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Business to Business Marketing Research for Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti

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**THESIS
ABSTRACT**

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This thesis was developed to acquire information about companies' attitudes towards recreational days for their employees and their families. The research was commissioned by Angry Birds Park Vuokatti/ SuperPark Oy.

The theoretical background for this thesis includes theory of marketing research, branding and enhancing working life balance. The theory of marketing research discusses the differences and benefits of quantitative and qualitative research, as well as using questionnaires in research. The branding section of the thesis defines branding, discusses brand strategy, how to build a brand and how to position it in the market. Chapter 3 discusses the work-life balance and how employers should see the employees as persons with their own personal lives, which will affect work motivation and performance.

The research was conducted using a questionnaire sent via email to the 120 companies selected for the sample. The companies were selected according to their location in relation to the Angry Birds Park Vuokatti, as well as according to the amount of employees and their revenue level. The respondents represent different business areas.

The results suggest that recreational days for the employees of a company are more common than recreational days that include the employee's family as well. In the respondents' opinion the Angry Birds Park Vuokatti is unsuitable for company recreational days, because it is not seen to be in line with the company image.

Language of Thesis	English

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1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is commissioned and coordinated by Vuokatti Super Park Oy /Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti. The company's Angry Birds park was one of a kind in Finland when it opened in December 2012 and creating awareness and forming business relationships is very important to this new company. This research was developed to acquire information about companies' attitudes towards recreational days for their employees and their families.

The theoretical background for this thesis includes theory on marketing research, theory on branding and theory about enhancing working life balance.

In recent years, it has been noted that there is a growing interest towards welfare and balancing work and social life has become even more important to people. There have been studies about this topic and the results point to the direction that when the employee's family and social life is in balance with work, the results in the office are better.

In addition, this could be beneficial to companies' image as caring about the soft values as well as profitability. Having a strong brand is crucial for companies if they want to succeed in today's business world.

The objective of this study is to find out if companies would be interested in these recreational days with employees' families involved and what they would like to have included in the packages/ the product offered.

The study was conducted as a questionnaire with both quantitative and qualitative questions about the companies' preferences and interests related to the topic.

The results acquired suggest that companies do arrange recreational days for their employees yearly but recreational days with the employees' families are not very common. In addition, the interest towards recreational days arranged in Angry Birds Park Vuokatti appears to be quite small.

2 MARKETING RESEARCH

Marketing is a very valuable part of a company's business actions as it is the tool for creating awareness about the company and the products or services it provides. Marketing research enables companies to study the existing markets; the attitudes and motivations of consumers to help develop a strategy that would excel the competing companies' marketing plans.

Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. Marketing research is a primary channel for providing that information (McDaniel & Gates 2010, 4.)

As described here, marketing research is a key source in providing companies with knowledge of the market, its offerings and consumers' take on the existing products on the market. It also provides companies with valuable insight into the motives behind consumer decision making, for example why someone buys brand X instead of brand Z. The reasons behind this decision can be various and it is important for companies to see how and why their products are being purchased. There can be reasons such as price, place on the self, appealing packaging but also reasons such as brand name affiliated with a famous athlete or a pop star, seeing the brand as superior to others, a more "luxurious choice". All these reasons are essential for companies to know so they can market their product more effectively.

Burns and Bush (2006, 7) describe marketing research as a process of designing, gathering, analysing, and reporting information that may be used to solve a specific marketing problem.

Furthermore, market research can be used in solving marketing problems. If the company detects some of their products are not selling as well as planned, marketing research can help to distinguish the possible problems in the product the consumers are not that keen on and then the company can determine whether to adjust the product to suit the consumer tastes or to see whether the product would be better received in a different market segment or a different area of market.

Simply stated marketing research facilitates by providing information to aid the decision making process. Simply put, marketing research is a group of methods and techniques to provide relevant information that can support analysis and decision to do with the creation and management of marketing communications. (Nair 2009, 1-2.)

From the standpoint of managerial decision making, extensive market research is crucial. Before any decisions are made, it is important to know the factors affecting the decision, inside the company and out in the market place. Knowing what is already out in the market place and how consumers perceive the products, will help in determining the right segment for the product. In addition, knowing why consumers initially make the purchasing decision for brand X and not Brand Z can help the company to determine what kind of a marketing strategy to use for their product. For example if someone prefers brand X for the reasons that it is sold in stores near the consumer, so it is easily reachable, and not brand Z because it is a bit more difficult to reach as it is sold in a speciality store, this can help the company to determine how and where their product will be sold and so decide on a marketing campaign suitable for that particular outlet in question.

2.1 Quantitative

Quantitative or numerical research in other words, is used when large quantities of data are to be analysed. It will provide the researcher with exact amounts of answers, statistics are easily drawn from quantitative researches and with large amounts of replies to go through, the quantitative way is most likely the fastest way to analyse data.

Quantitative research is research using previously determined set of questions with a large enough sample size to provide statistically accurate data. In practice this means using a questionnaire to poll at least 200 consumers within each segment of a market. It is a way of discovering data such as:

- a product's consumer profile

- the way a market can be segmented

- probable sales at a given price level

- estimated sales of a new product

- the results of a blind product test.

(Lines, Marcousé & Martin 2006, 228.)

As we can deduct from the previous reference, quantitative research can be used in many different ways to help the managerial decision making process.

Quantitative research is good for counting how many do this or that, and it can do so in a valid and reliable way. However, quantitative research is really a descriptive methodology rather than a scientific one, even though it has sought to use scientific principles. (Callingham 2004, 99.)

The problem with quantitative research is that it only provides numbers of responses, not the reasons why people chose this product or this brand over the other. The reasons behind the decision are not easily seen with just quantitative research methods. As the sample sizes need to be large, the reasons behind the replies can be various and without a better knowledge of the circumstances of the consumers or the market segment, the findings of the research can prove to be inefficient in determining why, not just how many.

In the case of quantitative research the emphasis is on counting the numbers of respondents that do or say this or that. This means that conventional statistical tests can be applied to assess how certain the number arrived at is. Consequently, this methodology puts great emphasis on the sample size and on the representativeness of the sample. All this is fine if the requirement is to know a figure of this type (and this is the strength of quantitative research), but it does not help in understanding anything other than simple relationships (which is its weakness). (Callingham 2004, 103.)

2.2 Qualitative

Qualitative research is comprehensive research into the motivations behind consumer behaviour or attitudes. It is typically conducted by psychologists among small groups of people within the target market of the product. (Lines et al. 2006, 227.)

Qualitative research is usually conducted with smaller samples where as quantitative research deals with larger sample sizes. Qualitative research asks why and how rather than just how many. The reasons behind the attitudes and behaviour of consumers are the focus with qualitative research.

The idea behind qualitative research is that when people are asked direct questions they may give answers that make them sound sensible or rational. Yet many purchasing decisions are based on emotion, not logic. Qualitative researchers aim to find out consumers' real thought processes during a relaxed discussion that has no pre-set questions. (Lines et al.. 2006, 227.)

From the point of view of qualitative research, there are no right or wrong answers. Consumers often feel obligated to answer questions in a way they think the researchers would wish them to answer or in a way they think would show them in a better light than an honest reply when faced with a research asking about motivations behind their purchasing decisions. An experienced researcher knows this and will try to ask additional questions where the consumer has to reply more according to his or her real motivations. Since the point of qualitative research is to find out the actual motivators that drive consumers it is important to keep this in mind when carrying out a qualitative research.

Qualitative research is good for producing a logical description grounded in the fieldwork that is easy to understand and remember; and one that explains and stimulates too. This made qualitative research more suitable for aspects of brand work than was quantitative research. Qualitative research has been growing in importance ever since the 1960s and is now a genuine alternative paradigm, but one that is still fighting to be seen as different from the mainstream era paradigm (modernism). This is why major business decisions are not taken solely on the basis of qualitative research. (Callingham 2004, 99.)

As the reference above states, no major business decision is to be taken based just on qualitative research. This is why quantitative and qualitative research often go hand in hand when marketing research is conducted. Quantitative research tells how many consumers think for

example why brand X is again more popular than brand Z and qualitative research then adds more value to the research by giving examples of why consumers think like this. Learning the motivations behind a consumer's purchasing behaviour will help a company to produce a marketing plan that will effectively reach the consumers.

Qualitative research does not seek to establish sizes at all, it is much more about the relationship that people have with their surroundings. This means that sample size has no real meaning in the context of qualitative research. What is needed is a representation of the different views, not a representative sample of the people. In principle, what is needed is an example of each of the different views and an enquiry approach that elicits these views. (Callingham 2004, 103-104.)

Qualitative research does need a reasonably sized sample since the object of the research is to learn all the existing views on the subject, not just some. This means that the sample needs to be reasonably large in order to be able to account for all the existing views, or at least a large majority of them. In practice this would mean gathering samples from different market segments so that it is possible to account for as many diverse views as possible.

2.3 Questionnaires

According to Hague & Hague (2004, 99), structured questionnaires consist of closed or prompted questions – that require the designer to be aware of or anticipate all possible answers.

Structured questionnaires can take more time in preparation because formulating potential answers for the questionnaire requires the questionnaire writer to know all the different potential answers.

There are two main types of categories, questions can be classified in; open – and closed questions (Hague et al. 2004, 100). Open questions are used to collect free responses from the respondents. They are able to express their views in any way they like. With the use of open questions, the researcher faces the difficulty of evaluating the responses given since the responses cannot be analysed the way closed questions and their set answers can be ana-

lysed. Closed questions are easier to analyse and forming closed questions and predefining the answer options are usually based on previous studies or knowledge of the subject topic. (Hague et al. 2004, 100.)

However valuable the information gathered with open questions is, as it leaves the room for the respondents to express their views freely, it proposes a dilemma for the questionnaire analysis. How can one analyse and categorize a diverse range of different answers? This can be very tricky at times. From this standpoint, closed questions are far easier to analyse as the respondent can only choose from a predetermined set of answers, which are chosen according to previous studies on the subject. Despite the difficulty of analysing open questions, the value of different views expressed with open questions can be seen as exceeding the difficulty in analysing and so this is a very important part of an extensive market research.

The questions can also be divided into categories according to the topic asked. Questions can be behavioural, asking about a person's actions and ways of, doing or they can be attitudinal which means that person's attitudes towards certain things are questioned. (Hague et al. 2004, 102-103.)

Both types of questions, open and closed are used in the questionnaire in this study. As the research is fairly small in sample size and the sample is chosen from a certain segment of the market so choosing the answer possibilities was not that difficult. With the previous experience the marketing team in the Park has, they were able to narrow down the possible answers to the most important aspects in consideration of the study.

According to Philips & Stawarski (2008, 2), the first step in questionnaire design is reviewing the objectives, topics, skills, or attitudes presented in the program for potential questionnaire items. Developing this information in outline form is sometimes helpful so that related questions or items can be grouped.

It is very important to keep in mind the objective of the questionnaire when forming the questions. As questions should be short and to the point, it is good to keep in mind the main objective of the questionnaire in order to receive answers that are relevant to the study at hand. Also when structuring the questionnaire, it is better to group similar topics together so the questionnaire is straight forward.

Questions should be simple and clear-cut, in order to avoid confusing the participants or leading them toward a required response. Each question should address only one issue. If multiple topics need to be addressed, dividing questions into multiple parts or developing separate questions for each topic. Avoid terms and expressions that might be unfamiliar to participants. (Phillips et al. 2008, 3.)

The point of a research is to find out how consumers view things, not to receive answers that are false or required by the company. The questionnaire writer needs to be very careful in making sure that the questions used are not leading the respondent to reply in a way that would be beneficial to the company in terms of existing marketing for example but false.

In terms of the language used in the questionnaire, Brace (2004, 8) says that a questionnaire writer who is not familiar with the vocabulary of a market can very quickly come unstuck. This does not just relate to complex business-to-business markets, but can arise almost anywhere.

The language used in questionnaires needs to be straight-forward. Especially with questionnaires directed to the consumers who may not be aware of the professional jargon, it is important that the language is easy to understand.

The questionnaire writer's job can be summarized as being to write a questionnaire that collects the data required to answer the objectives of the study as objectively as possible and without frustrating or annoying respondents, while minimizing the possibility of mistakes occurring at any stage in the data collection and analysis process. (Brace 2004, 10.)

So in other words, when writing a questionnaire one must keep the objectives of the study in mind without letting it disrupt or influence the question formation and to maintain the questionnaire interesting and easily flowing while minimizing the possibility for mistakes in collecting the data and when analysing in.

3 WORK & FAMILY LIFE

There are a large number of studies that focus on the issue of well-being at work. Most of these studies focus only on the work environment and relationships in the office. However, family well-being should not be overlooked by employers, because an employee is more productive at work when his or her personal life is in order.

It is important for employees to enjoy a happy and fulfilling life outside as well as in the office. Spending time with family, exercising or being active and eating well are very important things in the complete well-being of a person. This complete well-being also includes well-being at work. This can be established through challenging, encouraging and motivating employees to strive to do their best in their tasks in the office. However it is also very vital to keep in mind that motivating and encouraging should not induce too much stress on the employee as this may cause the opposite effect and reduce work motivation and well-being. It is essential that the employees feel their work is appreciated and that in itself is a very good motivator. This can then also reflect into the employee's personal life, as their family sees that the employee enjoys their work, the family will perceive the company in a more positive light and support from home is very important.

Progressive organizations are educating their managers of newer or modern views of employees. With these views, the managers value each employee as a whole individual with work and personal lives and support their employees' abilities to reach their full potential on and off the job because they recognize the link between productivity and work–life effectiveness. (Koppes 2008, 171.)

Furthermore, each individual employee should be seen as just that, an individual. There are many different personalities and ways of doing in an office and what works as a motivator to one may not work for the other. This needs to be kept in mind when thinking about employee motivation.

From the organization's point of view, employee health and well-being benefit the organization through reduced healthcare costs, greater productivity, and greater commitment to the organization. (Casey & Grzywacz 2008, 32.)

By showing their employees that they care about their employees' well-being in addition to the profitability and economic stability of the company, companies can mold their image or brand as they are referred to these days, into more employee-friendly companies. This will then affect the companies' employee turnover.

Most of the articles related to this subject discuss the use of flexi-time at work or working from home as a solution to face the challenges of fitting working and family life together. One additional solution could be to bridge the gap between family and work by organizing events like recreational days for the whole family, where the employees could get to know one another through family connections. It is often said that children are a really good way to get to know people, as children often do not feel the social strings adults feel and that might hold them back. In addition, bridging the gap between ones family and work may result in more encouragement from home to go to work since the family feels very positively about the work place.

4 BRANDING

Sexton & Trump (2010, 18) say that branding is about consumer perceptions. How consumers see a brand, what do they feel when they see the brands products, how do they perceive the company behind the brand. All these different components affect the brand image. This is where marketing research can help companies to answer these questions and help building a strong brand that represents the right things in the consumers mind, from the company perspective.

Brands foster customer loyalty, leading to more reliable company earnings and therefore higher and more sustainable levels of employment and wealth creation. Brands are a spur to innovation, ensuring that companies can capture appropriate returns from investments they make in improved products and services. Brands provide a reliable mechanism for consumer protection. Brands create pressure for corporate social responsibility. Brands provide a platform for corporate social leadership. Brands play a progressive social role through the opportunities they create for the not-for-profit sector. Lastly, there is a sense in which brands promote social cohesion, both nationally and globally, by enabling shared participation in aspirational and democratic narratives. These are the "seven social wins" of brands, and it is no exaggeration to argue that branding, in these seven crucial ways, represents one of the most powerful and wide-ranging forces at our disposal for positive social change. (Economist Books 2003, 48.)

Having a strong brand means that a company has a large amount of power in the market. Not only measured by sales but also in terms of affecting the consumers' minds. One can do a lot with a strong brand. As mentioned above, brands can create opportunities for the non-profit sector by creating awareness and brands can help building social campaigns for causes such as poverty, animal welfare, children's education. The list is endless. Brands can make a difference, when treated right. With brands, the company needs to be very careful that all the actions the company takes will be in line with the brand philosophy. The consumers can be very quick in making decisions based on just one, in consumers' mind, wrong move by the company, the consumers can begin following brand C instead of brand B. As so, it is vital for brands to listen to consumers, perform market research to establish what their consumers think about the brand and its competitors and evolve as the consumers and their opinions evolve.

Companies have long understood their dependence on the societies in which they operate – for market access, labor, raw materials, capital, and technical knowledge – but only recently have they started recognizing that stakeholders' concerns are their concerns, and that actively listening and responding to stakeholders produces fresh ideas for product innovation, enthusiasm for the enterprise, and enhancement of organizational reputation. (Hatch, Schultz & Olins 2008, 150.)

4.1 Brand definition

Brands are the foundation of most organizations. Brands are your reputation – what you stand for – in the minds of your customers and in the minds of your investors. If your reputation is negative, then you will have difficulty achieving your business objectives. If your reputation is positive, then you will see the impact on your future cash flow. (Sexton et al. 2010, 9.)

From the stand point of brands, keeping up a good reputation is the key to success. Consumers can be a fickle crowd and maintaining a good reputation is crucial when one misstep can cause the brand to fall out of the radar of consumers, or even worse be boycotted. Every business decision made in the company needs to be in line with the brand. It is very easy to lose ones reputation but it is a lot harder to get it back. This is why it is vital for companies to keep in mind that their brands can make them or break them in the eyes of the consumer.

The classic definition of a brand would probably be something like this: A brand is a unique and identifiable symbol, association, name, or trademark that serves to differentiate competing products or services. It is both a physical and an emotional trigger to create a relationship between consumers and the products or services being offered. An easier way to say this could be: "A brand is the relationship a customer has with a company and/or its products and services." (Miletsky & Smith 2009, 4.)

Every consumer has a relationship with a brand. Most of them have relationships with many brands. These relationships are what keep the brand going. Brands can also be considered as

guarantees. Consumers can think: "this must be good, this is brand C" or "I'll try this since I liked the other product that was made by brand B", as they are already familiar with the brand and enjoy the quality of the product, the packaging is appealing and the venue it is sold in is convenient. They know what they are getting when they purchase the brand. It is safe, it is familiar. This relationship may last over a few bumps and bruises but in the long run, if the brand cannot withhold the image the consumers have of the brand, then the brand will lose cash flow. This is why it is vital for companies to know what makes their brand the brand in the consumers' minds.

A brand is a collection of perceptions about an organization, formed by its every communication, action, and interaction. It is what people collectively say, feel, and think about your organization. In short, it's your reputation, identity, and good will with stakeholders and in the community. (Daw & Cone 2010, 20.)

People often have feelings as well as thoughts about their brands. (Nicolino 2000, 9.)

Consumers associate with brands. They live everyday with the brands. Brands are part of their everyday lives and so their chosen brands need to be in line with their lifestyle. Consumers can use brands as a way of showing off their lifestyle or the idea of a lifestyle they would like to have. People like to associate their chosen brands with a specific lifestyle. If someone can afford to buy the pricier brand instead of a medium priced, that can be interpreted as better income, luxurious lifestyle. Something other people do not have.

Brands have many benefits, but, above all, they create value. Brands help companies achieve price premiums and they save costs due to their inherent appeal to customers. Companies with strong brands consistently outperform their peers in the stock market. (Perrey & Spillecke 2011, 3.)

Here are some of the different aspects of how a strong brand affects a company:

1. A brand enhances the value of a product or service beyond its functional purpose –
thereby supporting volume and price.

2. A brand is a link between an organization and its stakeholders, providing a badge of
continuity and trust.

3. A brand is the result of behaviour – everything an organization does has the potential
to impact the brand.

4. A brand exists only in people's minds – it is a collection of feelings and perceptions in
the mind of the consumer

5. A brand can provide an organization with purpose and direction – providing a source
of motivation and interest for stakeholders.

(Miller & Muir 2005, xi-xii)

4.2 Brand strategy

Brand strategy, we suggest, should ultimately be regarded as an approach to building share-
holder value. The most important driver of shareholder value is cash flow – we argue that a
strong brand may have a positive impact on a company's cash flows. Unless we get better at
articulating the case for brands in terms of business strategy, their potential may remain un-
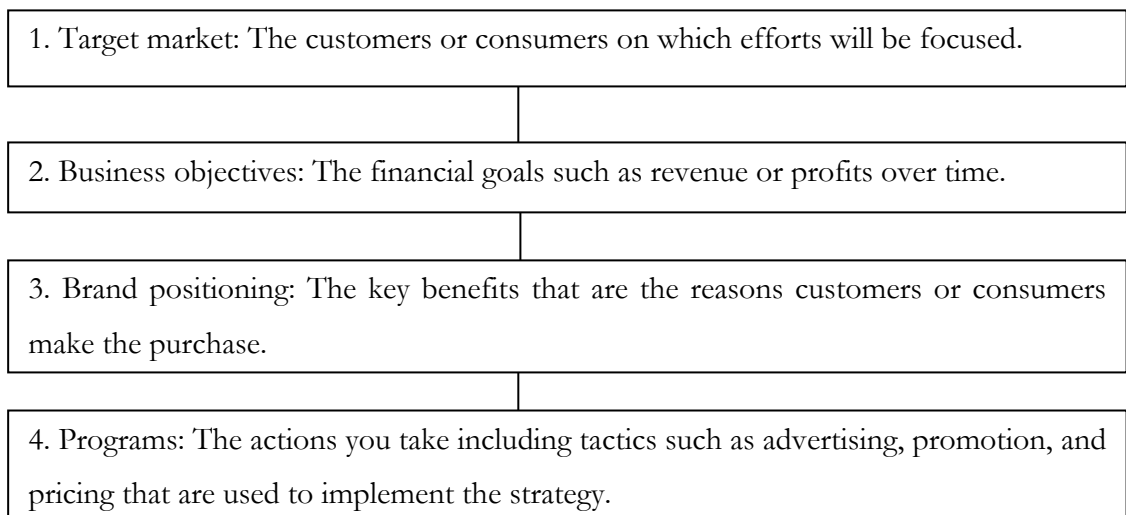exploited. (Miller et al. 2005, xii)

In order to create a strong brand, a company must keep in mind that all the actions and de-
cisions the company makes affect the brand. This means that all communications inside, to
the employees and between different departments, and outside, to consumers, suppliers,
stakeholders, the company must be in line with the wanted brand image.

According to Sexton & Trump (2010, 71), a brand strategy should achieve three objectives:

1. Coordinate all the functions of your organization so that they are all working together to create and maintain a strong brand.

2. Concentrate your resources so that they are used most effectively.

3. Communicate to those involved with the brand – usually nearly everyone in the organization – what they must do to create and maintain a strong brand.

It is very important that the employees of the company are well informed about the wanted brand image and so this can be conveyed forward in the company, from every level. Employees need to be aware of the brand image so they know how to communicate with customers and what channels to use. All the actions must be in line with the brand image, not just the actions of the management, but also all of the employees need to be aware of the image the company wants to set out.

A brand strategy consists of four major parts:

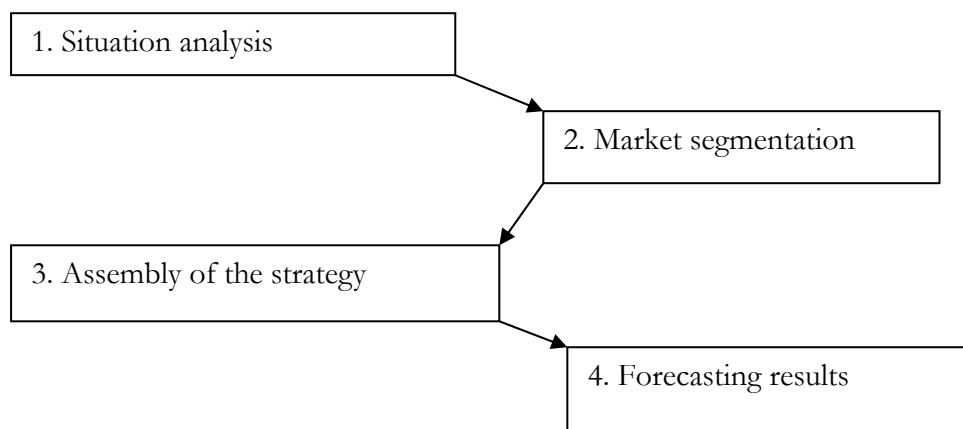| 1. Target market: The customers or consumers on which efforts will be focused. |
| --- |
| 2. Business objectives: The financial goals such as revenue or profits over time. |
| 3. Brand positioning: The key benefits that are the reasons customers or consumers make the purchase. |
| 4. Programs: The actions you take including tactics such as advertising, promotion, and pricing that are used to implement the strategy. |

(Sexton et al. 2010, 75.)

As far as brand strategy goes, all the above mentioned key factors need to work together. Without realizing the actual target market, marketing the product will be inefficient. The

goals of the campaign or venture need to be decided on and communicated to all of the em-
ployees working with the product. Marketing the product will also be inefficient, if the key
benefits of the product cannot be communicated to the consumers or if the company is un-
able to actually name the benefit the consumer receives from using the product. Last but
most definitely not least, all the actions a company takes, need to be in line with the wanted
brand image.

There are four main steps in constructing the brand strategy.

1. Situation analysis

2. Market segmentation

3. Assembly of the strategy

4. Forecasting results

(Sexton et al. 2010, 79.)

Before establishing a market strategy however, one must know where the company stands
currently and which market segments are most valuable to the company. If one does not
know where they are currently, it is impossible to realistically plan where to go. Only when
these factors have been taken into consideration, can one begin to assemble a brand strategy
and forecasting the results and outcomes of such a strategy; and how different components
of the strategy will affect the end result.

4.3 Brand building

The way people build brands is in their heads. We build an image as birds build nests – from scraps and straws we chance upon. -Jeremy Bullmore (Miller et al. 2005, 5.)

Branding is a very important part of business these days. Every company wants to stand out from the mass and differentiate themselves from their competitors. Building a brand requires a lot of knowledge of the company's current position in the market and the position the company wants to see itself in the future. Brand building includes all aspects of business, all marketing efforts must be in line with the wanted brand image. As the quote by Jeremy Bullmore puts it, people create their own images for the existing brands in their heads. The brand image is not just one commercial campaign or a successful PR-tour, it is everything the company says and does. All of the little things affect the brand in consumer's minds. To stand out from the mass is to keep this in mind and to act accordingly.

In building their reputation, brands need to not only be aware of these elements – the promise, the personality, and the unique selling point – but consistently fulfill each one. Any time the promise is broken, a dent is made in how the brand is perceived by the public. Any time the brand is not true to its personality, it takes another step away from its customers and further diminishes its viability. (Miletsky & Smith 2009, 4.)

The above reference says it very clearly; even a small, (to the company's eyes) insignificant mistake can fundamentally harm the brand in the consumer's mind and when a consumer looses their trust in a brand, it is very difficult to rebuild that trust.

Through brand-building – managing and monitoring the elements of the brand and marketing and communicating its message and reputation – brands can effectively build their markets, creating loyal customers who buy purposely rather than randomly. (Miletsky et al. 2009, 7.)

Branding is a very important part of business these days. Every company wants to stand out from the mass and differentiate itself from its competitors and to create a loyal customer base. Building a brand requires a lot of knowledge of the company's current position in the market and the position the company wants to see itself in the future. Brand building includes all aspects of business; all marketing efforts must be in line with the wanted brand

image. Building a successful brand is very demanding, it requires a lot of work but it can be done, if one knows how.

4.4 Brand positioning

The brand positioning process begins with identifying an organization's stakeholders, or audiences, assessing how important different stakeholders are, and defining the ideal relationship needed with each to enable business goals and objectives to be met. Different stakeholders will define the brand differently, according to their needs and their distinctive agendas. Deciding the priority each brand audience should be given is not as easy as it may seem, particularly when the brand is a corporation rather than a product. (Economist Books 2003, 81.)

As established in the previous chapters, creating a successful brand requires an extensive amount of knowledge on the current situation of the company in the market, the different stakeholders that affect the business, the differences in the market segments, the relationships the company has with its suppliers; and then the knowledge on how to determine the most important ones (suppliers, target market, stakeholders) from the rest. Stretching the target market and stakeholder efforts too wide will make the brand weak, as its marketing and communications will not be efficient enough to draw wide attention. In this process it is essential that the decision makers in the company know its current position in the market and also can clearly see where the company wants to go. Only this way can the most efficient decisions be made.

5 CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

The reason for the research was that as a new company, Angry Birds Park Vuokatti needs to establish a wide customer base and create knowledge of its existence and services it provides. By contacting the companies and researching their attitudes towards recreational days for employees and their families, the Park will get valuable information on what are the preferences of possible customers in terms of services etc. and the companies receive information about the Park and the possibility of such recreational days to be arranged at the Park or in Vuokatti Area.

The questionnaire (appendix 1& 2) contained all together 12 questions which were designed to be easy and fast to answer. The method of distributing the questionnaire was chosen to be email because of its easy access and fast, reliable distribution and answering properties. The questionnaire was conducted over a 3 week period via email; with one reminder email sent 12 days after the initial email was sent. All together 28 replies were gathered.

The sample for the questionnaire research was chosen to include 120 companies form the regions Kainuu and Pohjois-Pohjanmaa in Finland. The sample was chosen from a list of nearly 2000 contacts Angry Birds Park provided. The companies included in the sample had up to 50 employees and their revenue level was over 501 000 euros. All of the companies on this list are located no more than 250 km away from the Park's location.

The companies in the sample represent a wide variety of business lines, from electronics manufacturing to grocery stores.

The respondents represent the decision making level of business, as most of them were CEO's and Entrepreneurs.

6 RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The questionnaire was conducted over a 3 week period and the results gathered are present-ed here. Only 28 (23,3 %) out of the 120 companies in the sample replied to the question-naire so the results gathered cannot really be considered valid or to represent the general at-titudes of the sample, but can be seen as some sort of an indication on the current atmos-phere in business as the moment, due to economical instability.

There can be various reasons for such a low number of answers. The subject of this study, company recreational days, can be considered as irrelevant in these economically challenged times as when the research was conducted or it can be seen as the first saving method for companies to cut costs so the idea of arranging such activities for the workforce may not be considered relevant at the moment. The answers gathered now might differ from answers gathered in a different time period with a better overall economic situation. It can also be that employees and their whole wellbeing is still not considered by the companies in the sense that it would also include their personal lives and so, makes this study irrelevant to them. The questionnaire in full (in Finnish) and its translation to English can be found from appendices 1 and 2. The Frequency tables for each question can be found from appendix 3

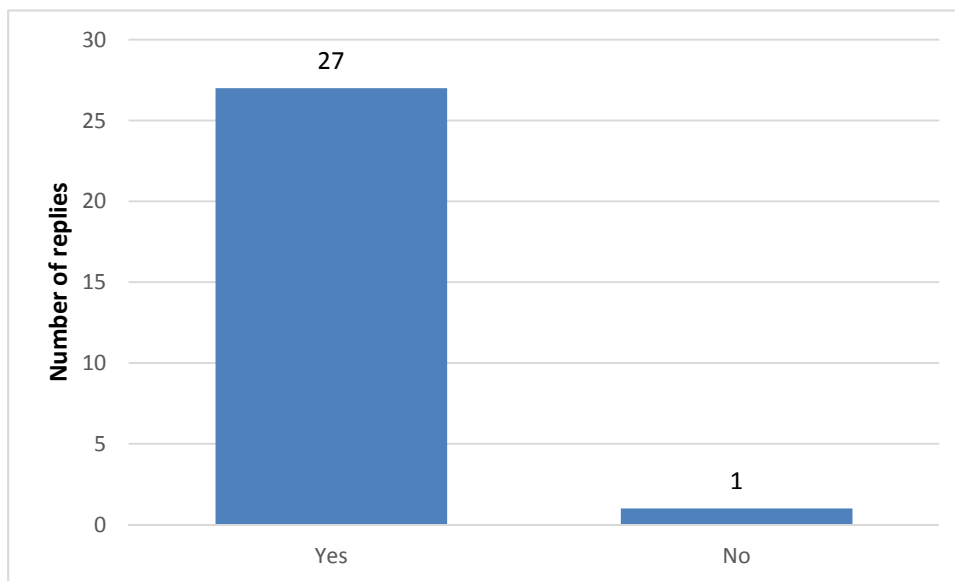Question 1: Has there been any recreational action arranged by your company?

Figure 1. Has there been any recreational action arranged by your company (n=28)

The results suggest that recreational days are common in Finnish company culture as 27 respondents said there had been recreational activities arranged by the company they work in, while only one respondent replied "no" to this question. The results are shown in Figure 1. This is a positive result since it seems that recreational days are valued in Finland, which may suggest that the wellbeing of the employee is taken into more careful consideration. However, the definition of a recreational day may differ on the managerial level and on the employee level. Managers can see different conferences and seminars as recreational, where the employees may view them as work events and consider recreational events as barbeque parties or company football matches.

Question 2: Which recreational methods/ activities have been used?
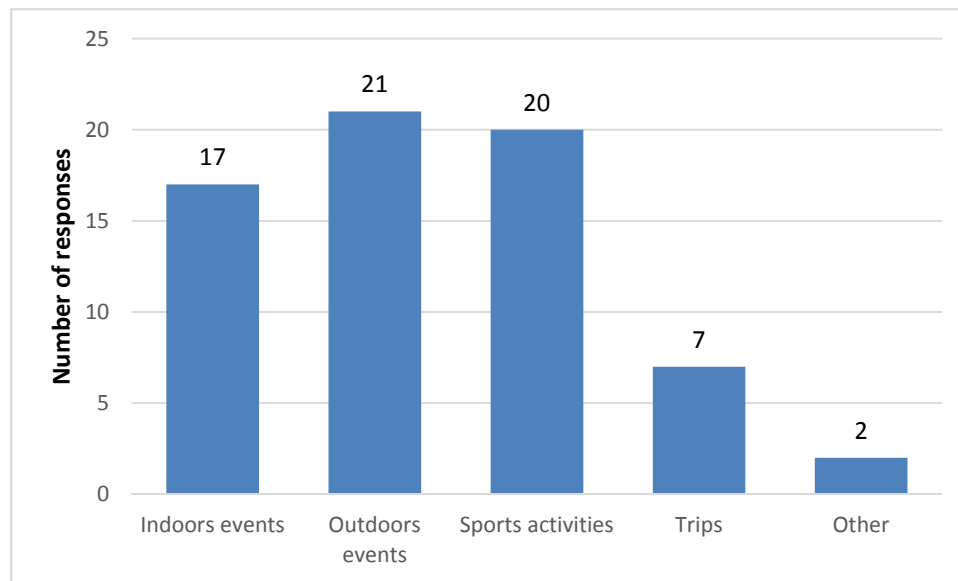

Figure 2. What recreational methods/ activities have been used? (n=28)

The most common recreational activities used in companies, according to the results of the questionnaire, seem to be outdoors activities and sports activities with 21 and 20 replies, as can be seen form Figure 2, indoors events are third most popular and trips of various sorts come in fourth place with only 7 replies. These results can be tied to the unstable economic situation at hand, companies most probably feel that arranging such days should not require too much capital and so trips are not commonly used as a recreational method due to high costs.

However, the economic situation is not the only explanation for this phenomenon. The popularity of outdoors events can also be explained by looking at the most common work places, indoor offices. When most part of everyday life is spent inside the closed doors of an office, having recreational events outdoors makes sense.

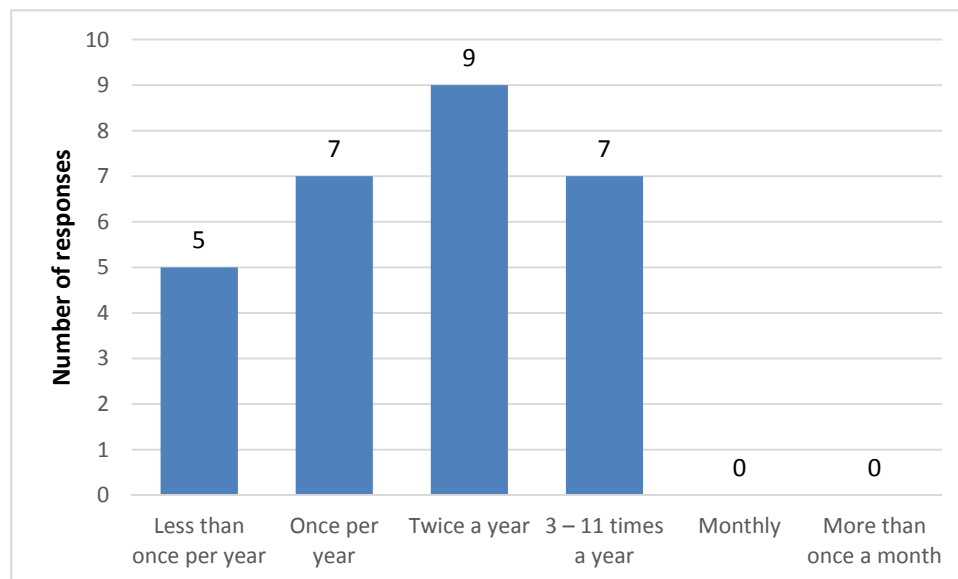Question 3: How often are recreational days arranged?

Figure 3. How often are recreational days arranged? (n=28)

Most companies seem to arrange their recreational days either yearly or more often as 9 respondents said their companies arrange recreational days twice a year and 7 respondents said their companies arranged recreational days once a year or as often 3 to 11 times a year as 7 respondents said.

Unfortunately here the questionnaire did not ask for a more specifically detailed answer on the substance and the venue of these recreational days. This would have given more information on what kind of days are arranged this often and would have been valuable information. This could be an improvement idea for the next study on the subject. One must now assume recreational days that are arranged this often do not require investing a lot of money but are rather half a day events arranged locally or even in the office.

None of the respondents answered that recreational days were a monthly happening.

Question 4: Have the employee's families been involved in company recreational days?
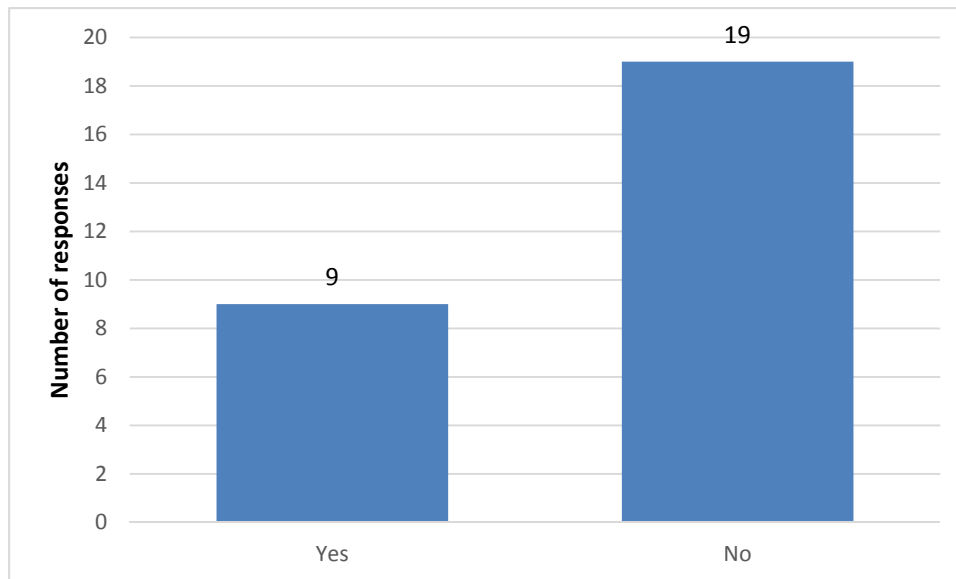

Figure 4. Have the employee's families been involved in company recreational days? (n=28)

Only 9 out of 28 respondents said that their families had been involved in their company's recreational days (Figure 4). Further questions indicated that the family members involved in these recreational days had most often been the employee's spouse but not their children. The responses indicate that recreational days that have been arranged more frequently (more than twice a year) usually involved the employee and their spouse but not their children.

Also what is evident with further questions is that although respondents say that the employees are getting to know each other better when their family, or in this case their spouse, is taking part in company recreational days (9 out of 9 respondents, see Appendix 3), the respondents do not seem to think there to be a strong connection between a familiar work environment and work motivation. 3 respondents out of 7 thought there to be no change in the work motivation of employees after such events. As the rate of responses to this question was only a small number (7 in total, Appendix 3), one cannot make assumptions about the general opinion of Finnish companies to this but according to these responses, the company culture in respondents' companies does not observe there to be a difference in work motivation when the employee's families are more involved with the company. In addition, only 3 out of 8 respondents say they have noticed employees to be spending more time together outside the office after their families have been taking part in company recreational

days. This could be explained by the fact that people still feel business should be business with little attachments to employee's free time or family life.

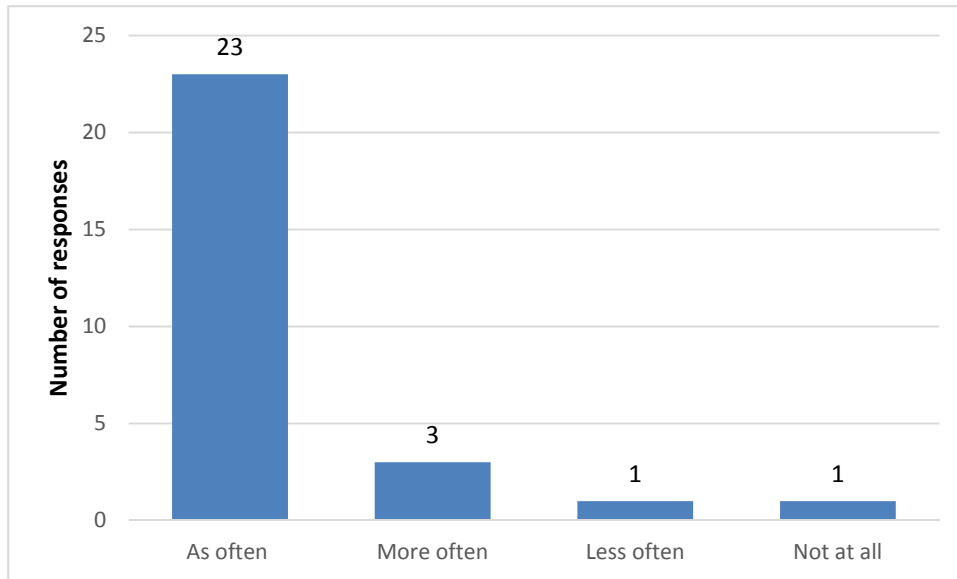Question 7: Is your company planning to arrange company recreational days in the future?

Figure 5. Is your company planning to arrange company recreational days in the future? (n=28)

What is positive is that 23 out of 28 respondents say their companies will continue arranging recreational days as often as before. 3 respondents even said their companies will arrange such days more often than now. Only 2 respondents out of 28 said their companies will arrange recreational days less often than previously or not at all.

Question 8: Is your company planning to arrange recreational days with the employees' families in the future?
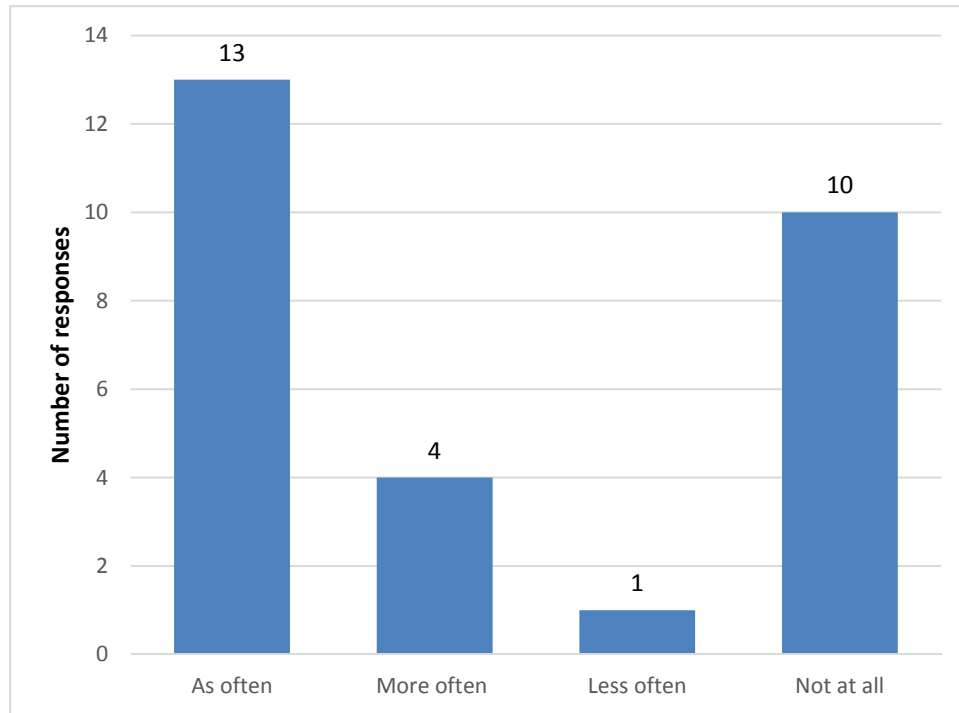

Figure 6. Is your company planning to arrange recreational days with the employees' families in the future? (n=28)

When asked about arranging recreational days with the employees families in the future 13 of 28 respondents said their company will continue arranging recreational days for the employees and their families as of then as previously. 10 of the respondents replied that their company will not be arranging any recreational days with employees families. 4 respondents replied their companies will arrange family recreational days for their employees more often than previously. This is a very positive response in view of this research even though one respondent said their company will arrange such recreational days less often than previously.

Question 9: Were you aware of the possibility to arrange recreational days in Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti?
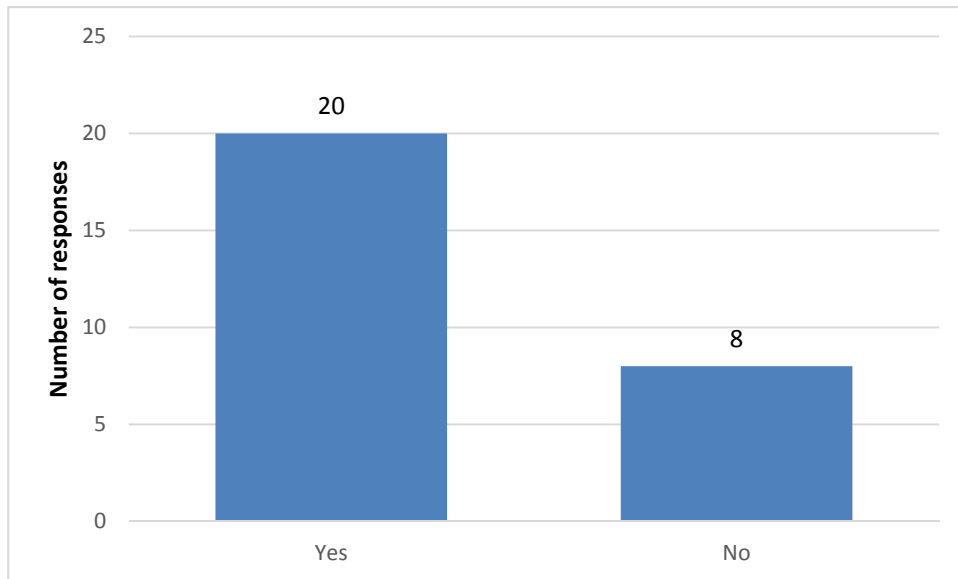

Figure 7. Were you aware of the possibility to arrange recreational days in Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti? (n=28)

Question 10: How likely would you consider the possibility to arrange your company's recreational day in Angry Birds Activity Park?
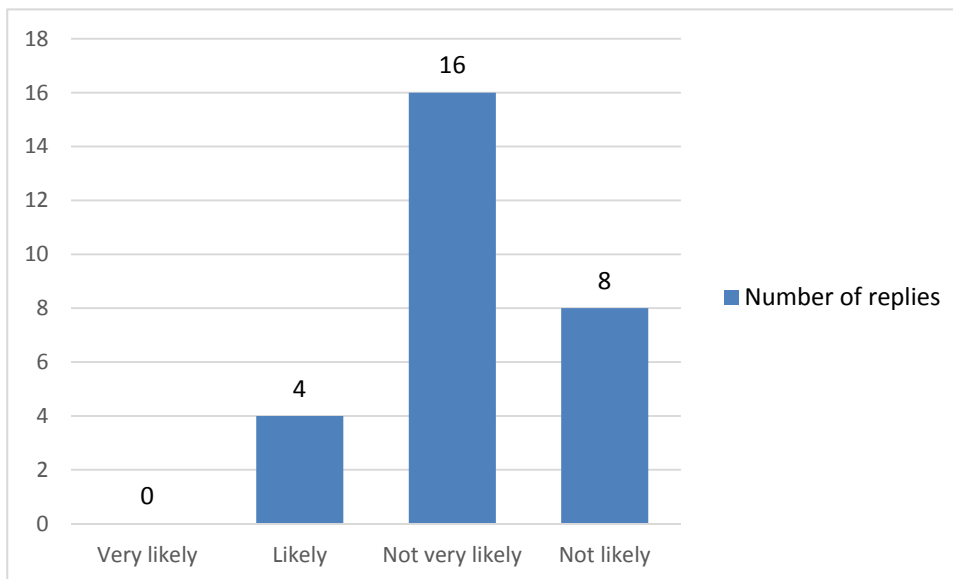

Figure 8. How likely would you consider the possibility to arrange your company's recreational day in Angry Birds Activity Park? (n=28)

According to the replies to question about previous knowledge about the possibility to arrange company recreational days in Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti, the knowledge of the Park and its services seems to be good. 20 out of 28 respondents (Figure 7) knew about this possibility previous to this research. However, as evident in Figure 8, most of the respondents, 16 in total, said that arranging their company recreational days in Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti is not very likely. Further questions indicated that, according to a couple of respondents, the Park was not considered as a suitable venue for company recreational days. There may be a number of reasons behind this, most likely one could be that the companies that replied as previously stated had not arranged recreational days with employees' families or that the age of the employees suggests their families would not include small children so the venue could be seen as irrelevant to their needs. Also, the recreational days arranged previously may have had a more formal programme and a sudden change of venue to a place so much less formal might affect the brand image of the company among its staff.

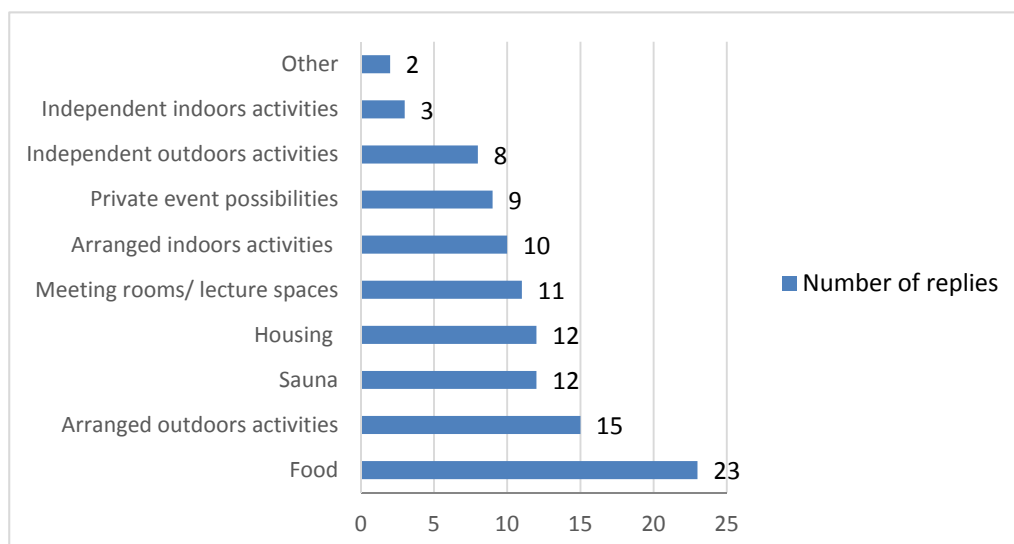Question 11: What elements do you consider as important when planning a company recreational day?

Figure 9. What elements do you consider as important when planning a company recreational day? (n=28)

Finally, the respondents were asked to respond to a question where they were should choose the most important factors they consider when arranging a company recreational day. 23 respondents, the highest number of responses, chose food to be the most important factor. The second most popular choice with 15 responses was arranged outdoors activities. Third with 12 responses were the housing facilities available and Sauna facilities.

Question 12 asked the respondents about their preferences and wishes for a recreational day arranged in the Angry Birds Park. None of the respondents replied to this, as the Park was seen as an unfit venue to host a recreational day. However, possible responses could have included some of the following:

- Accomodation package from Katinkulta / Sokos Hotel Vuokatti
- Bus transport from hotel to the Angry Birds Park
- Entrance to the Park and perhaps a guided tour first
- Meal in the Park
- Arranged activities in the Park (a golf competition, dance pad contest etc.)
- Combined activities with other attractions in Vuokatti (Katinkulta Spa, Husky safari etc.)

As Vuokatti is a very diverse holiday destination, a package deal similar to this would be quite simple to produce. Accomodation could be kept the same in each deal but the activities could be combined differently to create a unique package for each company interested, not to mention taking the seasons into account. In winter, the package could include a ski pass and access to the Vuokatti Ski Center and its slopes in addition to cross country skiing. In the summertime companies could enjoy the golf greens in Katinkulta or Sotkamon Jymy Baseball matches. These packages could be made easily personalised, so each company could choose the right activities for their employees and their families.

In the light of the results gathered, this research was more of a qualitative than a quantitative one, due to the low number of responses. As stated previously, qualitative research does not seek to establish sizes at all, it is much more about the relationship that people have with their surroundings. This means that sample size has no real meaning in the context of qualitative research. What is needed is a representation of the different views, not a representative sample of the people. In principle, what is needed is an example of each of the different views and an enquiry approach that elicits these views. (Callingham. 2004, 103-104.)

The results can be seen as expressing a view that the Angry Birds Activity Park is not considered as a suitable venue for company recreational days but rather a family activity. As we can see from the results, children are not often included on these company recreational days but rather the spouse of the employee. This can explain why the Park is not considered as a suitable venue since it is mostly directed to kids and families with small children.

7 LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

The limitations to this study are quite obviously related to the small number of responses. As only 28 out of 120 respondents replied to the questionnaire, the results gathered cannot be seen as representing a general opinion but rather expressing one view of many others possible. As far as the timing of the study, one could argue that 3 weeks of answer time was a very sufficient time allocation but was the timing the best possible? As this study was conducted during February-March, the companies might already be preoccupied with next year's business ventures. Also as the economical situation around does not seem to be improving, the businesses can be oblivious to these kinds of welfare researches.

In addition, some can say the sample size could have been larger as 120 companies could be considered as insufficient in determining what the general opinion of the subject of the study actually is. However, if more responses were gathered even with a sample of 120 companies, we could argue that results are valid even with a sample this sized.

The study itself could have included more in-depth questions to realise the motivations and ideals behind the responses. This would have required more preliminary research to be able to ask the right questions, predict the possible answers and the follow-up questions.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

What can be gathered from the results of this questionnaire is that Angry Birds Activity Park is not considered to be a suitable venue for company recreational days. What could be done next is to either consider a different approach method for marketing company recreational days or to just focus on tourists and families visiting. This has proven to be successful as the Park had did very well during its first year of operation.

As we can deduce form these results, companies consider the food & beverage service, outdoors activities (most probably sports related activities) and housing facilities when thinking about arranging recreational days. These are the factors where extra care should be taken when making offers to companies about recreational days. All of these factors are present in Vuokatti area, but not necessarily in Angry Birds Activity Park. A good suggestion could be to offer a joint package with other service providers to offer a package with all of the above (food, arranged outdoors activities, housing) and an introductory visit to the Angry Birds Activity Park so people could experience it first-hand. There could, for example, be a golf course arranged that would use the indoors golf range the Park provides.

For further studies on the subject, the sample size should be re-evaluated. The size of the next sample should be at least 200 companies, perhaps even more if the response rate is similar to this study. Also, it would be interesting to see if there are geographical differences in companies' attitudes towards company recreational days. The next study could involve a wider geographical are, as this study only involved companies 250 km from the Park.

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APPENDIX 1: ANGRY BIRDS ACTIVITY PARK VUOKATTI,

    YRITYSVIRKISTYSPÄIVÄT

Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti on maailman suurin Angry Birds-puisto, joka avattiin joulukuussa 2012. Puisto tarjoaa liikunta- ja leikkielämyksiä kaiken ikäisille kävijöille. Puiston yhteydestä löytyy myös Freestyle-halli, ravintola, myymälät ja muuta mukavaa tekemistä. Myös yrityspäivien pitäminen on mahdollista, puistosta löytyvät viihtyisät kokoustilat. Puisto sijaitsee aktiivilomailijoiden suosiman Vuokatin läheisyydessä.

Lisätietoa: http://www.angrybirdsvuokatti.fi/fi

*Pakollinen

Taustatiedot

    Yrityksen toimiala

    Henkilöstön määrä *

    Vastaajan asema

    Työntekijöiden keski-ikä

1. Onko yrityksessänne ollut henkilökunnan virkistystoimintaa? *
   - ⊙ Kyllä
   - ⊙ Ei

2. Jos virkistystoimintaa on ollut, mitä seuraavista henkilöstön virkistystoiminnan keinoista yrityksessänne on käytetty?
   Valitse enintään kolme

   - ☐ Sisätapahtumapäivät
   - ☐ Ulkotapahtumapäivät
   - ☐ Liikunta-aktiviteetit
   - ☐ Matkat
   - ☐ Muu:

3. Kuinka usein virkistystoimintaa on ollut? *
   - ⊙ Harvemmin kuin kerran vuodessa
   - ⊙ Kerran vuodessa
   - ⊙ Kaksi kertaa vuodessa
   - ⊙ 3 – 11 kertaa vuodessa

- ☐ Kuukausittain
- ☐ Useammin kuin kerran kuukaudessa

4. Ovatko työntekijöiden perheenjäsenet olleet mukana tapahtumissa? *

   - ☐ Kyllä
   - ☐ Ei

5. Jos työntekijöiden perheenjäsenet ovat olleet mukana tapahtumissa, miten usein tätä on tapahtunut ja keitä perheenjäseniä on ollut mukana?

	Puoliso	Puoliso ja lapset
Harvemmin kuin kerran vuodessa	☐	☐
Kerran vuodessa	☐	☐
Kaksi kertaa vuodessa	☐	☐
Useammin kuin kaksi kertaa vuodessa	☐	☐

6. Jos perheenjäsenet ovat olleet mukana virkistystoiminnassa, oletteko huomanneet

	Kyllä	Ei
- Ovatko työntekijät olleet sitoutuneimpia työyhteisöön?	☐	☐
- Ovatko työntekijät tutustuneet toisiinsa paremmin?	☐	☐
- Ovatko he viettäneet myös vapaa-aikaa enemmän yhdessä?	☐	☐

7. Aiotteko tulevaisuudessa järjestää henkilökunnan virkistystoimintaa? *

   - ☐ Yhtä usein kuin tähän mennessä
   - ☐ Useammin kuin tähän mennessä
   - ☐ Harvemmin kuin tähän mennessä
   - ☐ Emme lainkaan

8. Aiotteko tulevaisuudessa järjestää henkilökunnan virkistystoimintaa, jossa perheenjäsenet ovat mukana?

   - ☐ Yhtä usein kuin tähän mennessä
   - ☐ Useammin kuin tähän mennessä
   - ☐ Harvemmin kuin tähän mennessä
   - ☐ Emme lainkaan

9. Olitteko aiemmin tietoinen Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatin tarjoamista mahdollisuuksista järjestää virkistystapahtumia yrityksille? *

- ○ ☐ Kyllä
- ○ ☐ Ei

10. Kuinka todennäköisenä pitäisitte mahdollisuutta järjestää yrityksenne virkistystapahtuma Angry Birds –aktiveettipuistossa? *

- ○ ☐ Hyvin todennäköisenä
- ○ ☐ Todennäköisenä
- ○ ☐ Ei kovin todennäköisenä
- ○ ☐ Ei todennäköisenä

11. Mitä elementtejä pidätte tärkeänä virkistystapahtumaa suunnitellessanne? *
Valitse enintään viisi tärkeintä

- ○ ☐ Ruokailu
- ○ ☐ Ohjatut sisäaktiviteetit
- ○ ☐ Ohjatut ulkoaktiviteetit
- ○ ☐ Itsenäiset sisäaktiviteetit
- ○ ☐ Itsenäiset ulkoaktiviteetit
- ○ ☐ Kokoustilat/luentosalit
- ○ ☐ Saunatilat
- ○ ☐ Mahdollisuus yksityistilaisuuksiin
- ○ ☐ Majoitus
- ○ ☐ Muu: ☐

12. Mitä toivomuksia teillä on Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatissa järjestettävälle virkistystapahtumalle?

Mikäli kiinnostuitte mahdollisuudesta järjestää virkistystapahtuma Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatissa, olkaa hyvä ja jättäkää yhteystietonne tähän. Teihin otetaan yhteyttä.

Kiitos vastauksistanne!

APPENDIX 2: ANGRY BIRDS ACTIVITY PARK VUOKATTI, in English

Background information:
- Area of business
- Number of employees
- Respondents position
- Median age of employees'

1. Has there been any recreational action arranged by your company?
       Yes   No

2. Which recreational methods/ activities have been used?
- Indoors events
- Outdoors event
- Sports activities
- Trips
- Other_____

3. How often are recreational days arranged?
- Less than once per year
- Once pre year
- Twice a year
- 3 – 11 times a month
- Monthly
- More than once a month

4. Have the employee's families been involved in company recreational days?
       Yes   No

5. If employees' family members have been involved, how often has this happenend and which family members were involved?
                         Family members involved
- Less than once a year   Spouse Spouse and children
- Once a year   Spouse Spouse and children
- Twice a year   Spouse Spouse and children
- More than once a year   Spouse Spouse and children

6. If family members have been involved, have you noticed if
- The employees are more committed to their work?   Yes   No

- Have the employees gotten to know each other better?   Yes   No
- Have the employees been spending more time together?   Yes   No

7. Is your company planning to arrange company recreational days in the future?

- as often
- more often
- less often
- not at all

8. Is your company planning to arrange recreational days with the employees' families
    in the future?

- as often
- more often
- less often
- not at all

9. Were you aware of the possibility to arrange recreational days in Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti?
     Yes   No

10. How likely would you consider the possibility to arrange your company's recreational day in Angry Birds Activity Park?

- Very likely
- Likely
- Not very likely
- Not likely

11. What elements do you consider as important when planning a company recreational day?

- Food
- Arranged indoors activities
- Arranged outdoors activities
- Independent indoors activities
- Independent outdoors activities
- Meeting rooms / lecture spaces
- Sauna facilities
- Possibility for private events
- Accomodation

12. What preferences and / or wishes do you have for a recreational day arranged in the Angry Birds Park?

Thank you very much for your responses!

If you are interested in the possibility of arranging your company's recreational event in Angry Birds PArk Vuokatti, please leave your contanct details here. Your contact information will be forwarded to the Angry Birds Park Vuokatti.

APPENDIX 3: FREQUENCY TABLES

1. Has there been any recreational action arranged by your company?

Yes	27	96 %
No	1	4 %

2. Which recreational methods/ activities have been used?

Indoors events	17	25 %
Outdoors events	21	31 %
Sports activities	20	30 %
Trips	7	10 %
Other	2	3 %

3. How often are recreational days arranged?

Less than once per year	5	18 %
Once per year	7	25 %
Twice a year	9	32 %
3 – 11 times a year	7	25 %
Monthly	0	0 %
More than once a month	0	0 %

4. Have the employee's families been involved in company recreational days?

Yes	9	32 %
No	19	68 %

5. If employees' family members have been involved, how often has this happened and which family members were involved?

- Less than once a year

Spouse	4	80 %
Spuse and children	1	20 %

- Once a year

Spouse	3	60 %
Spouse and children	2	40 %

- Twice a year

Spouse	1	50 %
Spouse and children	1	50 %

- More than once a year

Spouse	1	100 %
Spouse and children	0	0 %

6. If family members have been involved, have you noticed if

- The employees are more committed to their work?

Yes	4	57 %
No	3	43 %

- Have the employees gotten to know each other better?

Yes	9	100 %
No	0	0 %

- Have the employees been spending more time together?

Yes	3	38 %
No	5	63 %

7. Is your company planning to arrange company recreational days in the future?

As often	23	82 %
More often	3	11 %
Less often	1	4 %
Not at all	1	4 %

8. Is your company planning to arrange recreational days with the employees' families in the future?

As often	13	46 %
More often	4	14 %

Less often	1	4 %
Not at all	10	36 %

9. Were you aware of the possibility to arrange recreational days in Angry Birds Activity Park Vuokatti?

Yes	20	71 %
No	8	29 %

10. How likely would you consider the possibility to arrange your company's recreational day in Angry Birds Activity Park?

Very likely	0	0 %
Likely	4	14 %
Not very likely	16	57 %
Not likely	8	29 %

11. What elements do you consider as important when planning a company recreational day?

Food	23	22 %
Arranged outdoors activities	15	14 %
Sauna	12	11 %
Housing	12	11 %
Meeting rooms/ lecture spaces	11	10 %
Arranged indoors activities	10	10 %
Private event possibilities	9	9 %
Independent outdoors activities	8	8 %
Independent indoors activities	3	3 %
Other	2	2 %