

samk



Satakunnan ammattikorkeakoulu
Satakunta University of Applied Sciences

SONJA PINNANEN

Customer-Centric Evaluation of Services at Ylläksen Vaellushevoseset

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM
MANAGEMENT
2024

ABSTRACT

Pinnanen, Sonja: Customer-Centric Evaluation of Services at Ylläksen Vaelushevokset

Bachelor's thesis

International Tourism Management

June 2024

Number of pages: 24

The purpose of this thesis was to figure out what the customers think about a trail riding company. The mission was to collect positive and negative aspects of the activities. This thesis was carried out as a commission for Ylläksen Vaelushevokset.

In the theoretical part, the animal-based tourism is shortly discussed as well as the trail riding is explored in common way and in detail for the company's offered trail riding activities. Furthermore, the discussion is about the Icelandic horses that the business uses and the Green Care activities both in common and in detail. Lastly the theory part has explored what is customer satisfaction and why it is an important part of the business success.

The research method that this thesis used was a quantitative research method. The data used was collected using an online questionnaire. The commissioner published a link to the online survey on social media, more in detail in the company's Facebook page. The survey was open between 19.04.2024 and 05.05.2024 and a total of 41 responses were received. The results can be considered as indicative, since the number of respondents was small.

A large number of respondents keep animal welfare, security and customer service as a key aspect of the trail riding business. Almost all of the respondents also keep important that there are variety of activities. The research also told in detail of what aspects should be improved and how likely the customers are to return the business.

Keywords: customer feedback, animal-based tourism, horse trekking, trail riding, customer satisfactory, Green Care

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 COMMISSIONER	5
3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE	6
4 ANIMAL-BASED TOURISM.....	7
4.1 Trail riding in Finland	7
4.2 Trail riding in Ylläksen Vaellushevokset	7
4.3 Icelandic Horses.....	8
4.4 Green Care Activities.....	9
4.5 Customer satisfactory.....	10
5 METHODOLOGY.....	12
5.1 Research method	12
5.2 Data collection process	12
6 RESULTS AND FINDINGS.....	14
7 CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION.....	20
7.1 Conclusion.....	20
7.2 Reliability	20
7.3 Reflection	21
7.4 Feedback from commissioner	22
REFERENCES	23
APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE	25

1 INTRODUCTION

Trail riding has gained more popularity in the last couple of years. People nowadays are keener to search tourism activities that involve nature and animals. Potential customers search for experiences and counterweight for busy times. According to many research animals and nature relieve stress. The author of this thesis aims to explore the trail riding business overall and in detail for the company of Ylläksen Vaellushevokset.

The aim of this thesis is to figure out how satisfied the customers are in the trail riding business. Also, if the customers care about the well-being of the animals and if the activities are ethical. This thesis reviews three things: the scale of different customers, how far have they come and is the company easily approachable.

The first part of the thesis covers commissioner, the subject of trail riding, characteristics, and usage of Icelandic horses and about the Green Care -service. After that the focus is on the methodology, data collection and the overall process of interpretation. In the last part there are analysed results and findings about this thesis. The commissioner of this thesis can use these results to look back on what went well or if there are any improvements to be made.

2 COMMISSIONER

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset Oy is a company based in Äkäslompolo, Lapland. The business owner is an entrepreneur Virpi Pohjolainen who bought the stable in 2015. Before that it was called Lapin Vaellushevokset. They offer horse trail rides all year round except when the horses have their breaks. The company is ending its operations in 2025. (Ylläksen Vaellushevokset, n.d.-e)

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset concentrates on the well-being of the horses. The owner Virpi believes that horses are meant to move freely and be with their heard. That is also why in the business the horses get to live outdoors in a big paddock and with the heard. (Ylläksen Vaellushevokset, n.d.-e)

The Green Care activities motivated the owner to include the Green Care activities into the business' itinerary. The owner got very positive energy when she realizes how positively the nature and animals can impact to special groups. The Green Care belongs smoothly to the activities since Virpi has a horse related nature instructor degree along with the horse business and entrepreneur degrees. (Ylläksen Vaellushevokset, n.d.-d)

3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this thesis is to get an overall picture how satisfied the customers are towards Ylläksen Vaellushevostet and to figure out if there are any modifications to be made. With this the business gets a good basic idea what has been good and whether there is a place for improvement. Furthermore, the business gets to see the meaning of their work and the bigger picture.

I am aiming to provide an overview of customers point of view about the trail riding business operation in the general level. The thesis will explain how customers can find the business and if they are easily accessible. In addition, from how far customers are willing to visit the business and the approximate age range of the customers.

This thesis can also be implemented to other similar business to get the idea what the customers like. There are not many theses related to horse trekking business overall and when overlooking the tourism aspect, the number of theses is even lesser.

This is a research-based thesis which will answer the following research question: How satisfied the customers are with the business? Additionally, it will explore these sub-questions: What improvements, if any, can be made to the business? Are the company's operations ethical concerning both the animals and the customers?

4 ANIMAL-BASED TOURISM

Animal-based tourism has increased its popularity over the years. The activities can be such as zoos, aquariums, horse riding and dog sledding. The animal-based activities are especially emphasized in the Nordic countries such as Finland, Sweden and Norway. In Finland the activities are more common in the Lapland region with activities such as, dog sledding, reindeer farms and horse riding. These activities are most consumed during the winter season but because the animal tourism has increased the activities are also receiving more customers during the summer season. (Bohn et al., 2018 pp. 3–5)

4.1 Trail riding in Finland

Trail riding is a relaxing way to enjoy nature and scenery on top of a horse. In trail rides you get to meet people who share the same passion towards nature and horses. Most of the times the trail ride is a short 1–2-hour trip around the forest and roads. The trail rides can also last for several days or include other activities such as swimming with the horses. In Finland the most used breeds for trail rides are the Finnish Horse, the Norwegian Fjord Horse or the Icelandic Horse. In the short trail rides, there is usually less recruitment for the skills in riding. The longer trail rides require the customer to be able to handle the horse well enough to prevent any unnecessary accident to occur. (Suomen Vaellustallien liitto ry, n.d.)

4.2 Trail riding in Ylläksen Vaellushevokset

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset offer various activities suitable for many people. They have shorter trail rides around one to three hours, longer half day trips that last 4,5 hours as well as whole day trips which is 8 hours. In the summer they offer trips during the midnight sun that last from 8pm until 5.30am. In the busier winter season, they mostly offer the shorter rides, so more customers get to experience the trail ride without the horses being too tired. They additionally offer goahti trips where they first ride a couple of hours before stopping to a

goahti to grill some sausages and making some crêpes before going back to the stable. (Ylläksen Vaellushevoset, n.d.-a)

During summer months the business offers camps from children to adults. The camp last for five days for teens and four days for adults. The camp includes horse riding, place to sleep, meals etc. The customers can choose if they want to sleep there or just participate during the day. On top of that there are six camps during August and September that each last for five days and is meant for adults. The activities in these camps are mostly similar compared to summer camps but there are few camps that includes one night stay in a wilderness cabin or visiting a reindeer yard. A few camp weeks also offers traditional wood sauna and smoke sauna visit. (Ylläksen Vaellushevoset, n.d.-b)

Beside the trail rides and camps the business sometimes offer special courses that concentrates on the gait riding. These special courses are held by an outside person that is not a part of the business regular staff. There is a possibility to stay there overnight with an additional cost. There are no meals provided, therefore the customers need to take their own food with them. (Ylläksen Vaellushevoset, n.d.-c)

4.3 Icelandic Horses

The horses that Ylläksen Vaellushevoset and many other trail riding businesses use is the Icelandic horse. These horses are suitable for trail rides since their physics is made for rough terrain since they are original Viking horses that have been over thousand years isolated in the rough island. Naturally they live in big herds so the horses are usually following the horse in front of them so there are rarely any conflicts between the horses. Icelandic horses are usually around 120-150cm, with average of 135cm and many refrain them as ponies. The height of the horses is measured at the withers. That is one of the reasons that they are used in trail rides, since adults and children can both use the same horses as they are pony size but are able to carry more weight. (Suomen Islanninhevosyhdistys ry, n.d.-a)

Icelandic horses use special tack that is more comfortable for the rider. It is also a bit different to ride an Icelandic horse compared to most other commonly used riding horses, as Icelandic horses usually have one or two gaits more than normal horses. Horses usually have three gaits; walk, trot and canter. Icelandic horses can have two more gaits in addition. There is one a bit more stable and pleasant called tölt. Tölt is a four-stroke gait like walk. It is noticeably faster than walk even though the legs are moving the same way. The other one is a bit more advanced and faster called flying pace. Flying pace is a two-stroke gait like trot. The difference is that in trot the diagonal pair of legs is moving at the same time. In flying pace, the legs move lateral so both legs in the same side move at the same time. It is preferred that Icelandic horses should have at least four gaits and that is taken into consideration when breeding. There are still some Icelandic horses that only have three gaits and it is still recognized for the breed. (Suomen Islanninhevostyöryhmä ry, n.d.-b)

4.4 Green Care Activities

Green Care Finland was established in 2010. It is funded together with a European Union programme called European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development that concentrates on investing to Europe's rural areas. It promotes the use of nature and animals in the health services. The clients are usually from the vulnerable groups such as elderly people, immigrants as well as disabled people. The services are supporting overall wellbeing, and the services are usually guided by organizations that are connected to nature tourism or wellbeing tourism. (Green Care, n.d.-a)

The most well-known and used method in Finland is animal-assisted therapy. The places offering wellbeing services including animals are stables that offer riding therapy including the social pedagogical horse activities. It is beneficial for those who have problems with focusing and for those who might have anxiety. The activities can be as simple as brushing or petting the horse. Some

might have short riding sessions since it also depends how comfortable the customers are with horses. (Green Care, n.d.-b)

Green Care programs also include other activities that are nature-based such as gardening and forest therapy. Services often are group activities, but they can be modified into individual sessions or family programs. The activities have a specific goal like improving mental and physical health, enhancing social skills, and providing educational benefits about the nature and animals. Documented outcomes highlight the significant benefits that the participants can gain from these activities. (Kuuluvainen & Sarén, 2016 pp. 5, 10 – 13)

Professionals providing Green Care services are required to have specific qualifications and training to ensure the safety and effectiveness, following the certification processes and standards. Green Care Finland collaborates with multiple institutions such as healthcare providers, educational institutions, and community organizations to enhance the reach and impact. Efforts are made to ensure that the services are accessible to all target groups, including people with disabilities and language barriers. Participant feedback is regularly gathered and used to improve services. Future plans aim to expand and enhance Green Care offerings. (Ylilauri & Yli-Viikari, 2019, pp. 62–65)

The Green Care that Ylläksen Vaellushevokset have is held during the summer months and non-busy autumn months and it is not intended to be rehabilitation or therapy. The activities involve horse and nature-assisted activities, customized to each client's individual needs and goals. The activities aim to develop motor skills, enhance social interaction, and improve workplace well-being. Additionally, small school and daycare groups can participate in activities to learn about horses and nature overall. (Ylläksen Vaellushevokset, n.d.-d)

4.5 Customer satisfactory

Customer satisfaction is a way to measure how well the company's products or services meet the expectations of its customers. It reflects the overall satisfaction of customers with their experience and various aspects such as product

quality, service delivery, and overall interaction with the business. Customer satisfaction is a crucial part of the company's long-lasting success. (Lei et al., 2022)

There are factors that can influence the overall customer satisfaction. Communication is an important key element. If there is no communication between the company and the customer the satisfactory stays on the low end. The personalization is also a key factor that allows the customers to feel as an individual rather than just a random customer. If the business can tailor, the activities even in a small scale it allows a better opportunity for the customers. It is important to collect feedback so the customers can feel to be heard and that way the company also gets an idea of where the problem areas might be. That leaves to the last key factory that is problem solving. The companies' needs to take into consideration the customer complaints to keep the satisfactory level high. (Guido, 2015, pp. 2–4)

It is important to measure the customer satisfaction to keep track of the customers opinion. The most used method to collect customer feedback is via surveys. That can be collected in the company's facility or online. Other methods are also used to collect the feedback. One of them being that the customers can give simple and short feedback right after the activity or product is purchased. That can include customer service or if the atmosphere was good. Also, reviews such as social media or online can give the company a good understanding of the customers opinion. (Lee et al., 2016, pp. 4–8)

If the customer satisfaction is high, it improves the customer's loyalty. Since if the company meets the customers' expectations the customers are more likely to revisit and recommend the place to others. The recommendations increase the positive word-of-mouth, aiding the company to grow. The customer satisfaction can also often increase the competitive advantages of the company's targeted market. These all allows the overall revenue to grow and make the company more successful. (Lei et al., 2022)

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research method

This thesis is a research-based thesis that uses quantitative research method. The quantitative method chosen and implemented in this case was questionnaire. The quantitative method was chosen since its characteristic are numerical data that can be analysed easily (Somekh & Lewin, 2005, p. 232). The quantitative methods can provide precise and quantifiable evidence that are used to measure and compare different variables. Data which is gathered from the quantitative methods can be analysed using statistical methods to identify those patterns, relationships, and other effects. Quantitative approach emphasizes objectivity while attempting to minimize researcher bias. That can be achieved through structured procedures. (Litosseliti, 2018, pp. 64–66)

5.2 Data collection process

Questionnaire is a good solution for a data collection method since it offers standardised questions and all the respondents are asked the questions in the same way. Questionnaires are also efficient and wide range of people geographically can take part of the survey in their own time. In addition, the questionnaires are used when anonymity is needed and that also increases people to be more honest with their answers. (Veal, 2018, pp.328–330)

The data collection method that this thesis is based on, is a questionnaire (appendix 1) that had a total of 14 questions, 11 of them being a mandatory question. The questions chosen for the questionnaire were decided on the topicality and relevance based on the research questions. The questionnaire was not too long so that the people would answer it and most of the questions had a multiple-choice part to make it easier and clearer. The questionnaire was short since people tend to avoid longer, more in detail going questionnaires.

As for the data collection process the first part was to come up with the questions that would help to bring answers to the research questions. In addition to ensure that the data collected would be kept safe and anonymous. The data was collected via Google Forms and the data also went to a Google Sheet to ensure that the answers will be safe.

The Google Forms survey was open from 19.04.2024 to 05.05.2024. The survey was on the company's Facebook page. In addition, it was on a Facebook group meant for riders to ensure that more people would see the survey. Total of 41 answered the survey, most of the respondents had found the survey via the company's Facebook page.

After receiving all the data, it was put on a Google Sheet. From there the data was analysed one by one to form charts to help the analysing process. Some of the data had to be modified to fit better on the charts. In addition, some of the answers had to be changed since the answers were put into a group rather than collecting the individual aspect. When the charts were ready, they were analysed and added to the thesis. Rest of the answers that cannot be formed as a chart had to be analysed by hand and a written analyse were created.

I have used ChatGPT in some of the questionnaire answers when analysing them. I have clearly stated in the text in which parts I have used the AI to summarize my open question answers. I have put the answers there anonymously only to gather summarized data for the longer answers that would be too hard to fit into a chart or go through one by one. Most of the existing answers were similar so the ChatGPT was a tool to summarize and get the key points.

6 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Majority (58,5%) of respondents were over 36 years of age. The figure 1 shows that the largest group was 36-45 which was 34,1% of all the answers. The business mainly targets to adults, so this result was not shocking that almost all the respondents were over 16 years old. There was only one answerer who was under the age of 15.

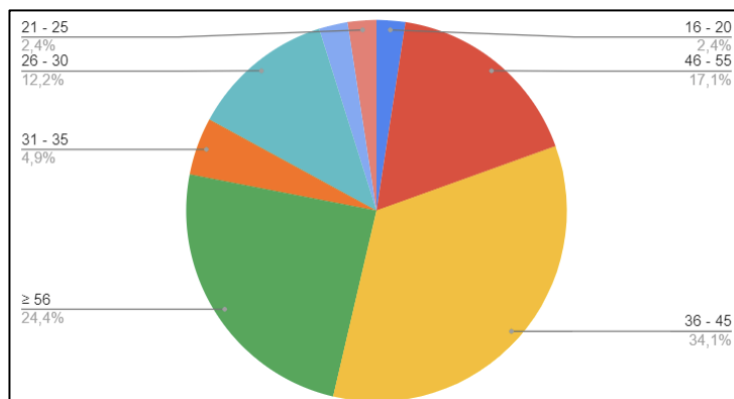


Figure 1. Age (n=41)

The two largest groups based on the region were Pohjois-Pohjanmaa (17,1%) and Uusimaa (17,1%). All the respondents were from Finland. Fourteen out of nineteen regions were mentioned in the questionnaire which shows that the customers come all over the country. This was also expected since the business mainly operates with tourists. I was hoping to get some international answers, but the seasons was already ended when making the questionnaire.

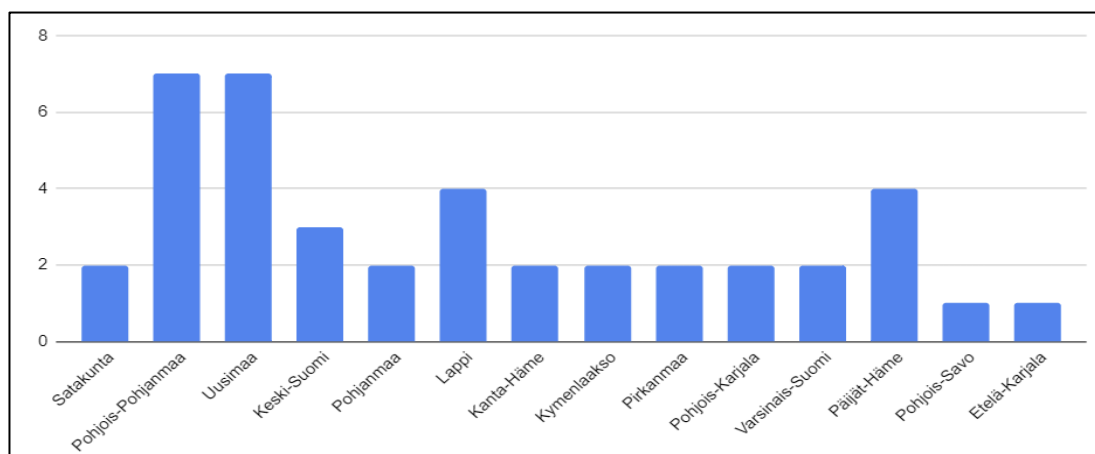


Figure 2. Region of the respondents (n=41)

In the figure 3 it can be seen most of the respondents heard about the place via internet (39%). The second largest answer group was that they heard about the place from their friend (22%). The answers were simplified for clarity, narrowing them down to the closest options: ad, flyer, or internet.

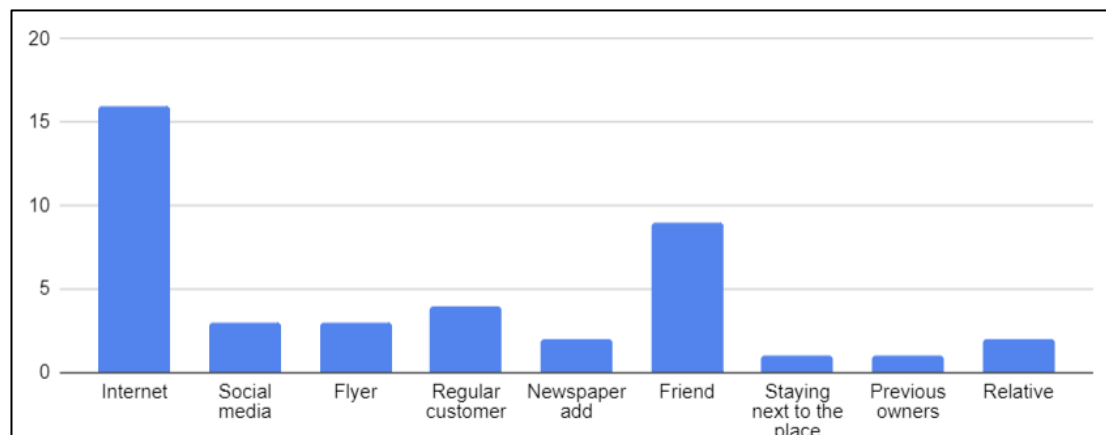


Figure 3. How did you hear about the place? (n=41)

The figure 4 was to figure out if the websites were clear for the customers. Most of the respondents answered yes (95,1%) but there were a few no answers (4,9%). In conclusion the website is clear, and people can find the necessary information there. Even though not all had the same opinion about this.

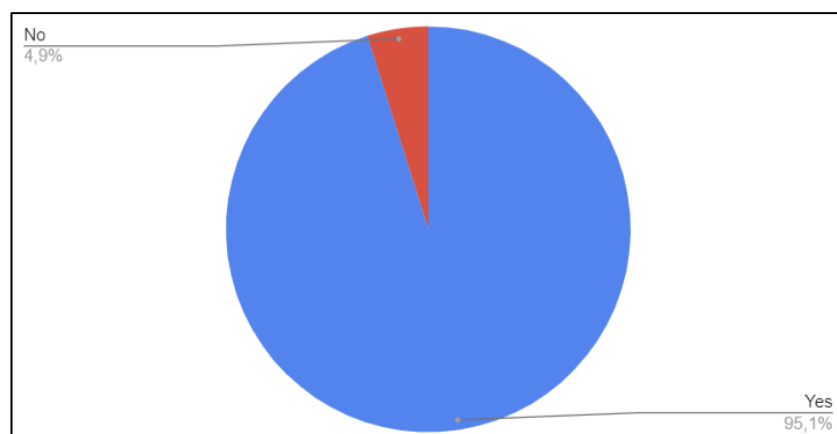


Figure 4. Was the website clear? (n=41)

Since all the horses in the business are Icelandic horses, the question asked was if the respondents had any prior experience about the Icelandic horses. The majority (75,6%) had prior experience as seen in the figure 5. Since there

are no requirements about the experience that come to the certain horse breed there was almost a quarter (24,4%) who had experience of the Icelandic horses.

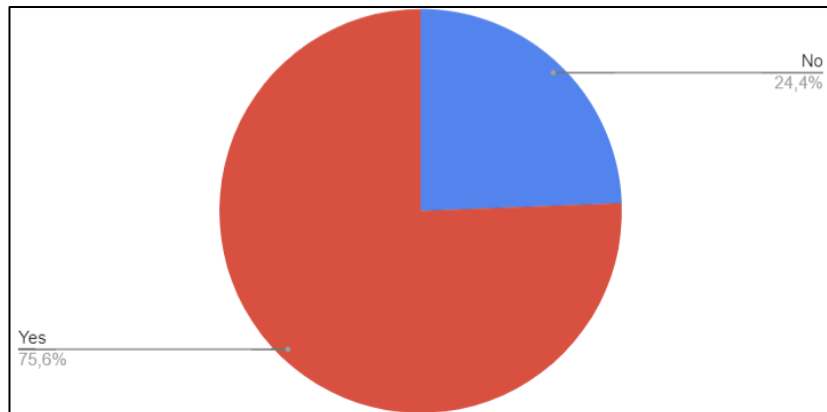


Figure 5. Did you have prior experience with Icelandic horses? (n=41)

Most of the respondents had visited the business before. In the figure 6 you can see that 82,9% had visited Ylläksen Vaellushevokset. Only 17,1% of the visitors were there for the first time. It was also stated in the open question that a few of the ones that answered no had visited the company when the last owner was still in charge. There was also few who said that they had only visited once in the early 21st century.

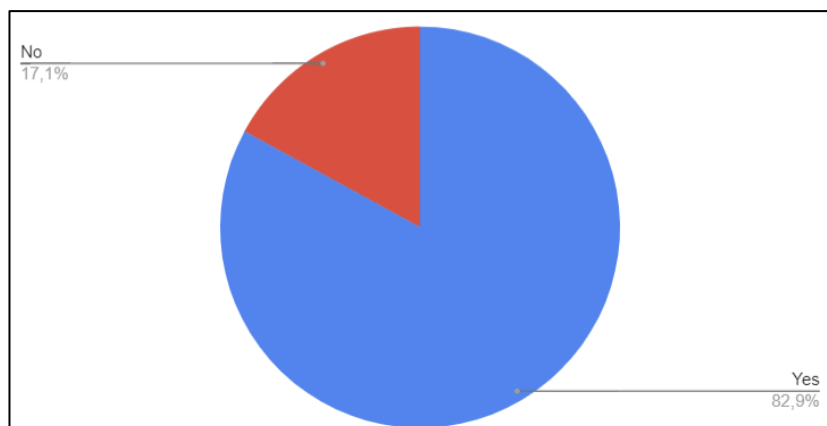


Figure 6. Have you visited the business before? (n=41)

The ones who had visited the business before were asked how many times they had been there. Most respondents had visited 1 – 5 times before (67,6%).

There were a lot more returned customers than anticipated. Some of them was regular customers, who had started while the previous owner were there and they continued throughout the years to visit Ylläksen Vaellushevokset.

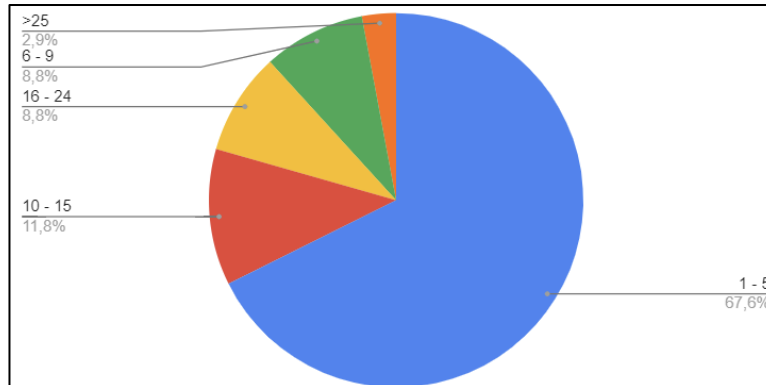


Figure 7. If you answered yes, how many times? (n=34)

In the figure 8 and 9 the scale was from 1 to 5 (1 – would not to 5 definitely would). In the figure 8 It was how likely the respondents would visit the place again. Most of the answers being positive 4 or 5 with 87,8%. In the figure 9 the scale was how likely the respondents would recommend the place to others. The positive answers for this were even more than the previous figure 8 by being in the 4 or 5 with 90,3%.

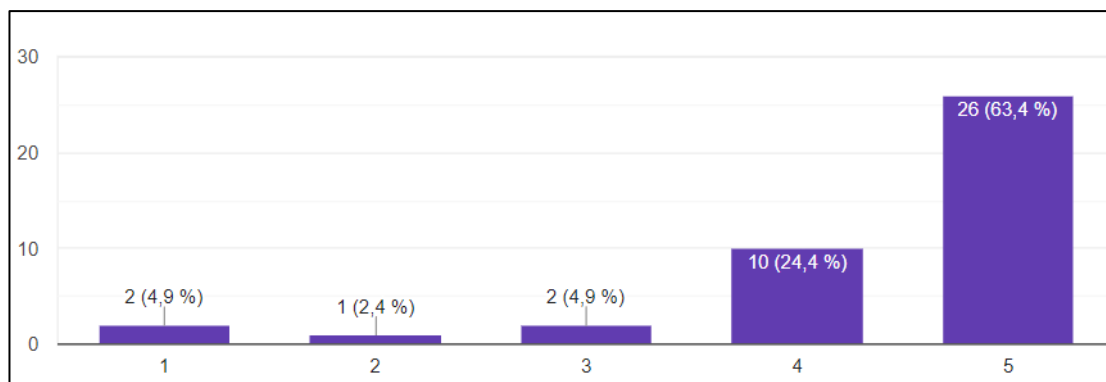


Figure 8. How likely you are to visit again? (n=41)

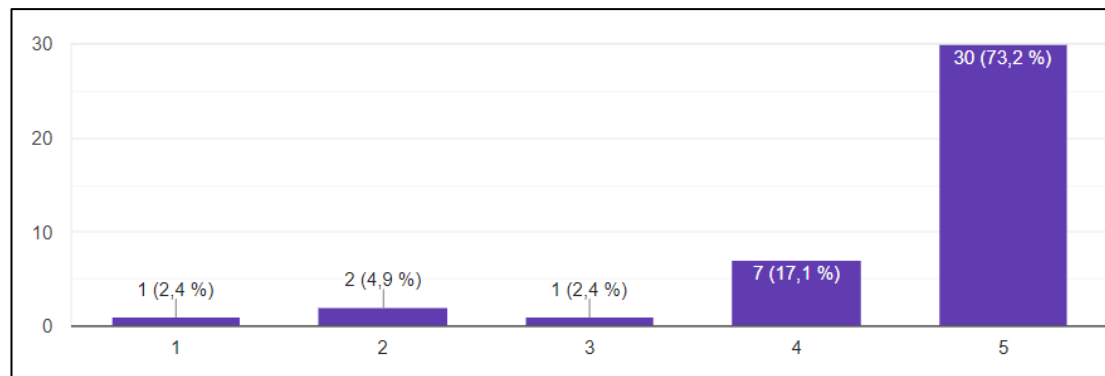


Figure 9. How likely you are to recommend the place to others? (n=41)

There was a question about if the place was easy to find and easy to access. All the respondents answered yes. From that we can figure out that the place has all the required information about the address available for the customers. The place is also near the main road in the tourist area, so the road signs are also there to help the customers to find the place.

ChatGPT has been used to the next chapter to summarize the answers. The first question is what was good in the business. In the answers there was eight main points that was mentioned in almost all of the answers. The eight points were: there are well-maintained horses, beautiful landscapes and scenic trails, emphasis on safety and clear instructions, good customer service, enjoyable and therapeutic experience, appreciation for the owner Virpi and staff's expertise in caring for horses, suitable horses for riders' skill levels and positive feedback on overall experience and organization.

The second question was if there was something that could have been improved. The answers here are also summarized by ChatGPT. Mostly people answered there is nothing to be changed but there were five main points that differentiated from rest of the answers. Firstly, there were concerns about the strictness of instructions and safety during activities. There were mixed experiences with customer service, including interactions with the owner and staff. A few had a disappointment with the riding experience, such as not meeting expectations regarding pace (e.g., lack of galloping) and inability to change order of the riders. Some participants expressed overall dissatisfaction with their experience without explanation. Lastly there were suggestions for

improvements, such as offering varied riding routes, addressing customer concerns promptly, and enhancing social activities with horses before and after riding.

It can be noticed that there are few things that occurs both in what went well and where there is room for improvement. Some had a great experience with the customer service but on the other hand some felt that there was something missing. The safety and instructions were also mentioned in both sections. This is all because every person has a different mindset and criteria of what they expect. Overall, I would say that the business is doing well and getting a lot of positive comments with only a few improvements needed.

The final non-compulsory question was open feedback. Few of the respondents' answers to this question. Most of them said all good for the future since the business is closing in 2025. There were also a few other answers that are worth of mentioning also by using the help of ChatGPT in summarizing. The owner Virpi was praised for being friendly, approachable, and excellent with horses and customers. Participants enjoyed fantastic trail ride experiences, including unforgettable overnight stays at Rönölä. Guests appreciated the horse riding, accommodations, and food offered by the business. There was admiration for the respect and care shown towards the horses, allowing them to live naturally and have proper breaks required. Despite the business closing, there was hope for a successor to continue similar activities.

7 CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

7.1 Conclusion

The research went through animal-based tourism and trail riding as a concept to help the understanding for the company's operation. Also, the Icelandic horses are a key element for the theory since it allows to people to see that the breed is important aspect of the trail riding when looking for the experience. The findings demonstrated that the animals are often related to the Green Care activities and most of the times trail riding business are taking part of that. The customer satisfaction was also a relevant factor to go through to understand the analysis made in the thesis.

As for the respondents they gave a detailed answers of the company's positive aspect. The research indicates high satisfaction among customers, with well-maintained horses and beautiful landscapes being the most praised aspects. However, some areas for improvement were identified, such as the flexibility of instructions and consistency in customer service. It is recommended that the business considers implementing more varied riding routes, improving customer service and potentially enhancing social activities with the horses. These changes could increase overall customer satisfaction and loyalty.

In conclusion the thesis provides good information for the future on how to be a functioning trail riding company. It is on display how Ylläksen Vaellushevoseet succeeds and how they and any other company could improve their operation. Customers focused more on the instructions and service, so inspecting those aspects thoroughly is very important.

7.2 Reliability

Since the number of respondents was small (41 respondents), the research cannot be held totally reliable since that would require at least 100 respondents. The research can be considered as an indicative because of the small

respondent rate. Most of the people were over 36 years of age, probably since the questionnaire was shared through Facebook. The younger riders mostly use Instagram or other social media platforms. The open question answer rate was good so that brings more reliability for the answers.

As for the theory part there are both domestic and international sources used. Most of the websites that was used as a source were up to date and included current information. Also, the books used were not too old so they can be considered a reliable along with the websites.

7.3 Reflection

At first, I thought of doing a totally different subject for the thesis and possibly without the commissioner. However, I ended up creating a more interesting subject and more familiar for me than the original plan. The commissioner was a great addition since it gave me more motivation to do this thesis. I ended up choosing Ylläksen Vaellushevostet since I wanted to figure out the trail riding customer satisfaction in a company that works in Lapland. They also had a great website to help me with this thesis process.

I think that I did quite well for my thesis since I had not made research independently before. My topic is current and has been more in the news. Especially the pandemic made the nature activities more known. The goal is presented clearly, and it is justified. I wish I had found more sources, but the trail riding business is still quite unheard in the theory. I think that the questionnaire was successful although I would have wanted also international answers. I think that I was a bit late for doing my survey since the main season had already ended. I am still satisfied about the questions and the surveys' clearness.

My biggest challenge during the thesis process was to choose the topic and write the thesis effectively. I do not think that my topic was too broad, so the end result was coherent, and the research questions got answers. I had a

loose schedule about this thesis when I started but managed to follow it quite well. I enjoyed that the thesis had multiple sections since I really liked when collecting the data and analysing it. So, I am satisfied with my end results of this thesis.

After reading more deeply about trail riding and Green Care activities I learned a lot of new information about how the animals and nature can heal people. I believe that my thesis can help other trail riding businesses or others that are interested of the topic. In addition, people who are looking to start a trail riding business can look the analysing part and see what the customers are looking when choosing the trail riding business to go. I also think that trail riding will be even more popular in the long run.

7.4 Feedback from commissioner

The commissioner's feedback was provided by Ylläksen Vaellushevokset, Virpi Pohjolainen. The feedback will first be written in English that I have roughly translated followed by the original Finnish comment.

Firstly, thank you for doing this thesis. Your thesis was well made. It has been planned well and prepared. You picked good questions for the customers and the answering has been easy for them. It was nice to hear how many of them gave positive feedback and gave all the best for me in the future, as well as for the new business for the next year. You have considered things broadly and thoroughly. All my feedback is purely positive.

Kiitos ensinnäkin, että teit tämän opinnäytetyön. Lopputyösi oli taitavasti tehty, hyvin suunniteltu ja valmisteltu. Olit osannut valita asiakkaille hyvät kysymykset, ja vastaaminen heille oli ollut helppoa. Oli kiva kuulla miten moni antoi positiivista palautetta ja toivotti minulle hyvää tulevaan, uuteen yritykseen ensi vuonna. Olit pohtinut asioita laajasti ja tarkasti. Kaikki palautteeni on siis vain positiivista.

REFERENCES

- Bohn, D., García-Rosell, J-C., & Äijälä, M. H. (2018). Animal-based tourism services in Lapland. Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutti. https://blogi.eoppimispalvelut.fi/elma/files/2018/01/Animal-based-Tourism-Services-in-Lapland_Report_2018.pdf
- Green Care Finland. (n.d.-a) Green Care. Retrieved April, 8, 2024, from <https://www.gcfinland.fi/green-care/>
- Green Care Finland. (n.d.-b) Eläinavusteiset menetelmät. Retrieved April, 4, 2024, from <https://www.gcfinland.fi/green-care-/menetelmat/elainavusteiset-menetelmat/>
- Guido, G. (2015). Customer Satisfaction. Wiley Encyclopedia of Management, 1–8. doi:10.1002/9781118785317.weom090287
- Kuuluvainen, V. & Sarén, H. (2016). Luonnon hyvinvointivaikutukset – hyödynnä tietoa matkailuliiketoiminnassa. Mikkelin Ammattikorkeakoulu. <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/116464/URNISBN9789515885500.pdf?sequence=1>
- Lee, Y., Wang, Y., Lu, S., Hsieh, Y., Chien, C., Tsai, S. & Dong, W. (2016). An empirical research on customer satisfaction study: a consideration of different levels of performance. SpringerPlus. doi:10.1186/s40064-016-3208-z
- Lei, Z., Duan, H., Zhang, L., Ergu, D. & Liu, F. (2022). The main influencing factors of customer satisfaction and loyalty in city express delivery. Front. Psychol. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1044032
- Litosseliti, L. (2018). Research Methods in Linguistics (Second edition). Bloomsbury Academic. <https://bit.ly/4dIF0aX>
- Somekh, B., & Lewin, C. (2005). Research Methods in the Social Sciences. SAGE Publications. <http://bit.ly/3UHSBqE>
- Suomen Islanninhevosityhdistys ry. (n.d.-a) Islanninhevonen. Retrieved April, 21, 2024, from <https://www.islanninhevonen.net/islanninhevonen/>
- Suomen Islanninhevosityhdistys ry. (n.d.-b) Askellajit. Retrieved April, 21, 2024, from <https://www.islanninhevonen.net/islanninhevonen/askellajit/>
- Suomen Vaellustalliien liitto ry. (n.d.) Vaellusratsastus lajina. Retrieved March 21, 2024, from <https://www.vaellustallit.fi/suomenvaellustalliienliittory/vaellusratsastus-lajina/>
- Veal, A. J. (2018). Research methods for leisure and tourism (Fifth edition.). Pearson. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/samk/reader.action?docID=5187252>

Ylilauri, M. & Yli-Viikari, A. (2019). Kohti luonnolista hyvinvointia: Näkökulmia luontoperustaisen toiminnan kehittämiseen. Vaasan Yliopisto <https://osuva.uwasa.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/8172/978-952-476-861-0.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset. (n.d.-a) Ratsastusretket. Retrieved May, 5, 2024, from <https://www.yllaksenvaellushevokset.fi/ratsastusretket2>

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset. (n.d.-b) Leirit ja Vaellukset. Retrieved May, 5, 2024, from <https://www.yllaksenvaellushevokset.fi/leirit>

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset. (n.d.-c) Kurssit. Retrieved May, 5, 2024, from <https://www.yllaksenvaellushevokset.fi/kurssit>

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset. (n.d.-d) Green Care. Retrieved May, 15, 2024, from <https://www.yllaksenvaellushevokset.fi/green-care>

Ylläksen Vaellushevokset. (n.d.-e) Yrittäjä. Retrieved May, 31, 2024, from <https://www.yllaksenvaellushevokset.fi/yrittaja>

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Customer Survey – Ylläksen Vaellushevokset

This survey is part of my International Tourism Management thesis that I am making for Ylläksen Vaellushevokset. The aim is to illustrate the business customer satisfaction.

1. Age? *
 - ≤ 15
 - 16 – 20
 - 21 – 25
 - 26 – 30
 - 31 – 35
 - 36 – 45
 - 46 – 55
 - ≥ 56

2. Region? *
 - Ahvenanmaa
 - Etelä-Karjala
 - Etelä-Savo
 - Kainuu
 - Kanta-Häme
 - Keski-Pohjanmaa
 - Keski-Suomi
 - Kymenlaakso
 - Lappi
 - Pirkanmaa
 - Pohjanmaa
 - Pohjois-Karjala
 - Pohjois-Pohjanmaa
 - Pohjois-Savo
 - Päijät-Häme
 - Satakunta
 - Uusimaa
 - Varsinais-Suomi
 - Other

3. If you answered other, what?

4. How did you hear about Ylläksen Vaellushevokset? *

5. Was the website clear enough? *

6. Did you have prior experiences with Icelandic horses? *
 - Yes
 - No

7. Have you visited Ylläksen Vaellushevokset before? *
 - Yes
 - No
8. If you answered yes, how many times you have visited?
9. Was it easy to get there? *
 - Yes
 - No
10. How likely you are to visit again? *
1 would not go – 5 definitely would go
11. What was good in your opinion? *
12. How likely you are to recommend this place to others? *
1 do not recommend – 5 definitely recommend
13. Is there something to improve? *
14. Do you have any other feedback about the company?