holiday length assumptions

"How long would you spend if going on holiday to the Great Britain?" was a question offering 4 answers. 141 out of 148 respondents answered this question. Majority of respondents, 87 (62%) out of the total number, answered that they would spend 7-14 days on holiday in Great Britain. 29 (21%) of the answerers would spend less than 7 days, 16 (11%) would spend between two and three weeks and only 9 (6%) would plan their holidays in Britain for more than 21 days.
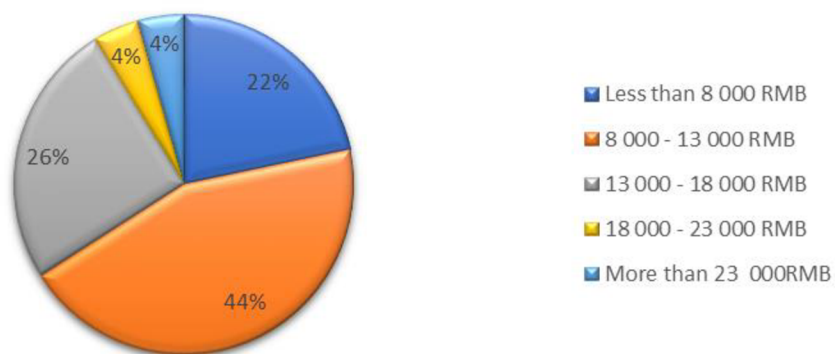

Graph 12: Holiday budget

It is necessary to count the budget for holiday in advance, therefore the following question was "What would be your desired budget for the trip to the Great Britain per person per week?" There were 138 respondents, who decided to answer this question. 61 (44%) respondents would spend 8000-13000 RMB, which is equivalent of approximately 900-1500 GBP range. 35 (26%) answerers would be willing to spend 13000-18000 RMB (1500-2000 GBP) per week of their holiday in Great Britain. Less than 8000 RMB (900 GBP) is considered as an affordable amount for 30 (22%) of the interviewees and for both 18000-23000 RMB (2000-2600 GBP) and more than 23 RMB (2600 GBP) expenditure were 6 people willing to pay this sum of money for their holiday.
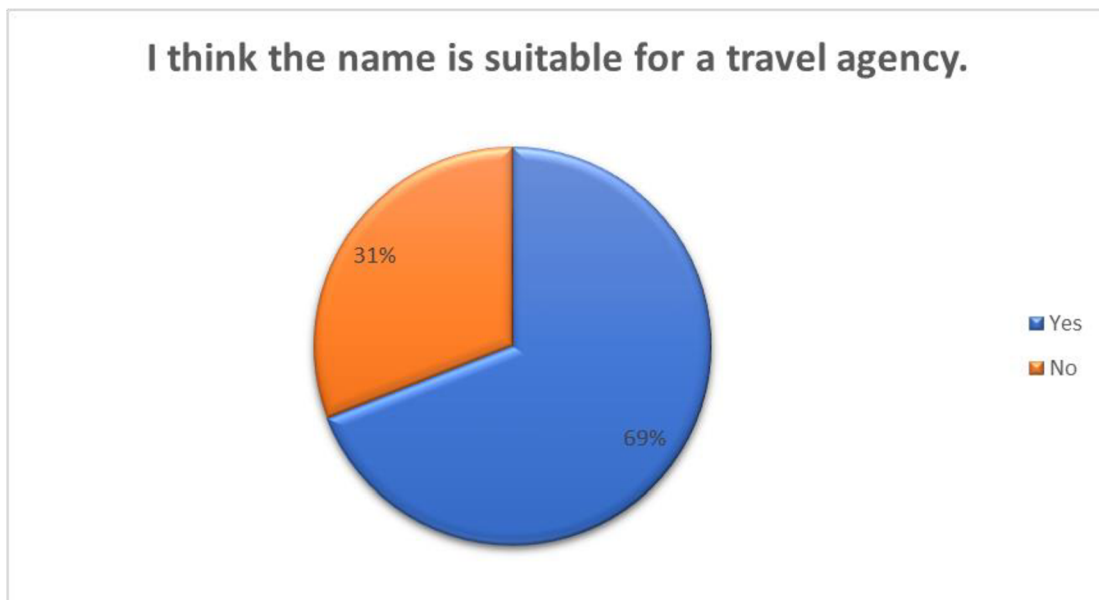
Graph 13: Opinion on the name

The third and last set of questions was aimed at travel agency criteria and opinions of Wenhua Travel. The first question was stated as "What is your perception of "Wenhua Travel" as a name for a travel agency?" It is necessary to point out that in Chinese translation of this questionnaire, which was handed to the respondents, the name of the travel agency was written in its Chinese name, which is "文化英伦旅行社". For the translation, this can be explained in parts as "文化" the culture, "英" for abbreviation of Britain, "伦" for abbreviation of London or human relationship and "旅行社" for a travel agency. The answers for this question were separated into two subsequent statements with "Yes" and "No" answer options. The first subsequent statement was "I

think the name is suitable for a travel agency." 139 respondents expressed their opinions on this statement, 96 (69%) agreeing that this is a suitable name, 43 (31%) thinking it is not.

It evokes positive feelings in me.

18%

82%

- Yes
- No
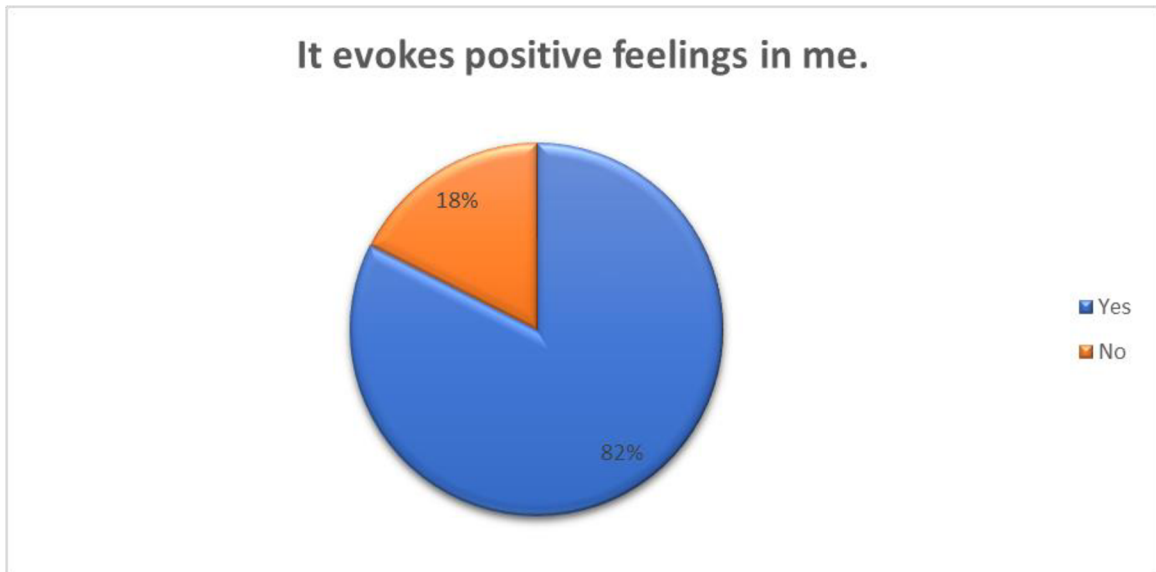
Graph 14: Opinion on feelings evoked

The second subsequent answer was "It evokes positive feelings in me." There were 137 answerers ticking this question, with 113 (82%) claiming this name does evoke positive feeling in them and 24 (18%) stating it does not.

The second question of the set, "What is your perception of this logo?" was divided into three subsequent statements with closed answers "Yes" or "No". In the end, respondents were given a blank space to express their opinions and suggestions for a change. Following the question, a picture of logo was given.

Interesting logo, I would not change anything.

Yes
No
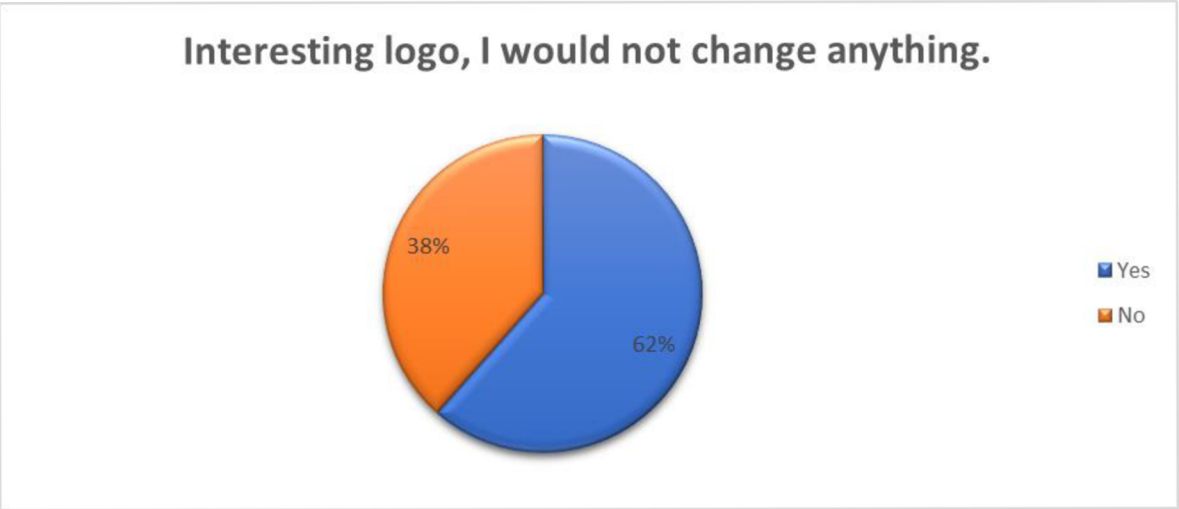
Graph 15: Opinion on logo

The first statement claimed, "Interesting logo, I would not change anything." 143 out of 148 people responded to this statement, 88 (62%) "Yes", 55 (38%) of them "No".

I like the colours of the logo.

Yes
No

Graph 16: Opinion on logo colours

"I like the colours of the logo" was a second statement which was answered by 147 respondents, where 66 (46%) of them expressed they liked the colours and 77 (54%) of them disliked it.
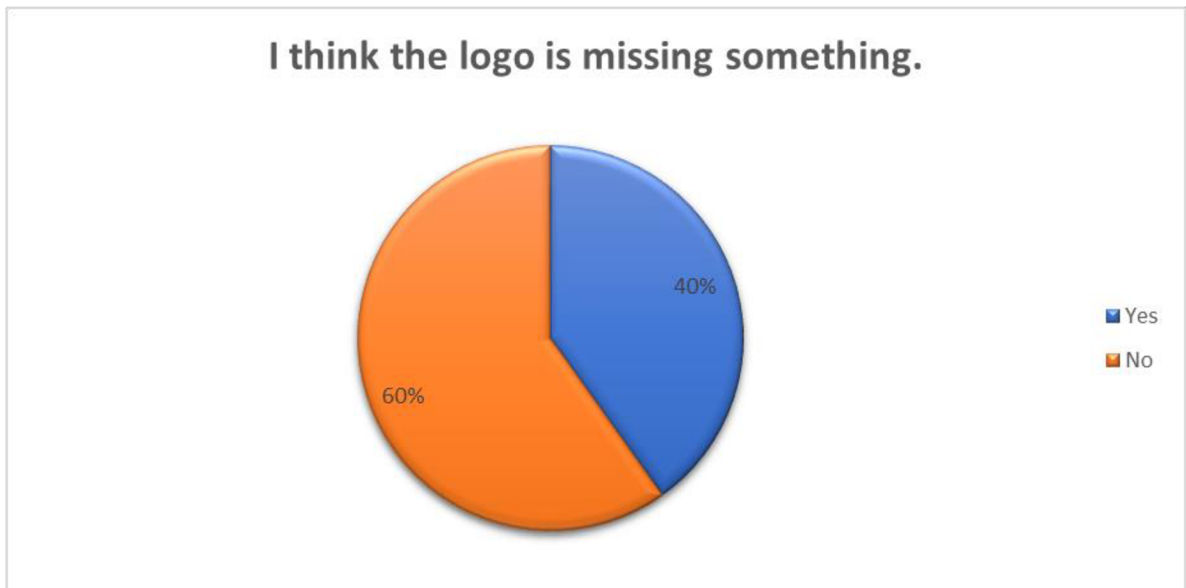
Graph 17: Opinion on logo design

The last statement of the set was "I think the logo is missing something." 142 respondents were willing to disclose their opinions about the logo, 57 (40%) claiming they think the logo is missing something, 85 (60%) of them stating it is not missing anything. In the blank field following the set of statements, the respondents were encouraged to suggest what would they change about the logo in case they marked in the previous question that they think the logo is missing something. 3 of them think the logo is too simple, formulating their opinions as "Too simple", or "It is too simple, it needs to be more customized". On the other hand, there were respondents who thought the exact opposite, nevertheless mainly about the written part of the logo. "Too complicated" and "It is too complicated for reading" were their opinions. 8 respondents declared they would change the design, "I would add a pattern or a picture", "Adding a picture or design", "Adding some specialty, for example a picture", and "It needs a design or a picture". Furthermore, 4 answerers think that lacks design in terms of the appearance of the characters. The opinions included "The characters should be more decorative", "The characters need more design", "The characters need to be personalized more", and "It is very little artsy and decorative". With regards to the written part, there were opinions such as "I would welcome a better wording, it is way too clumsy", "The Chinese characters used in the name are not suitable", "I would use more characters and less Latin alphabet", "When referring to the Great Britain, it should be used the complete 英国 word, not just 英". The other opinions included "It should

be something more special", "It is really difficult to pronounce, it should be more accurate", "I would emphasize the "英伦" part, "When using Wenhua in the English part of the logo, just use culture, do not translate it to Wenhua", "It should promote the destination more in the name", "The colour should be changed, for example to blue".

The last question was "When searching for a holiday abroad with travel agency, how important is the following criteria for you when choosing a travel agency?" with a chart containing the aspects in the left side and the ranking of importance on the top of the chart. The respondents had an option to mark the aspect as "Very unimportant", "Somewhat unimportant", Neither unimportant nor important", "Somewhat important" and "Very important" according to their opinions.


Graph 18: Price

The first aspect was price. There were 144 answerers marking this aspect, for 88 (59,5%) of the respondents, price is somewhat important, for 36 (24,3%) of them it is very important.
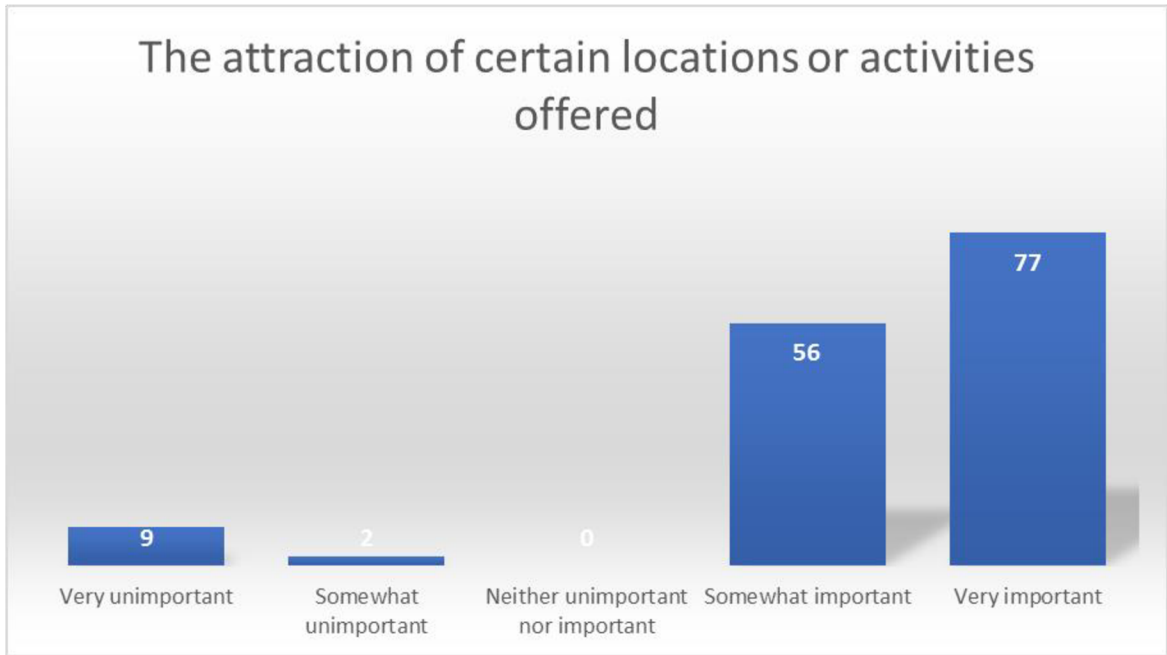
**Graph 19: Attraction of destinations and activities**

The attraction of certain locations or activities offered by a travel agency was a second aspect, answered by 144 interviewees. 77 (52%) think that it is a very important aspect and 56 (37,8%) claim it is a somewhat important one.
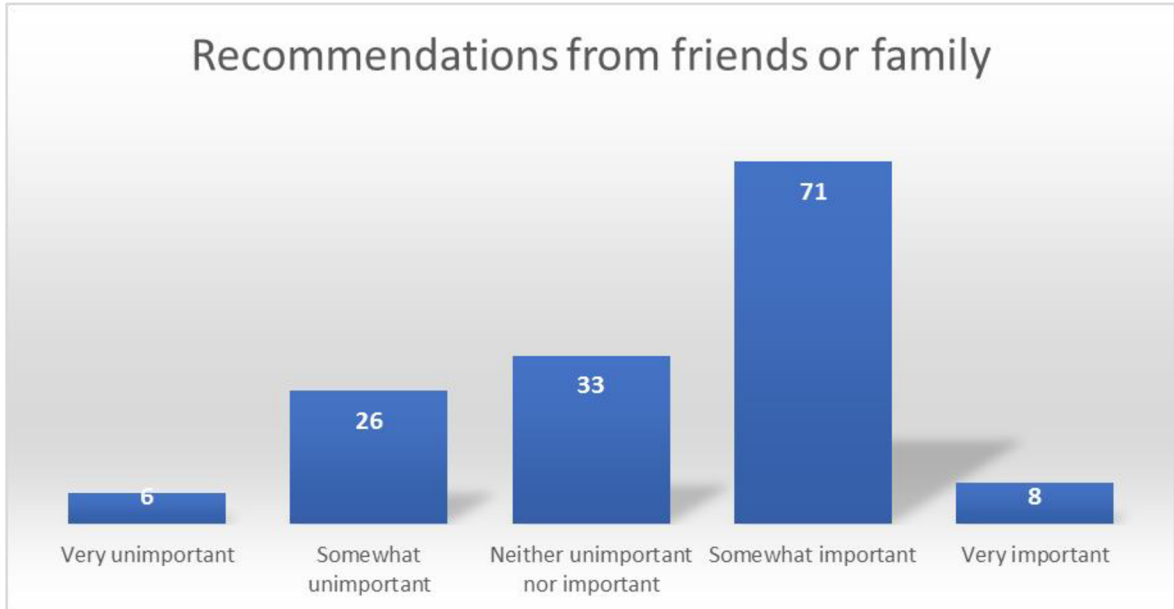

Graph 20: Recommendations

The third aspect was aimed to determine the role of recommendations from friends or family. There were 144 people filling this part. 71 (48%) of the respondents claimed it

is somewhat important factor, 33 (22,3%) think it is neither unimportant nor important criteria and 26 (17,6%) think this is somewhat unimportant.
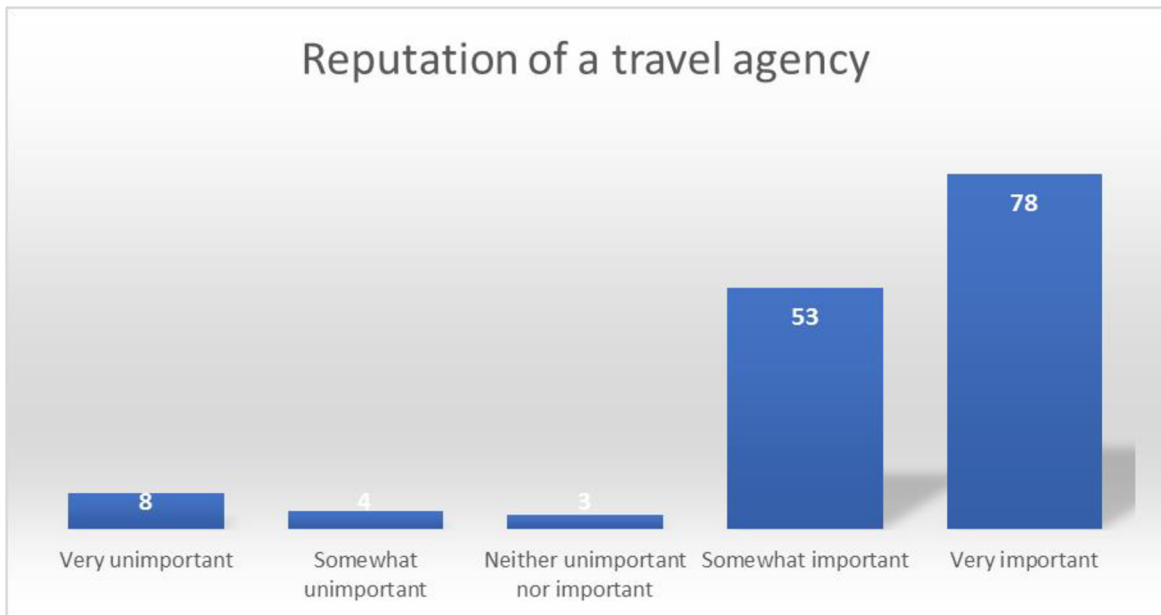

Graph 21: Travel agency reputation

The reputation of a travel agency was another criteria to be completed. 78 (52,7%) of the respondents see this factor as a very important one, 53 (36,8%) perceive it as a somewhat important aspect.
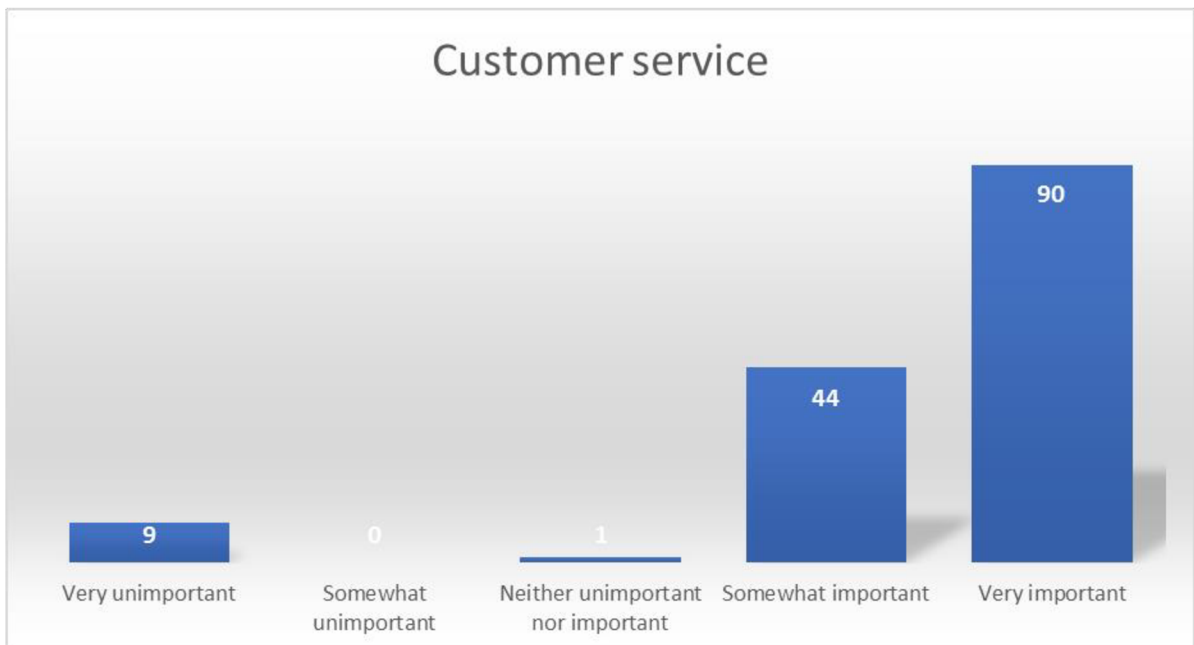
Graph 22: Customer service

The customer service was seen as a very important by majority – 90 (64,3%) of the interviewees out of 144. 44 (29,7%) claimed this factor is somewhat important for them.
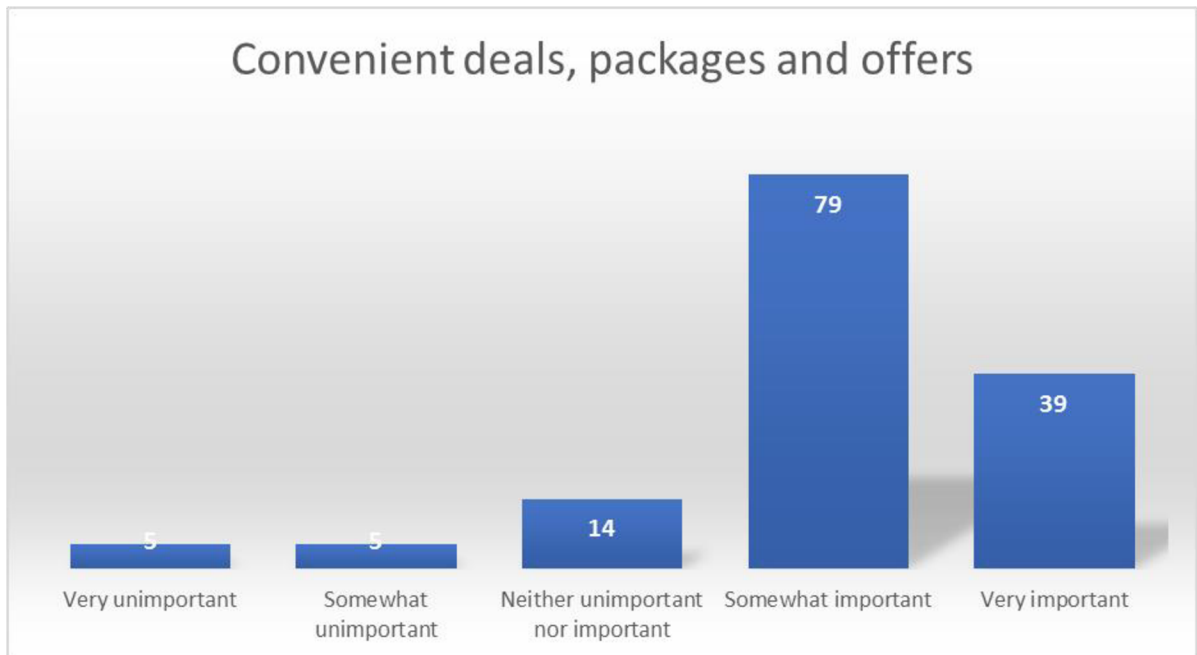
Graph 23: Convenient deals

The last criteria in the set to be filled in was convenient deals, packages and offers. There were 142 answerers who ticked this factor. 79 (55,6%) of the respondents think this is somewhat important, it is very important for 39 (27,5%) of them and for 14 (9,9%) it is neither unimportant nor important factor.

In the last field, respondents were encouraged to fill in their own criteria which they consider significant. Three times there was "The safety which the travel agency can ensure, is extremely important" factor mentioned.

2.4.4. Survey evaluation

The marketing research results imply that the area in which Wenhua Travel operates, is a promising market, notwithstanding, there are areas where the company still has opportunities to make certain amendments and improve the way its potential clients perceive it. The following part consists of market research results based on answers' outcomes interconnected in order to provide further explanation in the broader spectrum.

TRAVELLING INTEREST

90% of the respondents have never been to any European country, which means that Europe is not a very frequent holiday destination for Chinese. However, out of 10% of the respondents who have been to Europe, only 1 of them would not come back for holiday, and only 3 respondents claimed that their families would not be interested in holiday in Great Britain. Out of those, who have visited Europe before, 4 of them were in Great Britain and all of them would like to come back. This means that most of those who already have an experience in visiting Europe, are still interested in coming back. The general interest in coming to Great Britain for holiday expressed 66% of the total number of respondents, meaning that these is a market to target in People's Republic of China in terms of holiday to Great Britain. According to 2016 Nations Brand Index Survey, the perception by Chinse citizens towards Britain is very positive and Britain is associated mainly with museums. These associations were confirmed in my survey, as the associations with Britain were mainly positive, as most respondents perceive Britain as a beautiful, luxurious destination, rich in culture. Nonetheless, the opinions about local food are not perceived pleasantly, as 22,3% of answerers consider the food bad. This also resonates with the 2016 Nations Brand Index Survey, where the results show the importance of culture differences and the fact that there is a strong preference for Chinese and spicy food. Another unanimity is the key motivators for holiday in Britain, which mention "enjoy the beauty of the landscape" and "feel connected to the nature" in the Nations Brand Index Survey (VisitBritain, 2017), and in my survey, the culture, relaxation and nature are the most mentioned reasons to travel to Britain, closely followed by interest in beach, eco-tourism and honeymoon purposes. 62% of the respondents would plan their holidays in Britain one or two weeks long, with a desired budget of 900-1500 GBP per person per week.

TRAVEL AGENCY CRITERIA

When it comes to criteria important for choosing a travel agency when going on holiday abroad, the top three criteria evaluated as very important or somewhat important together by the most people was the customer service, with 93% of respondents, the attraction of certain locations or activities offered with 92,4% respondents and the

reputation of the travel agency with 90,1% answerers. However, with regards to the criteria marked as very important, the price, with 52% of the respondents considering these criteria very important, is the top criteria. The least important criteria were recommendations from friends or family, as only 54,2% of the respondents perceive it as very important or somewhat important criteria. Furthermore, only 3 answerers wrote their own additional criteria, however all of them agreed on the same one – the safety provided by the travel agency.

WENHUA TRAVEL BRAND ASPECTS

With regards to the name, 69% of the respondents think that the name is suitable for a travel agency when given only the name in Chinese, and 82% of them claim that the name evokes positive feelings in them. Hence, according to the survey, it is reasonable to assume that the Chinese part of the name was selected well and is suitable for a travel agency. With respect to the logo, 62% of the respondents think it is interesting. Nonetheless, when it comes to the colour aspect, 54% of the answerers dislike the colours of the logo. What is more, even though 60% of the respondents claim the logo does not miss anything, there were 27 answerers who shared their opinions on possible amendment and improvements of the logo, mainly suggesting more creative and decorative design with addition of a pattern or a picture.

2.5. In-depth interviews

To further understand the perception on the brand Wenhua travel, the author decided to carry out individual interviews with a few interviewees in order to gain detailed information and explore their perspectives on travelling and Wenhua Travel company. The director and owner of the company agreed to provide an interview related to his company. Furthermore, there were two Chinese citizens interested in travelling and willing to provide an interview and express their opinions about Wenhua Travel, based on various brand aspects showed to them, such as name, logo, website or marketing materials of the company.

2.5.1. Methodology

The in-depth interview for the owner of the company consists of 8 questions focused on operation of the company and the owner perception on the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of his firm. The interview was carried out online, as the interviewee and the interviewer stayed in different continents during the time the interview was conducted. The original transcript of the interview can be seen in Appendix 6.

The in-depth interviews for the Chinese respondents consist of 10 opened questions, 5 of the first questions focused on travelling interests, desires and behaviours of the respondents, 4 following questions concentrated on their perception on Wenhua Travel branding aspects and the last question's task was to find out what criteria the interviewees consider important with regards to travel agencies. Both of the interviews were carried out individually, in a relaxed atmosphere with enough time. The author intended to select interviewees which she knows personally, in order to assure comfortable feeling of the respondents when expressing their opinions. Both of the interviews lasted around 90 minutes. The first one was carried out the 28th of June, 2017, the second one the 29th June, 2017.

To ensure diversity of the samples chosen for the in-depth interviews, the two selected respondents show different basic characteristics. The first of them is a female, 23 years old, master student of Xiamen University in Fujian province, China, originally from Shandong province, is interested in travelling and have never been to Europe. The second respondent is a male, 21 years old, undergraduate student of Xiamen University in Fujian province, China, originally from Hunan province, is interested in travelling and have been to Europe multiple times, on holiday in France, Switzerland, Poland and the Czech Republic. Both of the respondents can speak fluent English and the interviews were conducted in English language, recorded and transcribed into electronic form later. With regards to the part where the interviewees are encouraged to express their perception on logo, it is shown to them printed out on a paper, flyers are given printed out as well and the website is provided on a laptop with enough time to try out all its features and subpages. The original transcripts of the interviews can be seen in Appendix 7 and 8.

2.5.2. Interview evaluation

The interview with the owner of the company disclosed certain information about the strengths and weaknesses of the company, as the owner perceives them. Among the unique aspects of the company, which differentiates it from its competitors, the fact that the director sends his employees on a trip across the United Kingdom to ensure the first-hand experience with the product his company is offering, is the most significant. The owner further confirmed the assumption mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis, that the nature of Chinese outbound tourism is highly seasonal. Also, several methods which did not work for the company as expected were acknowledged, such the marketing methods used and the student ambassador programme in the UK. The owner sees the opportunity for the growth of his company mainly in building and maintaining strategic relationships and allies.

With regards to Chinese respondents, despite the different characteristics and experiences of the respondents, there were certain similarities in their responses, especially when mentioning the cultural aspects and evaluating the visual brand features of the company. Both of the interviewees mentioned that food is very important part of their travelling. With regards to the company logo, both of the responders have some aspects they do not like about it. However, they differ in what these aspects are. One of them feels like the name should be improved, together with the feeling the need of adding some more eye-catching aspect to the logo. The second respondent mentions association with a barber shop and a shampoo brand. The author suggests this association might come from a similarity with Wella Professional brand logo. Both of the interviewees also have objections towards the logo situated on the website. They share opinions in terms of layout of the webpage, navigation and a search field, also pictures used. Both of them suggest reducing the text and change the size of font used in the marketing materials and use more and bigger, eye-catching pictures, also to create the desirable travelling atmosphere. Answers of the respondents show how important the selected pictures of the destinations are in terms of possible associations, as he mentions a significant aspect of Chinese culture – the shopping, and also the negative attitude towards African culture which influences his negative perception of one site's

picture. The two of the respondents also consider the customer service important when thinking of criteria for choosing a travel agency for holiday abroad.

2.6. Competitors comparison

People's Republic of China counted 1,377 million people in 2015 and the growth of its population is still on rise. The number of Chinese citizens travelling abroad has also been on rise, in 2016, there were 260 432 Chinese tourists visiting the Great Britain, with expenditure of £513.48 million (Visit Britain, 2017). Therefore, the market has become very attractive for many companies operating in tourism business. Wenhua Travel is one of them. Hence, the author compiled a list of Wenhua Travel company's competitors. It is necessary to point out that all of the competitors are indirect, as none of them specializes in or offers tailor-made holiday. Nonetheless, Chinese tourists are, and the in-depth interview with the owner of Wenhua Travel confirmed this hypothesis, used to prepared packages with set itinerary and the option of holiday tailor-made to fit their personal needs and desires is something new which they have not got used to yet. In consequence, the author compiled a list of companies offering holiday to Great Britain to Chinese tourists, and based on selected criteria, described and evaluated all of them. The list can be found in the following part.

2.6.1. Main competitors

OMEGA TRAVEL

The company specializes in tours to the Great Britain, Europe, the United States and Australia and offers wide variety of services, from flight tickets and hotels to car hire and others.

Name of the brand

The name of the brand is done only in English language therefore can be confusing or not easy to remember for potential Chinese client due to the language barrier.

Logo

The logo represents the company's specialization, with a designed pattern, however the text part is designed completely in English.

Picture 2: Omega Travel Group's logo

(Source: http://uk.omegatravel.net)

Website

http://uk.omegatravel.net/ for English mutation, http://www.omegatravel.net/ for Chinese mutation

This website is done both in English and Chinese language. The website is designed in matching colours and contains all the necessary information and clear layout, however just the main page contains excess of information. The search field and the contact information are clearly visible, situated at the top of the main page, while the WeChat QR code is located at the bottom. All the trips are showed in British currency even in Chinese language mutation of the website, which is not particularly convenient for the potential customers.

Facebook

The company does not have a Facebook page.

WeChat

The company has an official WeChat account with clearly structured information, however it seems to serve only informative purpose as it does not create any content to be shared into the newsfeed of its followers.

Weibo

The company does not have a Weibo page.

Flexibility

The company specializes in package holiday, nevertheless it offers tailor-made holiday as well.

Communication

The communication of the company's staff is quite fast, the response was obtained the second day after the request was sent. The company also has a VIP service for faster communications with its customers.

CHINA HOLIDAY

This company specializes in holidays in China, however can offer tailor-made holiday to Britain as well.

Name of the brand

The name is all in English, there is no Chinese involved. Therefore, for Chinese potential clients this can be unpleasant and not comprehensible.

Logo

The logo is simple, enhances the specialization of the company – the hotel services.

Picture 3: China Holiday's logo

(Source: www.chinaholidays.co.uk)

Website

http://www.chinaholidays.co.uk/

The website is coherent with clear structure and colours matching the colours of the logo. It enables the viewers to switch from English to both Simplified and Traditional Chinese characters, which means it can be comprehensible to potential clients from China as well as from Taiwan and Hong Kong, broadening the target group. However,

the website is way too simple, without eye-catching pictures and does not provide any additional information besides hotels and alphabet list of the main attractions.

Facebook

The company does not have a Facebook page.

WeChat

The company does not have a WeChat page.

Weibo

The company does not have a Weibo page.

Flexibility

The company specializes in group tours to China and hotel services, however offers tailor-made holiday as well.

Communication

The communication was excellent, fast, with almost immediate response. The staff was extremely helpful and accurate.

HELLO BRITAIN

This company specializes in holiday to the UK and is a Chinese version of China Holiday company.

Name of the brand

The name is Hello Britain, partially changed in the website and in the logo for Chinese clients, where "Britain" is written in Chinese characters.

Logo

The logo is simple, bilingual, without any specific pattern or design.

Picture 4: Hello Britain's logo

(Source: www.hellobritain.cn)

Website

http://www.hellobritain.cn

The website has a clear layout, matching colours and all the necessary information. The contact information is located conveniently in the upper part, while the QR codes for Weibo and WeChat access are located at the bottom of the page. Additionally, the website has a chat window for online consultation.

Facebook

The company does not have a Facebook page.

WeChat

The company has an official WeChat account where the relevant information about the firm can be found. They also share interesting content regarding to British life, culture, festivals and places. Furthermore, they have illustration of five and seven-days tours across England. Additionally, the agency has a personal WeChat account for queries to communicate with the company staff.

Weibo

The company does not have a Weibo page.

Flexibility

The firm offers group tours to Great Britain as well as tailor-made holiday.

Communication

The communication of the company is excellent, they respond within few hours with complete and detailed information.

HINO TRAVEL

Is specialized in group tours to the Great Britain, Europe, United States, Turkey, Kenya and Egypt.

Name of the brand

Hino Travel is a phonetical transcription of 海诺旅游, hainuo luyou, which is composed of characters 海 meaning the ocean or big or overseas and 诺 meaning a promise.

Logo

The logo is well designed in terms of comprehensiveness towards Chinese tourists, the Chinese name is bigger and more visible than the English part of it. It also has an easily memorable design, although I am not exactly sure what is it supposed to represent.

Picture 5: Hino Travel's logo

(Source: www.hinotravel.com)

Website

http://www.hinotravel.com/

The website has a very clear structure, it is easy to navigate with beautiful pictures and matching colours. The contact information is located at the top of the page. There is a search field for straightforward search. QR codes for Weibo and WeChat are located comfortably at the bottom of the page.

Facebook

The company does not have any Facebook page.

WeChat

The company has an official page where it shares interesting information and content including pictures, videos, articles and its offers and deals regularly.

Weibo

1738 followers and 6288 fans, regularly adds interesting content about travelling and beautiful destinations.

Flexibility

The company specializes in prepared group tours, however the author did not have a chance if the company offers tailor-made holiday as well.

Communication

The email communication is very poor, they have bilingual automatic reply assuring the potential client they are dealing with their request, however that is all what happens, they do not reply the email even after repeated inquiry.

Additional value

The company has its own application which is possible to be downloaded from the App Store. It makes all the information about offered products and services clear and is a further step towards its customers.

CTS HORIZONS

The company is part of the CTS Group, the world's leading specialist in travel to and from China. It specializes in tours to China and other countries located in East Asia and also offers tours across the UK for Chinese tourists.

Name of the brand

The name of the brand is done only in English language and it is the trading name of China Travel Service Ltd.

Logo

The logo is done in one colour, with a designed pattern, however the text part is designed completely in English.

Picture 6: CTS Horizons' logo

(Source: www.ctshorizons.com/Visit-UK)

Website

http://www.ctshorizons.com/Visit-UK

The website has both English and Chinese language mutation. The layout is clear and the page is easy to navigate. The search field and the contact information are clearly visible, situated at the top of the main page.

Facebook

The company has a Facebook page with 486 likes and 479 followers to 29.6.2017 and actively adds content to the newsfeed.

WeChat

The company has a WeChat account for the enquiries and communication with potential clients.

Weibo

The company does not have a Weibo page.

Flexibility

The company specializes in package holiday, nevertheless it offers tailor-made holiday as well.

Communication

The communication of the company's staff was quite slow, the response was obtained a week after the request was sent.

To sum up all the collected data, the author aligned them into the following chart. The leading company in each aspect was highlighted in orange colour.

	NAME	LOGO	WEBSITE	FACEBOOK	WECHAT	WEIBO	FLEXIBILITY
OMEGA TRAVEL	Only English	English Additional design	English Chinese	No	Official	No	Group tours Possibility of tailor-made holiday
CHINA HOLIDAY	Only English	English Additional design	English version of Hello Britain	No	No	No	Group tours Possibility of tailor-made holiday
HELLO BRITAIN	Partially Chinese	Chinese	Chinese Chat window	No	Official Adds content	No	Group tours Possibility of tailor-made holiday
HINO TRAVEL	Phonetic Chinese	Chinese Additional design	Chinese Clear layout Application	No	Official Adds content	Yes 1738 followers 6288 fans	Group tours
CTS HORIZONS	Only English	English Additional design	English and Chinese Clear layout	Yes 486 likes 479 followers	Official	No	Group tours Possibility of tailor-made holiday
WENHUA TRAVEL	Partially Chinese	Chinese	Chinese Clear layout	Yes 15 likes	Profile	No	Tailor-made holiday

Chart 1: Competitor comparison

2.6.2. Tailor-made holiday comparison

To find out more about the flexibility, communication and prices offered for tailor-made holiday by each company, the author contacted these travel agencies by email with an inquiry to design a tailor-made holiday for her Chinese friend coming to the Great Britain. He would fly to Nottingham, where the author stayed at that time, so the flight tickets cost would not be included. The requirements were as follows:

Duration: 7 days

Places: starting from Nottingham (not included, just a starting point) – Cambridge – London - Oxford

Accommodation: 4* or 5* hotels

Other specifications: Private tour, private car, Chinese speaking guide

To summarize all the collected findings, the author aligned them into the following chart. The leading company in each aspect was highlighted in orange colour.

	Private car & guide	Accommodation	Total price	Flexibility	Email Communication
OMEGA TRAVEL	£480/day	-	£3360+?	- Able to offer tailor-made holiday - After further communication, they said it was too late but offered 1 week in London with detailed itinerary	- Response the 2nd day - VIP communication
CHINA HOLIDAY	-	4* 5 nights for driver who is travelling outside London	£4810	- Able to offer tailor-made holiday - Detailed itinerary provided	- Immediate response - Very helpful
HELLO BRITAIN	-	-	£4000-4500 depending on the hotel	- Able to offer tailor-made holiday - Offered group tour with the same places, £110 per day	- Almost immediate response
HINO TRAVEL	-	-	-	- Not found out whether offers tailor-made holiday	Automatic reply, no response
CTS HORIZONS	Around £500/day	-	Around £3500+?	- Able to offer tailor-made holiday - Offered group tour with the same places + additional places and meals, 3* accommodation, £1020 total	Response 1 week later
WENHUA TRAVEL	Around £350/day	£100-500/night	£2450+(£700 to £3500)	-	-

Chart 2: Tailor-made holiday comparison

2.6.3. Evaluation of competitors' comparison

The comparison of Wenhua Travel company's competitors showed differences between the companies and also factors in which Wenhua Travel can grow in the future. Hello Britain and Hino Travel have the most highlighted areas, therefore can be considered as strong competitors of Wenhua Travel. With regards to the price of the required trip, the author was not able to gather complete information, as the agencies stated the price varies according to the hotel prices. Only China Holiday offered the total price. Nevertheless, it seems the prices vary with £200-300 difference. To conclude, Wenhua Travel has competitors to be careful about and to learn from, however, it is necessary to point out the statement from the beginning of this chapter, all of these competitors are indirect, as none of them specializes strictly in tailor-made holiday.

2.7. SWOT Analysis

This chapter deals with SWOT analysis, which is a useful tool to analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a company and how these factors influences its performance (Daft, 2003, p.248). SWOT analysis consists of two parts which can be perceived as the analysis of internal environment, represented by strengths and weaknesses and external environment, represented by threats and opportunities of a company. The results of SWOT analysis can help the company with setting its competitive strategy. With regards to the competitive strategy, it is appropriate to make a TOWs matrix, as besides the review, it also provides summarization of strategies to improve the company's position in the market (Smart Insights, 2017). The author compiled the analysis based on the marketing research, competitors' comparison and in-depth interviews. The results of SWOT analysis will be used as a foundation for creation of proposals in the following chapter.

In each of the four parts of the SWOT analysis, the subparts will be described and evaluated by the weight and value. In terms of the weight, all of the subparts together have to equal 1. With regards to the value, the subparts will be evaluated by numbers, for strengths and opportunities from 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest fulfilment and for

threats and weaknesses from -5 to -1, where -1 is the lowest fulfilment. The column marked as "Total" will be the result of weight and value of the subpart. The output will be the final basis for the evaluation.

STRENGHTS

- **First-hand knowledge of the destination**
  - The company staff is very customer attentive and knows what they are selling and are ready to help the customer to make the right decisions for the particular trip of their interest. Therefore, the agent is bringing value to the customer.
- **Flexibility of the itinerary**
  - The company is unique in providing tailor-made trips to suit each client individually, therefore is able to cater for a wide range of budgets.
- **Financial security – PTS trust account protection.**
- **Personal experience with Chinese tourists and their interests**
  - The Great Britain and China are culturally very different countries and it is necessary to take this fact into account when attracting and catering Chinese clients. The director engages well-qualified and experienced employees, some of them with Chinese background, to be responsible for dealing with Chinese clients and sends them away on a trip to experience the services in person. The company emphasizes the importance of customer feedback to continually improve its services.

STRENGHTS	Weight	Value	Total
First-hand knowledge of the destination	0,3	5	1,5
Flexibility of the itinerary	0,4	5	2
Financial security	0,1	4	0,4
Personal experience with Chinese citizens and their interests	0,2	5	1
Total	1		4,8

Chart 3: Strengths

WEAKNESSES

- **Not well-known, relatively new to the market**
    o The company has still been somewhat new to the market, in comparison with its competitors. This fact leads to lack of necessary reputation.

- **Highly seasonal nature of tourism**
    o According to (VisitBritain, 2017), the arrival of Chinese tourists to Britain is highly seasonal, with the most significant volume of incoming tourists during July to September

- **Limited financial funds**
    o In comparison with its competitors, the company is relatively new to the market and therefore does not have resources of such amount as the major players in the industry.

- **Not fully used potential of social media**
    o The company has a fully functional website, a Facebook page and a WeChat account. However, the Facebook page is not very developed, it is not followed by a high amount of users and does not add any regular content to the newsfeed. The same applies for the WeChat account.

WEAKNESSES	Weight	Value	Total
Not well-known, relatively new to the market	0,3	-4	-1,2
Highly seasonal nature of tourism	0,2	-3	-0,6
Limited financial funds	0,2	-3	-0,6
Not fully used potential of social media	0,3	-4	-1,2
Total	1		-3,6

Chart 4: Weaknesses

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Development of strategic partnerships in China and the UK**
    o Developing relations and partnerships with travel agents in China can be extremely advantageous due to the fact that the tourism sector in China is very well developed and there are numerous possibilities to find

cooperation which further helps to spread awareness of the company and to seek new customers. Partnership with luxurious hotels and restaurants across the UK can enable the company to offer services for beneficial prices due to bulk deals with airlines and other suppliers.

- **Investment in online marketing in China**
  - o Brand awareness spreading through implementation of new supporting systems, such as cooperation with Chinese social media influencers, setting up a travel blog which would regularly share articles about interesting and not well-known places in the UK, its culture, festivals, food, etc.

- **Student ambassador scheme**
  - o This scheme proved itself not successful in the UK due to high number of Chinese speaking fluently English language, however, the company can proceed to spread this system to universities in China

- **Extensive advertising and marketing**
  - o The company can undertake extensive advertising and marketing in order to promote both its name and the services offered. Hence, a focused marketing campaign with clearly set goals and strategies can help the agency spread awareness among its potential clients.

OPPORTUNITIES	Weight	Value	Total
Development of strategic partnerships in China and the UK	0,4	5	2
Investment in online marketing in China	0,3	5	1,5
Student ambassador scheme	0,2	4	0,8
Extensive advertising and marketing	0,1	3	0,3
Total	1		4,6

Chart 5: Opportunities

THREATS

- **Economic circumstances with negative consequences towards tourism**
  - o A slump in the economy of China may affect its travel industry and people's travel habits. This might lead in unpleasant consequences such as lower purchasing power of citizens and thereupon lower interest in tourism, especially to foreign countries.

- **Terrorism and natural disasters**
  - o Unfortunately, there is no way to protect the company from these situations to occur. Situations of troublesome nature might affect the economy and the willingness to travel to the country. Nevertheless, there are means to minimalize the undesirable aftermath by enhancing the level of services offered in case of any disaster happen.

- **Existing competition**
  - o Established travel agencies with focus on Chinese tourists are a threat as they might provide additional services to their clients or evolve new marketing strategies or tactics. What is more, there are British travel agencies operating the business in taking British tourists to China which means they already have well-established relations with Chinese side and therefore would be easy for them to add and provide new services providing of similar nature as Wenhua Travel.

- **The entrance of other service providers into this niche**
  - o The current growth in the tourism sector is highly likely to become more attractive for new companies and therefore may result in an increasing number of firms entering this market. Correspondingly the competition in the field would increase.

THREATS	Weight	Value	Total
Economic circumstances with negative consequences towards tourism	0,2	-2	-0,4
Terrorism and natural disasters	0,2	-2	-0,4
Existing competition	0,35	-5	-1,75
The entrance of other service providers into this niche	0,25	-4	-1
Total	1		-3,55

Chart 6: Threats

2.7.1. Evaluation of SWOT analysis

2.7.1.1.　　　SWOT analysis summary

Internal Environment	1,2
External Environment	1,05
Total	2,25

Chart 7: SWOT analysis summary

2.7.1.2.　　　SWOT analysis matrix

	STRENGHTS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	SO – Leverage strengths to maximize opportunities ATTACKING STRATEGY	WO – Counter weaknesses through exploiting opportunities BUILD STRENGTHS FOR ATTACKING STRATEGY
THREATS	ST – Leverage strengths to minimize threats DEFENSIVE STRATEGY	SW – Counter weaknesses and threats BUILD STRENGTHS FOR DEFENSIVE STRATEGY

Chart 8: SWOT analysis matrix

	STRENGHTS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	9,4	1
THREATS	1,25	-7,15

Chart 9: SWOT analysis matrix summary

The chart using TOWs matrix shows that according to the results, the most suitable for the company is the Attacking strategy, which is leveraging strengths to maximize opportunities. Nevertheless, the chart also shows that the combination of threats and weaknesses is also strong, therefore, the company has to be careful in its operation in terms of its competition and possible new entrants to the market and constantly improve in order to consolidate its strengths and position in the market. The following is a graphic representation of the results.
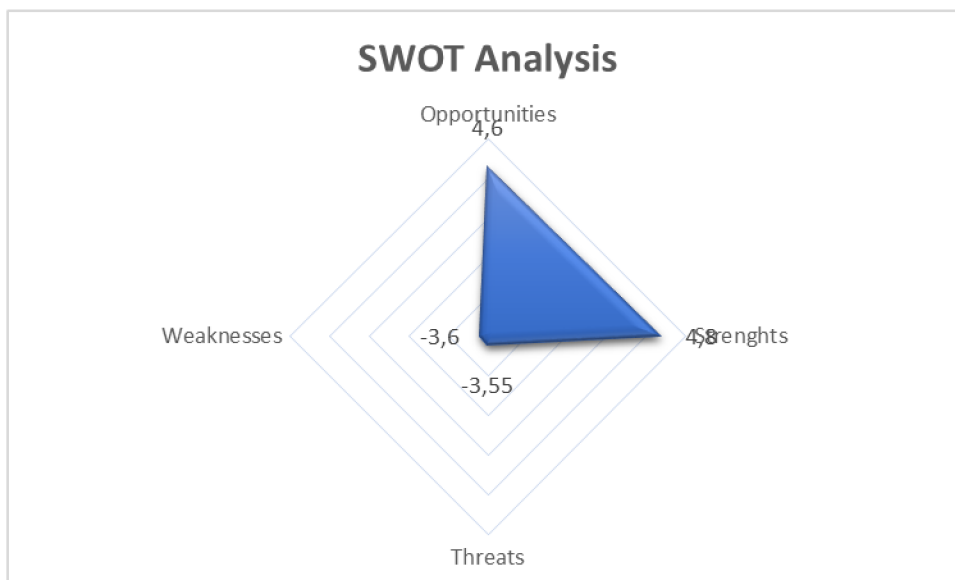
Graph 24: SWOT analysis

3. PROPOSAL PART

3.1. Proposals for further development

In this part of the thesis, the author will be dealing with the proposals designed for Wenhua Travel company based on outcomes of the previous analytical part consisting of market research, in-depth interviews, competitors' comparison and SWOT analysis. The proposal part will include suggestions for the company brand to derive new means of communication with its potential clients and further consolidate its position in the rather competitive field of tourism industry.

3.1.1. Logo

Logo is a very important part of brand in terms of visual aspect. If designed in comprehensible, smart and eye-catching way, it can be easily memorable and create stronger awareness of the brand. Wenhua Travel logo was subjected to questions in both survey and in-depth interviews. In survey, significant number of respondents expressed the urge to complete the logo, which is currently only in a written, bilingual form, without any additionally designed pattern or picture representing the whole company. In-depth interviews confirmed this idea. What is more, 54% of survey respondents expressed they do not like the colours of the logo. Colours in general are a choice of personal opinion and the owner of the company choose these colours based on the fact that golden and red are positively perceived colours in Chinese culture. However, the author recommends seeking a professional designer with Chinese background in order to design an additional pattern for the logo and for consultancy on colour adjustment, for example making them lighter or darker in order to improve its visual impression.

Implementation

A high quality, eye-catching logo pattern can be designed in a week to month time, depending on the quality of service, financial resource and the number of the designers in the designing team. The price of a high-quality service starts approximately from £100. I also advice to find a designer who has knowledge of Chinese environment and is

familiar with Chinese cultural background and the perception of colours, characters or patterns in order to receive the most suitable design.

3.1.2. Website

Website was another object examined by the respondents in in-depth interviews. The main concern was the fact that the logo situated on top of the page is too small and not remarkably catchy. The layout was generally considered as very well-designed, however the content and colours of the website were subjected to discussion. Therefore, I suggest carrying out minor changes in the appearance of the website, mainly the landing page. By the same token, the respondents struggled to understand that the product the company offers is the tailor-made holiday.

Implementation

I assume the owner has direct access to the platform on which the website was created, therefore it should not take more than one day to enter the platform in order to change the size or placement of the logo and also add at least examples of package holiday which the company is able to create and plan for the client. Moreover, it is necessary to stress the fact that the main aim of the company is to sell tailor-made holiday. As the owner confirmed, Chinese customers are not particularly used to the option of creating their own holiday yet, therefore it is crucial to highlight this information as it is the aspect differentiating Wenhua Travel from its competitors in the market.

3.1.3. Slogan

Wenhua Travel does not have any slogan, but to support its brand identity, I advise to create a slogan which resonates with values of the company and also makes potential client imagine the experience and encourage them to buy the services.

Implementation

The implementation includes either brainstorming inside of the company and I estimate it can be carried out in one to two days. Other possibility is to hire a professional Chinese speaking copywriter in order to create the slogan. In this case, it is necessary to count with an additional cost. I also recommend stressing the possibility of experience the holiday in Britain the way the tourist wants in order to support the fact that the company focuses on tailor-made services.

3.1.4. Student ambassador scheme in China

Wenhua Travel had a scheme of student representatives at selected universities across the UK, who spread brand awareness among Chinese students studying programs at these universities. Chinese students usually face considerable pressure in terms of their study results, therefore in case their families were planning to visit them in the UK, these students would usually not have enough time to plan the holiday for them. Consequently, they would confide this task to a travel agency. Wenhua Travel student ambassadors supposed to represent the company and its services on the university campus and visit relevant student organizations. Nonetheless, in-depth interview with the owner of the company disclosed that the company found this scheme as highly inefficient, for the reason that there was lack of demand for their services within the study community in the UK. The targeted students speak English very well and despite the study pressure, they seem to be willing to plan the holiday for their families themselves.

According to the market research survey, students in China are very interested in visiting the UK, as 66% of them confirmed by their responses. The main reason why student ambassador scheme did not work in the UK was the fact that the foreign students were not interested in services provided by the travel agency and able to communicate in English language and therefore arrange holiday abroad by themselves. However, students in China usually do not speak English and have no experience in arranging holidays abroad. On top of that, formalities such as visa issue can be rather

complicated. In case of fulfilling their desire to spend holiday in the UK, they will show significant need to rely on a travel agency. Hence, I suggest establishing student ambassador scheme in China.

Implementation

First of all, it is necessary to decide which universities to target as China is immensely large country with a significantly high number of universities. According to (visit Britain), the regions from which the most Chinese visitors come to the UK for holiday, are, in following order from the region with most visitors to the one with least: Beijing, Shanghai, South Central China, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan, North China, East China, Nanjing, Chengdu, Shenyang, Hangzhou, Chongqing, Tianjin and Wuhan. Accordingly, I suggest that the company picks the most famous universities in each of the mentioned city or region and try to establish contact with a Chinese student or foreign student speaking Chinese at this university. These selected student ambassadors could spread the word about the company, help spread brand awareness in various organizations and events across the university and on top of that, create a focus group through WeChat and communicate in university online groups as well. I estimate two weeks to implement this program, including research on the best universities, contacting the university or university WeChat group in order to find students interested in the position of student ambassador, selection of the students and giving them the information. The cost of implementation varies, as the students would be rewarded the same way as during the student ambassador scheme run in Britain, thence would be rewarded by a fixed financial sum per realized booking.

3.1.5. Marketing materials

Marketing materials are one of the main means of visual communication with the customer and a way to attract new potential clients. During in-depth interviews with Chinese students, I discovered that according to their opinions, marketing materials of Wenhua Travel company, such as flyers, have pictures of interesting places they would like to visit, however they are not large enough to catch attention. Furthermore, it is

recommended to focus on objects in the pictures, which Chinese tourists find particularly interesting and exciting, such as museums, shopping and expensive western brands. Moreover, the interviewees stated that the font used in flyers is too small and there is excessive amount of text in the flyer. It also serves only informative purpose, there should be more eye-catching pictures, because that is what Chinese tourists really care about when choosing their travel destination, especially if they are not familiar with the destination yet.

Implementation

I suggest approximately one week as a sufficient time for selection of appealing photograph and changing the appearance of the printed marketing materials, with reduction of the text part. The cost is difficult to determine as it is possible to carry out proposed changes by the director himself in case he owns online versions of the materials. In different circumstances, it is advisable to hire a graphic designer to compose a new layout of the materials. Additional cost need to be added to print the materials. The printing expenditure depends on selected company, material to be printed on and volume of materials.

3.1.6. Weibo

Weibo is a social media platform mainly for blogging. It is very popular in China and therefore a very convenient tool for company marketing. Using Weibo, the company can create content and upload videos, articles, music or pictures so its followers can keep up with the services and information shared by the company.

Implementation

Setting up Weibo account is very easy and does not require any special knowledge and does not put any obstacles to foreign companies in terms of normal usage. Notwithstanding, if the administrator of the account does not speak and write Chinese language fluently, it is a big obstacle. Thus, this problem can be solved in two different ways. Either to hire a native Chinese employer to create the content regularly and

communicate with the followers in accordance with the company vision, or to entrust the administration of account to a specialized company which will manage it. The cost of the implementation depends on choice of the solution.

3.1.7. Wechat

The social media which is usually used in western world, such as Facebook, Twitter or Google, are not accessible in China as their usage is banned by government. This censorship is also called "Great Firewall". Therefore, any social media marketing done in China has to be carried out on Chinese social media, mainly on the most important one of them, WeChat. In the first quarter of 2017, WeChat had 938 million monthly active users, creating extremely powerful media for online marketing (Statista, 2017). Nonetheless, there are two ways to create an account.

The official account can be Chinese or international. The main disadvantage of an account registered outside of China is the fact that it is not accessible to users in China, while the account registered in China is accessible both for Chinese and non-Chinese users. Furthermore, the official account registered in China can be divided in three forms. It is a subscription account, Service account and Enterprise account. Each one of them serves different purposes. The Service account is beneficial for its option to share a message daily to the followers of the account. Nevertheless, in messages of the follower, this account appears grouped with all other account which the recipient follows. This way, the company account can appear at the very bottom of the subscription group and the recipient might never read it. Service type of account, on the other hand, can be used as a very useful tool for business. Companies using this account can get inquiries from their followers and build their own applications. However, the disadvantage lays in the fact that there can be only one message per week shared among the followers with this type of account. The message the follower obtains is shown among his contacts though, which is very advantageous for the company. Enterprise account on WeChat serves mainly the purpose of organizing the internal networks of a company and its focus groups. Therefore, it is not suitable for marketing.

Implementation

The main problem for foreign companies is to get an official verified account visible to their target market – Chinese citizens. This is impossible without Chinese mobile phone number and therefore also China Residence ID and legal Chinese entity. In consequence, I suggest finding a trustworthy partner in China who could arrange this procedure. Nevertheless, this solution is dangerous for the business and requires lot of trust into Chinese partner and effort to find them. To solve this problem, I suggest entrusting this task to one of the numerous companies providing services in setting up an official verified WeChat account for foreign companies. The most suitable type would be Service account, as it provides the most options suitable for marketing and reaching the followers. The financial cost is not estimated as these companies provide it upon request only.

3.1.8. Chinese food option

According to the market research survey and the in-depth interview, Chinese have a very strong relationship with food. It is extremely important for them and it was mentioned and emphasized several times in the analysis. Most of them are willing to try and taste new dishes, however they might not like it and still miss Chinese food. Moreover, 22,3% of market research survey respondents associate Britain with not delicious food. Based on these findings, I suggest the company offers options to eat in places with Chinese food during the tours and that they lay stress on it in information provided to the potential customers.

Implementation

The most important part is to find restaurants providing quality Chinese food in big cities where usually clients of Wenhua Travel go and establish strategic partnership with them. In case the tourist will dislike local food or will have difficulties digesting it, they will have an option secured how to deal with the problem. It is difficult to estimate

the time needed for implementation of this plan, however I expect the search for the restaurants and contacting them should last one day.

3.1.9. Special travel packages

Wenhua Travel focus lays on tailor-made holiday, however it is a young company and its reputation among Chinese travellers is still yet to be discovered. According to the market research survey and in-depth interviews, the main interests in terms of a type of holiday in the UK is culture, walking and nature, eco-tourism and honeymoon holiday. In accordance with the in-depth interview with the owner of the company, Chinese tourists are also used to prepared packages planned by the travel agencies, they are not used to the choose freely their travel destinations. The company is at the beginning of its operation, therefore based on my analysis, I recommend creating packages focused on specific activities in the UK and target customers with various interests. This way, the company can attract potential clients and show them more options how to enjoy their services.

Implementation

I suggest creating packages focused on three main areas. Honeymoon holiday, Sports & Nature holiday and Cultural holiday. Honeymoon holiday is already offered by the company but does not promote it other way except on their website. Sports & Nature holiday would consist of the most beautiful national parks, reservations, mountains and lake districts across the UK. Cultural holiday, on the other hand, would provide tourists with tours visiting museums, art galleries, sculptures, abbeys and other historical places. The implementation of this step would take approximately two months, with steps consisting of picking the most suitable places, creating the tour, making deal with hotels in places selected, creating the content and pictures for marketing materials and place them on the website and social media and pricing of the packages.

3.1.10.   Strategic partnerships

Strategic partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships between Wenhua Travel company and restaurants, hotels or sightseeing places in the UK or travel agents and airlines in China. By building new ones and maintaining and strengthening the existing ones, the company can improve its position in the market and gain valuable advantages.

Implementation

It is significantly difficult to build new strategic partnerships, however as the company is located in Britain, it should be only a matter of finding and contacting the right and suitable partners to acquire the partnership. Differently it will be done with Chinese partners, as it culturally requires more time and effort to build strategic partnerships in China. Therefore, I recommend finding a Chinese speaking person to maintain these partnerships.

3.2. Evaluation of the proposals

All the proposals drafted in the section above were created and based on the analytical part and its outcomes. The suggestions were devised in order to strengthen competitiveness of Wenhua Travel company and to improve its position in the market. The proposals include ideas to improve or change visual aspects of the brand, such as logo, printed marketing materials or website page. Furthermore, the suggestions focus on social media communication to spread brand awareness among potential clients, build a positive reputation among Chinese travelers and agents in China. Another equally important proposal is creation of strategic partnerships and creation and promotion of tour packages focused on special activities, preferred by Chinese tourists. This way, the company will enhance its operation and attract more high-end clientele to buy their services.

3.2.1. Requirements for implementation

In the following chart, I aligned and summarized the estimation of cost and time requirements and possible limitations of the implementation of the proposals.

	Estimated cost	Premises for implementation	Limitations
Logo	From £100 for a designer	Designer, 1 week – 1 month of implementation	Designer of Chinese cultural background, possible subjective perception by customers
Website	Internal	Internally, 1 day of implementation	-
Slogan	Internal/from £100 for a copywriter	Internally or a copywriter, 1-2 days of implementation	Professional copywriter of Chinese background and fluent in Chinese language
Student ambassador scheme	Internal, £100 per sale	2 weeks of implementation	Possible that no student will be willing to participate in particular university
Marketing materials	Designer from £100, print cost from £20 per 1000 pieces	Graphic designer, 1 week of implementation	-
Weibo	Internal or depending on external company	-	Dependence on external company
WeChat	Internal or depending on external company	-	Possible cancelation of the account by Chinese government, dependence on external company
Chinese food option	-	Ideally establishing strategic partnerships	Possibility of no option in destination of holiday due to tailor-made character of services
Special travel packages	Internal	2 months of implementation	-
Strategic partnership	-	-	Big companies such as airlines might not be interested in creating a partnership

Chart 10: Requirements for implementations

Total cost necessary for implementation of the proposals is estimated at minimum of £320 without the cost necessary for hire of external companies for social media administration. Moreover, there is additional cost in case that the company decides to not carry out suggested implementations internally. Proposals such as establishing of strategic partnerships cannot be quantified, but are especially time efficient.

3.2.2. Schedule of implementation

The schedule of implementation was created based on estimated time necessary for application of the proposals. The dates of implementation beginning differ in each plan, together the schedule should take 6 months in total and the last implementation should be carried out by the end of January.

Proposal	Implementation date
Logo	August 2017
Website	August 2017
Slogan	August 2017
Student ambassador scheme	September and February 2017 due to arrival of new students, possible to repeat every 3 years
Marketing materials	September 2017
Weibo	Start October 2017, then regular administration once a week
Wechat	Start October 2017, then regular administration once a week
Chinese food option	November 2017, then continually
Special travel packages	December 2017
Strategic partnership	Continually

Chart 11: Schedule of implementation

3.2.3. Benefits of the proposal

It is difficult to determine the exact impact of realised proposals in the current situation, however, if carried out right, the proposals should be visible in the future after their realisation and beneficial for the company in terms of increase in brand awareness of the company and its profitability.

Increase in brand awareness

The student ambassador scheme at universities across China, changes is visual aspect of marketing materials and building online community will spread the positive bread awareness and will lead to revenue growth of the company.

Differentiation from competition

As a company with short existence in the market, I recommended that Wenhua Travel differentiate itself from the competitors by providing food options and special travel packages. Furthermore, by creating their own slogan and improve the logo design. This will lead to strengthening the company's market position and increase in profitability.

Increase of fans number on WeChat

The proposal to create and official WeChat account, regularly add interesting and relevant content and creating the community will enable the company to increase the number of its fans and establish a strong and fan base. These actions will be further supported by the proposal of Weibo page establishment. The strongest competitor has nearly 500 followers which, considering the size of Chinese market, is not a big number and can be surmounted in a few months.

Increase in website traffic

After the changes in visual aspect of the site are carried out and the information about tailor-made holidays is emphasized, travel packages are added and online marketing tools are applied, I expect growth in website traffic and longer time spent browsing the website, these acts can be tracked by Google Analytics. Considering the time that the company is operating in the market, I will value 10% growth in traffic as very successful.

Improvement in customer satisfaction

There were several proposals of activities to be carried out to differentiate Wenhua Travel from other companies offering similar services. Together with building of strategic partnerships it will lead to increase of customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to design a viable and feasible proposals to strengthen brand and competitiveness of Wenhua Travel company which operates in tourism field and offers tailor-made holiday for Chinese tourists coming to Great Britain. The theoretical was written using literature focused on term "brand", branding strategy and positioning and communication of a brand in order to provide valuable base for the analytical part. Moreover, specifics of branding in China and important aspects of Chinese outbound tourism were discussed. or part consists of interpretation of branding and strategic brand management.

The analytical part examines the current situation of the company and provides results of market research survey, in-depth interview with the owner of Wenhua Travel company and its potential Chinese clients. Furthermore, investigates on the main competitors in the field and carries out a SWOT analysis as a summarizing tool of the analysis.

Based on analysis outcomes, several proposals were suggested for the company to further develop and strengthen its position in the market. I recommended several propositions to be carried out, including building of strategic partnerships in the UK and China, changes in visual aspect of the brand or focus on online marketing in China. Subsequently, I carried out estimation of the implementation process. Wenhua Travel is a young company and operates in a highly competitive market, however, this market has been growing consistently and the company is the first one to offer the type of services as tailor-made. Once the company eliminates its weaknesses and exploits the opportunities, it will be able to build a strong successful brand.

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LIST OF PICTURES

LIST OF CHARTS

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Appendix 1: Website

(Source: www.wenuatravel.cn)

7天浪漫英伦精华之旅

假期时间太短？经费有限？没关系，这里还有短期7天浪漫英伦之旅线路可以参考！适合假期有限，但又想来一场完美旅行的人。而这趟旅行不止可以游玩像伦敦、爱丁堡这样颇具代表性的国际大都市。离开城市的白云，迈入湖光山色的田园风景则给此次旅行添了一抹浪漫风采！

1-3天　伦敦
第4-5天　湖区
第6-7天　爱丁堡

每人£1500起 (4/5* 酒店，全程私人导游＆司机)

10天不列颠四大首府之旅

14天太长？没关系！文化英伦旅行社精选的10天不列颠首府游线路一样让你有足够时间了解这个矛盾又可爱、复杂又迷人、严谨又幽默的国家。感受英格兰的绅士风度，苏格兰的民族传统，威尔士的热情洋溢还有北爱尔兰的幽默风趣！最重要的是这趟旅行之后你一定会知道为什么英国有那么多不一样的名称！

第1-3天　伦敦（英格兰）
第4-6天　卡迪夫（威尔士）
第7-8天　爱丁堡（苏格兰）
第9-10天　贝尔法斯特（北爱尔兰）

每人£2100起 (4/5* 酒店，全程私人导游＆司机)

14天英伦文化经典之旅

你最喜欢英国的什么？是永远兼具传统与艺术一体的伦敦？还是底蕴深厚的牛津和剑桥？又或者是世外桃源般的湖区？更甚是激情四溢的苏格兰？不管是哪种，文化英伦旅行社精心策划的经典之旅都可以将这些英伦风情一网打尽，让你14天环岛玩遍英国！历史、人文、风景，美食皆可满足你的行程路线！赶快来看看我们的行程路线吧！

第1-3天　伦敦
第4天　巴斯
第5天　牛津
第6天　莎士比亚故居
第7-8天　湖区
第9-11天　苏格兰&爱丁堡
第12天　约克
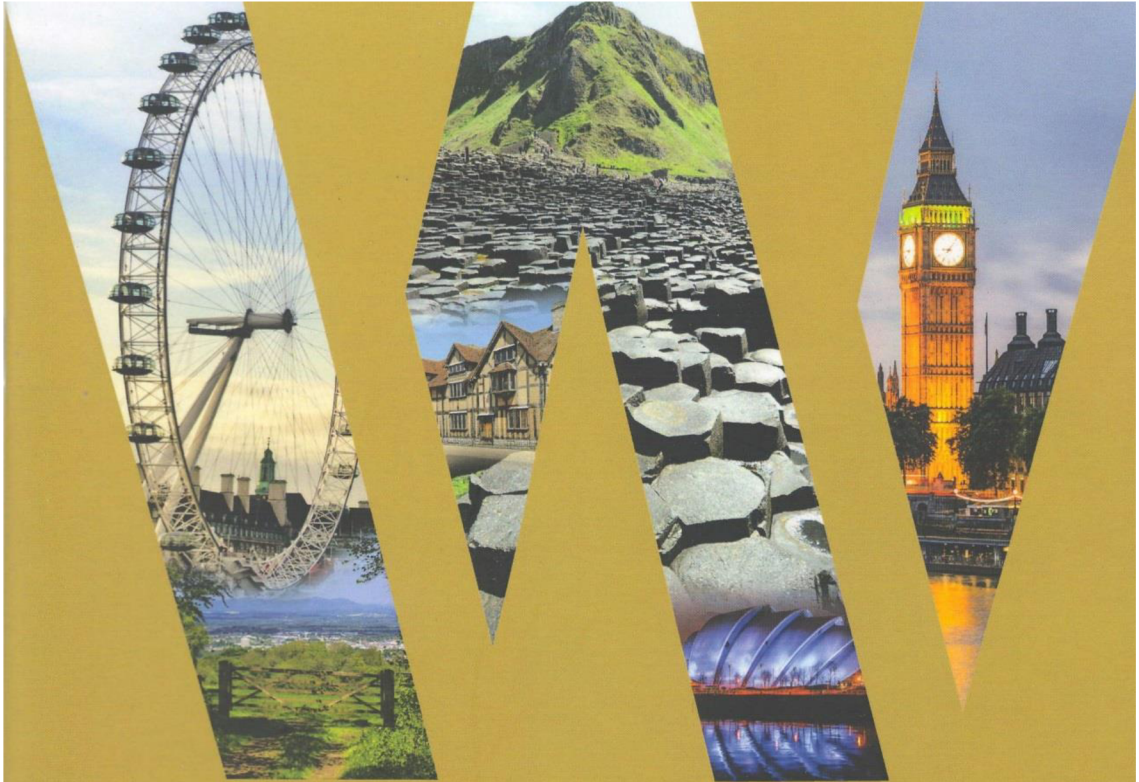第13天　剑桥
第14天　伦敦

每人£2900起 (4/5* 酒店，全程私人导游＆司机)

7天浪漫英伦精华之旅

假期时间太短？经费有限？没关系，这里还有短期7天浪漫英伦之旅可以参考！适合假期有限，但又想来一场完美旅行的人。而这趟行程的亮点是不止可以游玩像伦敦、爱丁堡这样颇具代表性的国际大都市。离开城市的喧嚣，迈入湖区欣赏蓝天白云，湖光山色的田园风景则给此次旅行额外增添了一抹浪漫风采！

1-3天 伦敦
第4-5天 湖区
第6-7天 爱丁堡

每人£1500起（4/5*酒店，全程私人导游&司机）

10天不列颠四大首府之旅

14天太长？没关系！文化英伦旅行社精选的10天不列颠首府游线路一样可以让你有足够时间了解这个矛盾又可爱，复杂又迷人，严谨又幽默的国家。感受英格兰的绅士风度，苏格兰的民族传统，威尔士的幽默风趣！最重要的是这趟旅行之后你一定会知道为什么英国有那么多不一样的名称！

第1-3天 伦敦（英格兰）
第4-6天 卡迪夫（威尔士）
第7-8天 爱丁堡（苏格兰）
第9-10天 贝尔法斯特（北爱尔兰）

每人£2100起（4/5*酒店，全程私人导游&司机）

14天英伦文化经典之旅

你最喜欢英国的什么？是永远兼具传统与艺术于一体的伦敦？还是底蕴深厚的牛津和剑桥？又或者是世外桃源般的湖区？更甚是激情四溢的苏格兰？不管是哪种，文化英伦旅行社可以将这些英伦风情一网打尽，让你14天环岛玩转英国！历史，人文，风景，美食皆可满足你！赶快来看看我们的行程路线吧！

第1-3天 伦敦
第4天 巴斯
第5天 牛津
第6天 莎士比亚故居
第7-8天 湖区
第9-11天 苏格兰&爱丁堡
第12天 约克
第13天 剑桥
第14天 伦敦

每人£2900起（4/5*酒店，全程私人导游&司机）

Appendix 2: Flyer 1

WENHUA
文化英伦旅行社 TRAVEL

英伦 – 文化的国度

购物

英国享誉购物天堂,世界上最著名的哈罗兹商城和比思特购物村使能使游客管窥一见,收获满满。比思特村内全年有机会以优惠价购买多家名牌衣服及饰件,例如巴宝莉(Burberry)、阿玛尼(Armani)、雨果博斯(Hugo Boss)、普拉达(Prada)、古奇(Gucci)等等。

以下是最受欢迎的购物点:

牛津郡的比斯特购物村 Bicester Village, Oxfordshire
伦敦的哈罗兹 Harrods, London
伦敦各条商品街 London shopping streets
曼城的特拉福德中心 Trafford Centre, Manchester
利物浦的利物浦一号 The Liverpool One, Liverpool
柴郡橡树品牌专门店 Cheshire Oaks Designer Outlet
肯特的蓝水购物中心 Bluewater, Kent

影视拍摄景点

参观最受欢迎的影视剧拍摄现场:

查茨沃斯庄园 Chatsworth House

唐顿庄园 Downton Abbey

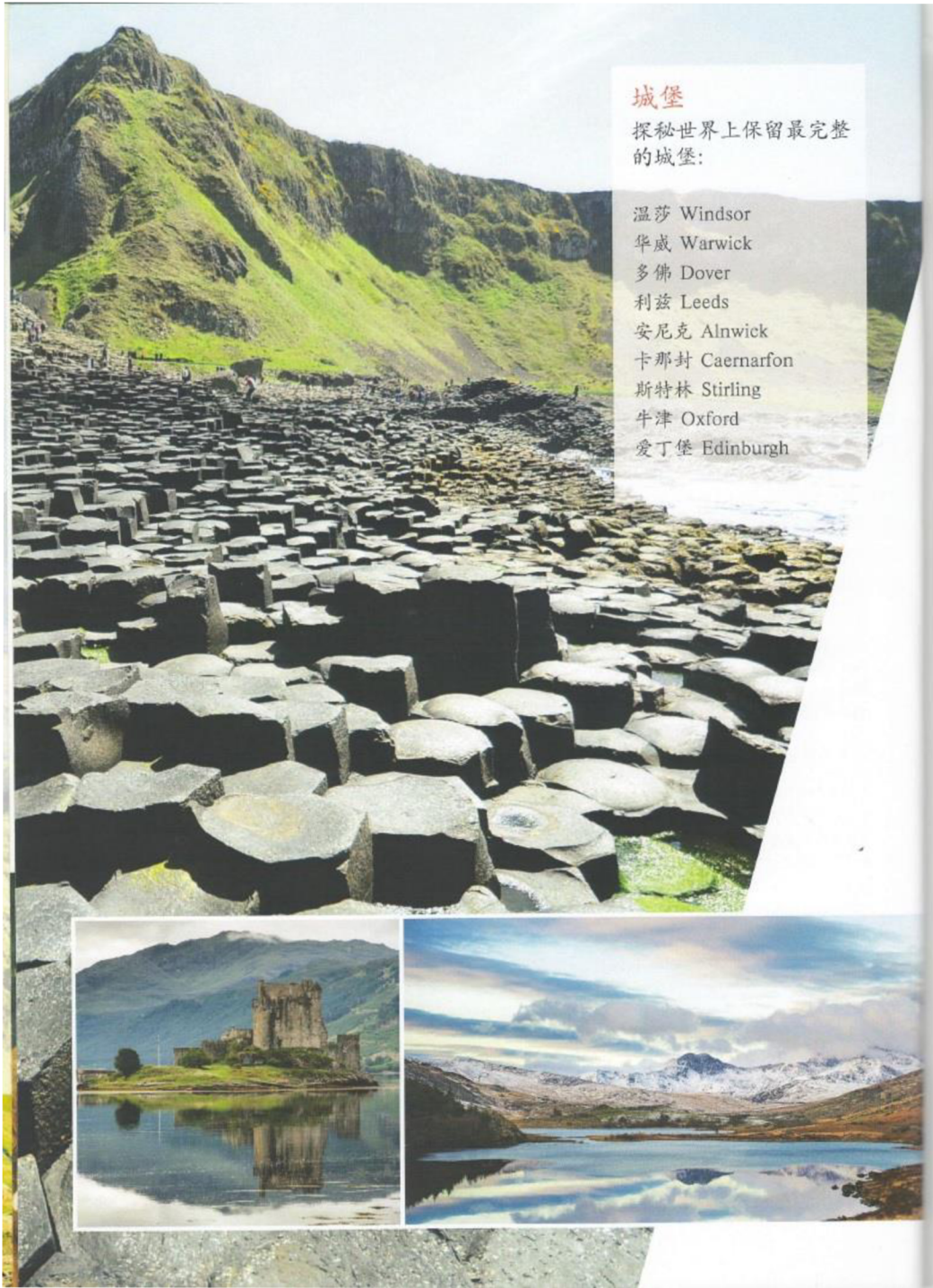福尔摩斯 Sherlock Holmes

哈利·波特 Harry Potter

詹姆斯·邦德007 James Bond 007

神秘博士 Doctor Who

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城堡

探秘世界上保留最完整
的城堡：

温莎 Windsor
华威 Warwick
多佛 Dover
利兹 Leeds
安尼克 Alnwick
卡那封 Caernarfon
斯特林 Stirling
牛津 Oxford
爱丁堡 Edinburgh

Appendix 3: Flyer 2

A)

1) 你的性别是什么?

男 ☐ 女 ☐

2) 你几岁了?

....

3) 你是从哪个省来的?

....

B)

1) 你去过欧洲吗?

是 ☐ 否 ☐

是的话, 你去过哪个国家?

....

2) 你觉得和英国英国相关的有什么? （可以多选）

无聊, 不有趣的地方	☐
漂亮，有趣的地方	☐
奢侈的地方	☐
文化博大精深，名胜古迹	☐
好吃的饭菜	☐
不好吃的饭菜	☐
好人	☐
坏人	☐
安全的地方	☐
危险的地方	☐

其他: ....

3) 你想去英国旅游吗?

是 ☐ 可能 ☐ 否 ☐

4) 你家人想去英国旅游吗?

是 ☐ 可能 ☐ 否 ☐

2) 你觉得这个商标怎么样？

这个商标很有趣，不需要修改。

是　　☐　　　　　　否　　☐

我喜欢商标的颜色。

是　　☐　　　　　　否　　☐

我觉得这个商标不完整。

是　　☐　　　　　　否　　☐

如果是，请写出想要修改或添加的地方：
……………………………………………………………………………………

3) 当寻找有国际线路的旅行社时，你觉得下边这些条件重要程度？

	非常不重要	不太重要	无关紧要	比较重要	非常重要
价格					
目的地或活动的吸引力					
朋友或家人的推荐					
旅行社声誉					
服务态度					
方便的包价					
其他:					

Appendix 4: Original market research survey in Chinese

5) 你去英国旅行的原因是什么？（可以多选）

沙滩假期	☐	散步和自然	☐	跳水	☐
蜜月	☐	文化娱乐	☐	过本地的节日	☐
夜生活	☐	灵魂归属	☐	生态旅游	☐
活跃生活	☐	拜访家人	☐	放松	☐

其他: ....

6) 你如果去英国旅行，会停留多长时间？

7 天以下   ☐
7-14 天   ☐
14-21 天   ☐
21 天以上   ☐

7) 你预期去英国每人每周的花费大概是多少？（不包括机票等交通费）

8000人民币以下   ☐
8000到13000人民币   ☐
13000到18000人民币   ☐
18000到23000人民币   ☐
23000人民币以上   ☐

C)

1) 你觉得"文化英伦旅行社"作为旅行社的名字怎么样？

我觉得很合适。

是 ☐   否 ☐

这个名字对我有正面的影响。

是 ☐   否 ☐

5) What would be your aim in your holiday to the Great Britain? (Multiple answers possible)

Beach holiday	☐	Walking and nature	☐	Diving	☐
Honeymoon	☐	Cultural holiday	☐	Festival	☐
Nightlife	☐	Spiritual holiday	☐	Eco-tourism	☐
Active holiday	☐	Family visit	☐	Relaxing	☐

Other: ....

6) How long would you spend if going on holiday to the Great Britain?

Less than 7 days	☐
7-14 days	☐
14-21 days	☐
More than 21 days	☐

7) What would be your desired budget for the trip to the Great Britain per person per week? (Excluding transport cost of the flight ticket)

Less than £1000	☐
From £1001 to £1500	☐
From £1501 to £2000	☐
From £2001 to £2500	☐
More than £2500	☐

(Chinese survey will be converted in RMB)

C) TRAVEL AGENCY CRITERIA

1) What is your perception of a "Wenhua Travel" as a name for a travel agency?

I think the name is suitable for a travel agency.

Yes ☐   No ☐

It evokes positive feelings in me.

Yes ☐   No ☐

A) GENERAL INFORMATION

1) What is your gender?

Male ☐   Female ☐

2) What is your age?

………………

3) Which province do you come from?

………………………………

B) TRAVELLING INTEREST

1) Have you ever been to Europe?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, which country/countries have you visited?

……………………………………………

2) What do you associate with Britain? (Multiple answers possible)

Boring, not interesting place to visit ☐
Beautiful place to visit ☐
Luxurious destination ☐
Rich in culture ☐
Good cuisine ☐
Bad cuisine ☐
Nice people ☐
Bad people ☐
Safe country to visit ☐
Dangerous country to visit ☐
Other: ………………………………………

3) Would you like to visit Britain?

Yes ☐   Maybe ☐   No ☐

4) Would your family like to visit Britain?

Yes ☐   Maybe ☐   No ☐

2) What is your perception of this logo?

Interesting logo, I would not change anything.

Yes ☐   No ☐

I like the colors of the logo.

Yes ☐   No ☐

I think the logo is missing something.

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, please write what would you change/add to the
logo: ………………………………………………………

3) When searching for a holiday abroad with travel agency, how important is the following
criteria for you when choosing a travel agency?

	Very unimportant	Somehow unimportant	Neither unimportant nor important	Somehow important	Very important
Price					
The attraction of certain locations or activities offered					
Recommendations from friends or family					
Reputation of travel agency					
Customer service					
Convenient deals, packages and offers					
Other:					

Appendix 5: Market research survey translated to English

Appendix 6: In-depth interview with the owner of Wenhua Travel

1) What services does your company offer?

We offer a wide range of services including accommodation, guiding & attraction tickets. The service which differentiates us from our competitors is our itinerary's created by our sales team. Each of our sales staff regularly completes familiarisation trips to see all of the sights and hotels which they are selling. This allows them to give our clients first-hand knowledge about the attractions they will visit and the hotels they will stay in. We are the only company for Chinese tourists which does this!

2) What are the main differentiating characteristics of your travel agency?

Our staff's passion for travel both in the UK and worldwide and the training which we provide for every member of staff. We hire people based on their love for travel and the UK especially. Then we send them away for 20 days visiting all the main locations in the UK meaning they have first-hand knowledge of the product they are selling. None of our competitors do this and that personal service is the difference between us and our competitors.

We also like to ask in depth questions about the clients to learn as much about them as possible which allows us to create the perfect itinerary for their visit to the UK. We will spend significantly more time learning about who our clients are and what they like then our competitors.

3) Do you feel an increase in interest in this type of service, or has there been a decline since the beginning of the business or is the interest constant? Is the interest seasonal?

The interest is very seasonal and is mainly during the summer months however there are a lot of Chinese also like to travel during the Chinese New Year.

Our way of working is very new to Chinese customers and therefore we have to educate them on how we work because they are used to being given a set itinerary which they can purchase immediately without any thought. This has proved to be our biggest

challenge and will take some time to get past. I believe the Chinese tourism industry is developing and changing and with time they will learn how we work. For the moment I would say that interest in our service is constant but I see it growing rapidly in the future when consumers learn about the benefits of having a personal itinerary created for them.

4) Is there a great competition in this kind of tourism business? Has it risen since you started doing business?

There is not much competition as most Chinese companies focus on group tours and package tours. Customer service in the industry is very poor but this is changing and more companies are offering tailor made tours and offering better customer service. However, there is a long way for our competitors to go to catch up with the excellent service and itineraries which we create.

5) Could you characterize your clients? Has the client's composition and claims changed over the time your company is operating?

To start our main target market was families visiting students in the UK however we have moved away from this market as regularly the students would speak good English and want to organise the itinerary for their family. This meant our service is did not have much value to them so we looked for another market. Our current target market is wealthy upper-middle class people who have a lot of disposable income and time to enjoyed their holiday. They will usually want to spend more time traveling than your average Chinese tourist and therefore can benefit from a tailor-made itinerary.

6) What forms of marketing do you use and how have they changed over the time you have been doing the business?

We predominately work with agents in China now as we found that Chinese are reluctant to buy from foreign companies especially when they need to send funds abroad. This means our main marketing is word of mouth and trade shows. However, we started the business marketing on social media, Baidu PPC and with student ambassadors but this was very expensive and not very successful. We have therefore stopped these forms of marketing and focus mainly building relationships with our partners in China.

7) Do you think you are cooperating with enough of strategic allies?

This is definitely something we need to continue working on but we have improved dramatically since the start of Wenhua Travel last year.

8) How did the Ambassador student programme in Britain work? Do you think that if used in China, this program has a chance to raise brand awareness of your company brand in China?

Unfortunately, the programme was not at all successful in the UK mainly due to the lack of demand for our products within the student community. I have not thought about the possibility of trying a student ambassador programme in China but it could be more successful as the students English and knowledge of the UK will not be as good and therefore they will have more need for our services.

Appendix 7: In-depth interview N.1

1) Please mention a few of your favourite entertainment activities.

I like parties, especially when I go out with friends. Just a few friends, it does not have to be very fancy places, just small places where friends can talk and share things about life. I really like that.

2) Does any of your entertainment activity involve traveling?

Yes, I like it very much. The girl I met over there (*points to a person sitting nearby*) just before we met, she is going to South China for science research for the whole month. I wanted to go too, but instead I am going with another friend of mine to Yunxiao, a place located in Fujian province. There are very great sceneries there, the mountains, the water. You know in China, in many places the water quality is not very good but that place is really amazing.

3) How often do you go on vacation?

Actually, I go on vacation pretty frequently. But if I do not have longer vacation than one week, I would go to places near Xiamen. Like Longyan, Zhangzhou, actually I am going to Zhangzhou this Saturday for a short run, about five kilometres. And after that race we are going to visit some places and an island near Zhangzhou. So, I go on vacation at least once a month.

4) What do you look for when choosing a travel destination?

You know when I search for a travel destination, what I am looking for is something special, what I really like is architecture, natural sceneries and places with water, I mean sea, ocean. And another one, food. Food is really important. And it does not have to be only Chinese, anything what I like is OK. So, I have to try before I know and I will decide whether I like it.

5) What would be your primary reason for visiting the Great Britain?

I think it is the culture. I like English speaking countries culture. Especially Britain, because Britain has much longer history than America. I have a classmate, she is studying in Britain and she introduced me to some people from there and they are very friendly, when you look at strangers face for more than three second, the smile comes out. But the main reason is the architecture, the buildings there, I really like it.

6) What is your perception of a "Wenhua Travel" as a name for a travel agency?

Wenhua means culture in Chinese. I think this name is pretty good, especially the characters "英伦", it means it specializes in Great Britain. The name tells what is the travel agency's specific tourist routines. And the "文化" – "wenhua", culture of the Great Britain is really amazing, so I think this name really matches with Great Britain, especially if this is what they specialize in.

7) What is your perception of this logo?

I think this logo is pretty good. Firstly, I like the colour, the light yellow. And this design of the words is very simple and there is Chinese and English, it is very easy to understand. But I think there is something missing because it is not very easy for people to remember this name. Especially if you have some eye-catching things, that can make people more impressed with this logo, so I think its missing something like this.

8) What is your perception of this website?

When I enter the website, I am actually kind of impressed, because the background of the images is really amazing, I like the sceneries. There is a search area, you can search what you want, that is very convenient. Another, the logo. The logo is something I want to complain about. The logo does not match the scenery. The scenery is really amazing but the logo is kind of…not very good. (*Reading names of the cities offered*) These are famous cities in Britain, right? This is really nice. The pictures are really good. Let me click on one place, Edinburgh. There is an introduction of the places…And the first I saw in this website when I clicked the Edinburgh, there is nothing here but only one picture there. The font is kind of small. Normally it is OK but not very good. Back to the homepage, the homepage I like but the links of the places should be improved. This is a commercial website, right? So, if it is a commercial website, where is the tourist routines information? (*The interviewer: "The company specialize in tailor-made holiday"*) But I cannot recognize it is tailor-made. The examples for the tourists are OK. This plan, introduction and arrangement of the activities and the accommodation, it covered all the parts, it is completed, it is good. But the details behind should be more completed. Where is the phone number, when people want to contact? I see, here it is. That is it.

9) What is your perception of this flyers and brochures?

The colour is OK. I like the colour, but there are too many words, too many words...Why there are so many words? The text is too much.

(*Different fliers are shown*)

This is clear...I think this picture in this place can be replaced by more colourful pictures. I know the colour of the image really matches with the background but I think this travel agency is specialized in routines to the Great Britain, so it might be better if you can put there the remarkable place of Great Britain and make the picture more eye-catching. So, this is the first page. It would be much better if the front page had eye-catching image, people might be more interested in reading the next page. The words need to be more accurate. You know, if this is an advertisement, the sentence should be more formal, this language is kind of casual. Too much words. And it did not tell anything special of these routines. I mean, I know this is the routine of the typical travel. But I still think it is missing something, because this is the basic information. What I expect is what is typical for the culture, you can put some pictures about culture, museums or architecture which can reflect the culture. Again, too many words. This is for the places, right..so you better take some..you know, for travelling, the images are more attractive. So instead of all these words, I mean, words are necessary, but make this short. Pick four pictures of some four places and put them there. Just a suggestion. This is a seven-days romantic travel routine. Have some pictures that are romantic. Because just looking at this, I do not see anything romantic. Make me feel romantic!

10) When searching for a holiday abroad with travel agency, what important criteria would you consider when choosing a travel agency?

The first thing which comes to my mind is the service. When they make people feel comfortable during the whole journey and make sure the safety of the travellers. That's very important, that's a primary thing. Make the tourists safe. Safe is very important. And secondly, make them happy. I mean, safe is important, but also happy, because that's what travelling is, right? Happiness. And make the tourists informed what's special about the country. Not only the things which you can look at, like the architecture or sceneries. More important is the guide, he should introduce some culture, stories behind the architecture or the name of the places or something like this.

1) Please mention a few of your favourite entertainment activities.

Video games, basketball and music. I love to sing.

2) Does any of your entertainment activity involve traveling?

Of course, I love travelling. I love it. That is why I went to the Czech Republic. And I want to come to Europe again.

3) How often do you go on vacation?

Depends on my study schedule. When I am at the university I can never go to travel. You know maybe twice a year, once a year. After my bachelor degree, I will go really often. But not now, after study. I am pretty sure after study I will go everywhere.

4) What do you look for when choosing a travel destination?

I think the view. Maybe also the food. Because I think when I really like the view I do not care about the food but every time I go to Europe, the only thing I miss is the food. So if I go to another country, I think the food is more important. That is the most important thing for me, the food. That is why I always get fat.

5) What would be your primary reason for visiting the Great Britain?

If I have a British girlfriend. But I do not like British girls.

6) What is your perception of a "Wenhua Travel" as a name for a travel agency?

Sounds pretty good. I do not know, you have there the Wenhua, it really sounds professional, it is going to be a really meaningful travel but actually Wenhua Travel it is just a name of it, Wenhua Travel is the travel which makes you feel like you are travelling in a culture which is different than yours. It is not a culture shock, you can feel the culture. Educate yourself in different culture. But for some people like me, I do not really care about the culture, you can feel the culture everywhere, but I do not really care about it, I care about views and food. But actually food is also part of the culture…

7) What is your perception of this logo?

Looks like a spa shop, it does not look like a travel agency...if you are a salon or a barber shop, it feels like a barber shop, not a travel company. I do not think it is good. It really does not look like a travel agency. I think it is really important, the sign, the first feeling when people see the brand. Because you should make people feel like traveling,

right. If you see the sign you do not feel like travelling. And this is…the design looks too comfortable, it is kind of like a service stuff, like a massage stuff. I do not know why, I just feel like that. It looks like a haircut. It reminds me of that shampoo brand you can see everywhere, I do not know its name, it looks the same though.

8) What is your perception of this website?

I do not know, it looks, I really hate the yellow. And when you travel, you never want to see this colour. It is after you finish the food, it is this kind of colour. And this kind of yellow and red together do not look good, they should not be together. It makes me feel uncomfortable.

Also, the logo in the website is so small, I can see "Wenhua" clearly but not "Travel", so what does only "Wenhua" mean? But the layout is pretty good. The places are really well laid out. It makes sense, it is easy to navigate. But the colour choices are bad. But yeah, it is easy to understand and to see. If the colour and the logo was changed, it would be pretty good. Maybe if it was changed to white? It would look good.

And the main picture...why sunset? It is beautiful and it is not bad but it should not be the main picture, this is a travel website, it is the main picture, it should be super pretty and colourful, but that is just my opinion. And the yellow colour is just everywhere, it is a bad choice. In terms of the finding information, they have the search field here, that is really useful, you can find any information there, like if you do not have any idea, you can just search instead of looking at all of them and choose one. And they have 客服 (*customer service*) that is really good, but if there is only one person then she is going to be really busy. But I think it might be a small company so it makes sense if there is just one person. And it is very good they have double languages for the pictures. So, when I click in, I think the good thing is they do not make the things too complicated, usually this kind of website is very complicated. They make everything really obvious, that is the good point, that is really good. Especially the front page, it is very clear. The page is not complicated, they do not have "trash" information, like these kinds of websites usually do.

9) What is your perception of this flyers and brochures?

It is so pretty but so small (*about the picture in the flyer*). They should put there more pictures. The text, first I see it, I do not want to read it. The titles should be in bigger fonts because it is all the same font size and all small size. I just do not want to read, too much. Here, there should be more pictures of views to take pictures of and shopping. It is really important for Chinese people, the shopping. And you make it really small. If you make it big and nice, I see it for the first time, I see shopping. That is what people are interested in. That is what we like, it is part of our culture. (*referring to the pictures in the fifth page of the flyer*) This is so pretty, why is it so small? It is beautiful for Chinese people. And this picture is so big and it looks like Africa (*referring to the sixth page of the flyer*). Uganda maybe, it really makes me feel like Africa. I do not feel like going there.

10) When searching for a holiday abroad with travel agency, what important criteria would you consider when choosing a travel agency?

The food they would offer during the journey, this would still be important. The place you live in. Of course, they have to give me lot of useful information about the typical food and the place I am going to. So, the general service they would offer me.