

**Marketing strategy for a new product  
A Day OUT at the Wells, promotion of tourism in  
Tunbridge Wells, Kent**

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Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně

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#### I. Teoretická část

- Zpracujte literární rešerzi k tématu marketingová strategie nového produktu a formulujte teoretická východiska.

#### II. Praktická část

- Analyzujte marketingovou strategii propagace turismu v Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
- Navrhněte zlepšení marketingové strategie propagace turismu v Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

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## **ABSTRAKT**

Cílem této práce je vytvořit marketingovou strategii pro servis propagace turismu v Tunbridge Wells (dále jen TW), což je lázeňské město v hrabství Kent na jihovýchodě Anglie. Teoretická část práce popisuje všeobecně různé marketingové strategie nového produktu. Analytická část seznamuje s výsledky marketingového výzkumu návštěvnosti TW a jeho okolí, ze kterého bylo zjištěno, že je potřeba lépe propagovat turistické aktivity v oblasti TW. Proto byl zkoumán potenciál vytvoření rekreačního programu nazvaného “A Day OUT at the Wells” (Výlet do Wells), který by spojoval několik turistických atrakcí s velmi známou “A Day at the Wells”, interaktivní expozicí georgiánského TW v centru města. Návštěva Spa Valley Railway (parní vlaky z TW do nedaleké Groombridge), Pantiles (lázeňská kolonáda v centru města) a dalších míst bude propagována jako balík atrakcí za slevněné paušální vstupné.

Klíčová slova: marketingová strategie, primární výzkum, sekundární výzkum, PESTEL analýza, SWOT analýza, Ansoffova matice, životní cyklus výrobku, Bostonská matice, marketingový mix

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this work is to create a marketing strategy for a service promoting tourism in Tunbridge Wells (thereinafter as TW), which is a spa town in the county of Kent in the south-east of England. The theoretical part describes various marketing strategies of a new product in general. The analysis presents the results of the marketing research of visitor rate of the TW area, which showed that there is a need for better promotion of tourism activities. The potential of creating a leisure program called “A Day OUT at the Wells”, which would connect several tourist attractions with the well-known “A Day at the Wells” was therefore investigated. Visiting the Spa Valley Railway, Pantiles and other features will be promoted as a package of attractions for a reduced all-inclusive admission fee.

Keywords: Marketing strategy, primary research, secondary research, PESTEL analysis, SWOT analysis, Ansoff matrix, Product life cycle, Boston matrix, Marketing mix

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## INTRODUCTION

The service for which I am going to produce a marketing strategy is promotion of tourism in the Tunbridge Wells area provided in conjunction with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

From my own experience I feel that there is a need for better promotion of tourism activities in Tunbridge Wells area (spa town in a county of Kent in the south-east of England), where I used to live and want to come back.

Tunbridge Wells seems to lose out to the more glamorous destinations such as London and the South East Coast resorts with their obvious attractions; even local people do not fully enjoy what Tunbridge Wells has to offer.

That is why I want to concentrate on the closest destinations for a family weekend or a day out, which is Tunbridge Wells itself plus its surroundings. Local tourism should be helped by the fact that the tourist board information office is situated in the town center.

I shall be investigating the tourism office in order to find out whether the local attractions are well known to the locals and nation-wide or whether they need advertising by means of TV-ads, radio-ads and leaflets and other means. I intend to find this out by talking to the Tourist Board itself, interviewing the local people and indeed by studying the tourism statistics throughout the UK.

I would also investigate **the potential of creating a leisure program called “A Day OUT at the Wells”**, which would connect several tourist attractions with the well-known “A Day at the Wells” (interactive exhibition of Georgian TW in the centre of TW). Visiting the Spa Valley Railway (steam trains from TW to Groombridge), Pantiles (spa colonnade in the town centre) and other features will be promoted as a package with the Day at the Wells. I would carry out a survey to find out whether there is an interest in these attractions.

Having done that and expecting a high visitor rate, I would then put the project into practice – with a possibility of an advertising campaign, which will be carried out, offering an unforgettable “A Day OUT at the Wells” for a reduced all-inclusive admission fee.



## **I. THEORY**

# 1 MARKETING STRATEGY FOR A NEW PRODUCT

## 1.1 What is a product?

A Sony DVD player, a Ford Taurus, a Costa Rican vacation, a Café Mocha at Starbucks and advice from your family doctor – all are products. We define a product as anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption and that may satisfy a want or need. Products include more than just tangible goods. Broadly defined, products include physical objects, services, events, persons, places, organizations, ideas, or mixes of these entities. Services are a form of product that consists of activities, benefits, or satisfactions offered for sale that are essentially intangible and do not result in the ownership of anything. Examples are banking, hotel, airline, retail, tax preparation, and home repair services. [1, p.223]

Mr. Philip Kotler says [1, p.223]: „Today, as products and services become more and more commoditized, many companies are moving to a new level in creating value for their customers. To differentiate their offers, beyond simply making products and delivering services, companies are staging, marketing and delivering memorable customer *experiences*. Whereas products are tangible and services are intangible, *experiences are memorable*.” And I do want to make my service truly memorable.

## 1.2 Services marketing

Service industries vary greatly. *Governments* offer services through courts, employment services, hospitals, military services, police and fire departments, postal services, and schools.

*Private non-for-profit organizations* offer services through museums, charities, churches, colleges, foundations, or hospitals.

A large number of *business organizations* offer services – airlines, banks, hotels, insurance companies, consulting firms, medical and law practices, entertainment companies, real estate firms, advertising and research agencies, and retailers. [1, p.249]

### 1.2.1 Nature of Services

Mr. Philip Kotler defines service as [6, p.440]: „Služba je jakýkoliv akt nebo výkon, který může jedna strana nabídnout jiné straně a který je svojí podstatou nehmotný a nevede ke změně vlastnictví čehokoliv.“ Service is any act or achievement, which one side can offer to another, and which is by its principle intangible and does not lead to a change of ownership of anything. (R.S.)

There are four service characteristics – *intangibility*, *inseparability*, *variability*, and *perishability*.

- *Service intangibility* – a major characteristic of services - they cannot be seen, tasted, heard, or smelled before they are bought.
- *Service inseparability* - a major characteristic of services – they are produced and consumed at the same time and cannot be separated from their providers, whether the providers are people or machines.
- *Service variability* - a major characteristic of services – their quality may vary greatly, depending on who provides them and when, where, and how.
- *Service perishability* - a major characteristic of services – they cannot be stored for later sale or use. Perishability is not a problem when the demand is steady. Once the demand fluctuates, many companies offering services have problems. There are several strategies, which adjust better demand and supply of services. On the side of demand it is – differential pricing, demand out of season, complementary services, booking systems. On the side of supply it is – extra staff in the peak of season, increase of effectiveness, increase of consumers` participation, joint services. [6, p.446]

### 1.2.2 Marketing strategies for service

Because services differ from tangible products, they often require additional marketing approaches. In a product business, products are fairly standardized and can sit on shelves waiting for customers. But in a service business, the customer and front-line service employee *interact* to create the service. Thus, service providers must interact effectively with customers to create superior value during service encounters.

Therefore service marketing requires more than just traditional external marketing using the four Ps. It also requires internal marketing and interactive marketing.

- *Internal marketing* – means that the service firm must effectively train and motivate its customer-contact employees and supporting service people to work as a team to provide customer satisfaction.
- *Interactive marketing* – means that the service quality depends heavily on the quality of the buyer-seller interaction during the service encounter. [1, p.250]

### 1.2.3 Marketing strategy and the marketing mix

Customers stand in the center. The goal is to build strong and profitable customer relationships. Next comes the marketing strategy.

*Marketing strategy* – the marketing logic by which the company hopes to achieve strong and profitable customer relationships. It involves deciding which customers to serve (segmentation and targeting) and with what value proposition (differentiation and positioning).

It identifies the total market, then divides it into smaller segments, selects the most promising segments, and focuses on serving and satisfying these segments.

Guided by marketing strategy, the company designs a marketing mix made up of factors under its control – product, price, place and promotion. [1, p.53]

*Marketing mix* – the set of controllable tactical marketing tools - product, price, place and promotion – that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market.

- *Product* – the goods-and-services combination the company offers to the target market.
- *Price* – is the amount of money customers have to pay to obtain the product.
- *Place*- includes company activities that make the product available to target consumers.
- *Promotion* – means activities that communicate the merits of the product and persuade target customers to buy it. [1, p.57]

### 1.2.4 Methods of analysing marketing opportunities

In order to develop a marketing strategy a business must use the primary and secondary market information that it collects to analyse the competitiveness of its product or service and to gain an understanding of the external environment in which it is operating. This requires continuous scanning of the market to spot market opportunities.

Two techniques for carrying out the analysis are:

- PESTEL analysis – an acronym (a word formed from the first letters of other words) for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal influences
- SWOT analysis – an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

#### 1.2.4.1 PESTEL analysis

In a dynamic environment where the external situation is continually changing this analysis would need to be carried out regularly, particularly by a business which aims to launch new products.

Every organisation will at some time want to launch a new product into the market place. To do this successfully an organisation needs to thoroughly investigate its external environment.

- **P** is for political factors – how is the organisation and/or its products affected by the political environment?
- **E** is for economic factors – economic forces affect both the organisation and its consumers and customers. The impact will depend on whether the business is in the service or manufacturing sector.
- **S** is for social factors – there are many social and cultural changes taking place in society.
- **T** is for technological factors – processes, invention and innovation, Internet
- **E** is for environmental factors – environmental issues are now a major concern for any marketing department because of the need to be environmentally friendly.

- **L** is for legal factors – legal rules and regulations can be either an opportunity or a constraint on the organisation.

#### ***1.2.4.2 SWOT analysis***

SWOT is a technique for comparing or matching an organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses with the opportunities and threats found in the external environment.

- **S** is for a strength – is a specific asset, skill or competence found within the organisation which would help it achieve its objectives.
- **W** is for a weakness - is a specific feature found within the organisation which could prevent it from achieving its objectives.
- **O** is for an opportunity - is any specific feature found in the organisation's external environment which would enable it to achieve its objectives.
- **T** is for a threat - is any specific feature found in the organisation's external environment which would prevent it from achieving its objectives.

#### **1.2.5 How businesses develop different marketing strategies**

Once a business has collected and analysed market information about its external environment and carried out a marketing audit of its internal strengths and weaknesses it should be able to identify the best strategy to achieve its objectives.

We examine three techniques for assessing possible strategies:

- Ansoff matrix
- Product life cycle and
- Boston matrix

##### ***1.2.5.1 Ansoff Matrix***

H.S. Ansoff first described this in 1957 in the *Harvard Business Review*.

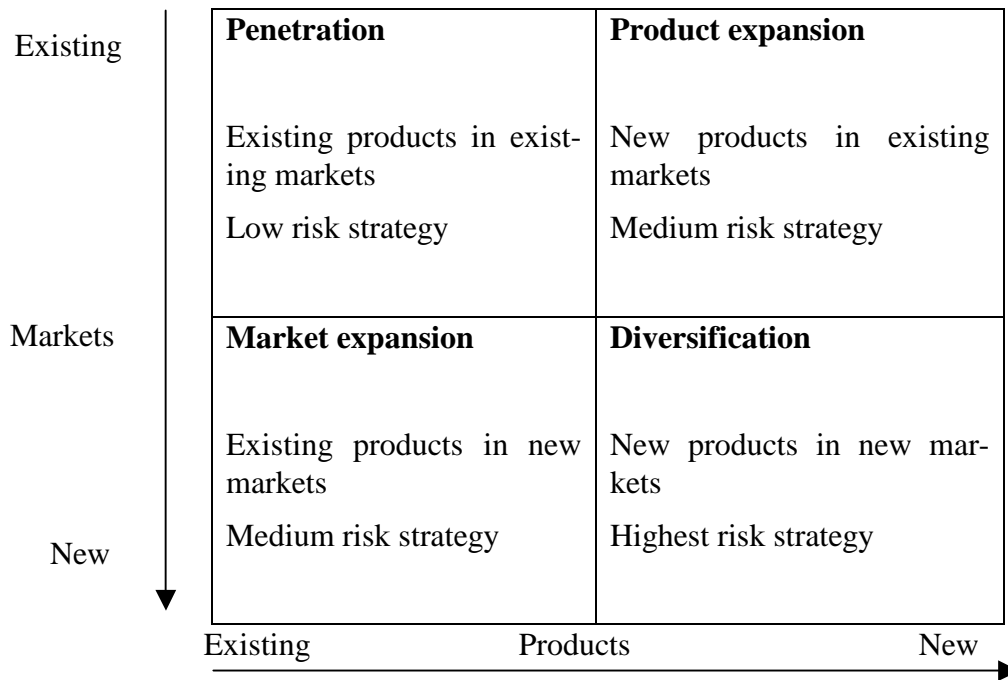


Figure 1. Ansoff Matrix

The horizontal axis shows existing and new products. The vertical axis shows new and existing markets. The basic two by two matrix gives four possible strategies for increasing sales.

Initially there are two key choices in the Ansoff matrix: *to exploit the product or the market*. To make a decision a business would have to assess or screen the new markets and new products, then compare the potential benefits with those expected from continuing with existing markets and products.

### Market based strategies

**1/ Market penetration** – this involves expanding market share in existing markets by using existing products. This can be done by:

- Persuading current customers to buy more of the product
- Converting non-users into customers
- Poaching customers from competitors

**2/ Market expansion, entering new markets** – this involves using existing products to increase market share by moving into new markets. For example:

- Catering for different market segments

- Entering new geographical markets

### Product based strategies

**3/ Product expansion, new product development** – this means changing or adapting the product so that it sells to more people in existing markets.

- Finding new uses for the product.
- Changing pack size
- Adapting existing products

**4/ Diversification** - developing new products in new markets. This is the most expensive and risky strategy as it requires intensive screening of both the idea for new products and the opportunities in new markets. [4, p.349 - 351]

#### 1.2.5.2 Product Life Cycle

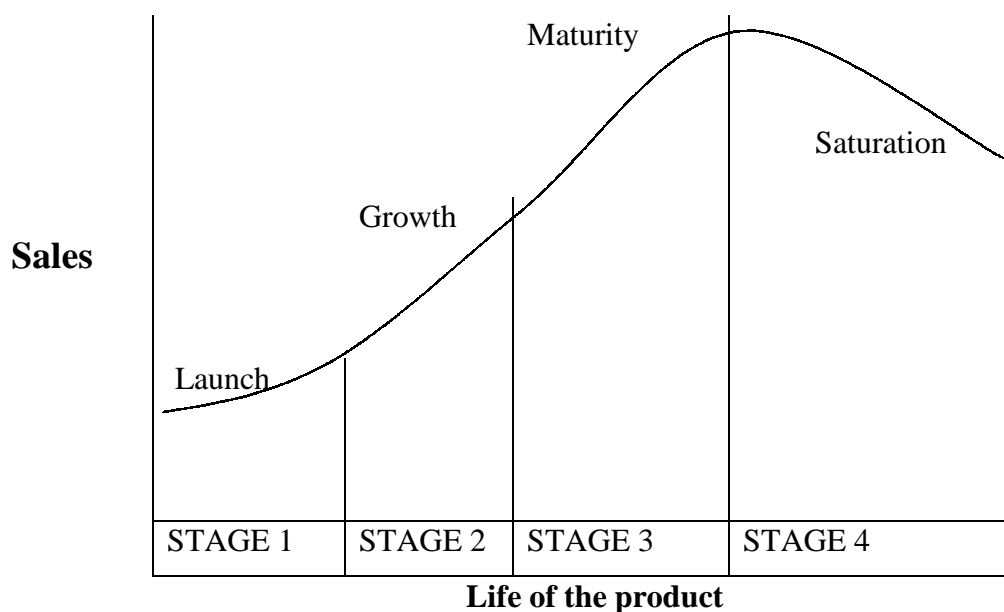


Figure 2. Product Life Cycle

In order to put the Ansoff matrix into perspective, we need to understand how new products are launched, grow and finally die.

The product lifecycle is a description of the life of a product, from its launch to its final withdrawal from the market. Using this analysis will help a business decide whether it is worth investing further in a product.



For every successful product in the market there are probably twice as many that have failed.

The product lifecycle model above shows how products may go through four stages during their life in the market place. Figure 2 is a model; no scales are shown on the axes because both the time and the amount of sales will vary with different products in different markets.

**1/ Stage 1 – Introduction and Launch** – introducing a new product into the market can be a very expensive process. During this stage costs are likely to be very high and profits will tend to be low. Internet sales and direct selling have been useful in enabling some businesses to overcome this entry barrier.

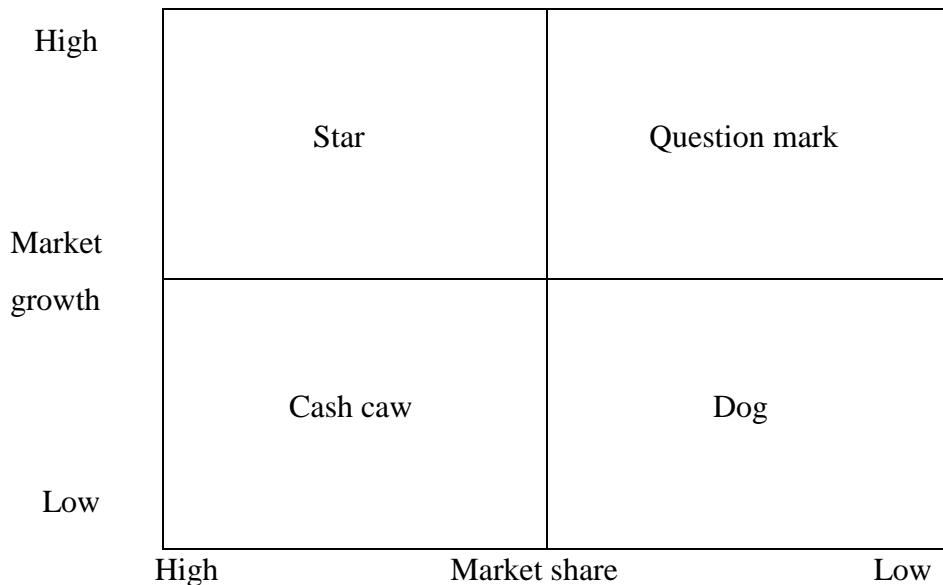
**2/ Stage 2 – Growth and development** – during this phase the product should be establishing itself in the market, sales and profits should be increasing and the initial investments should be paid for .

**3/ Stage 3 – Maturity and competition** – this stage is characterised by an increase in competition, which could lead to increased costs because of extra advertising and promotion. Price cuts, special offers and discounts may be given in an attempt to stimulate sales.

**4/ Stage 4 – Saturation and decline** – this stage is typified by declining sales and low profits. Even price cuts and advertising are not enough to tempt the consumer into purchasing. The business may attempt to re-launch the product in a different form. [4, p.353 - 356]

### ***1.2.5.3 Boston Matrix***

After producing a product life cycle for each of its products the business can use these to carry out an analysis of its product portfolio. This will help the business identify possible areas of growth. A useful technique for doing this is the Boston matrix, originally developed by the Boston Consulting Group, a leading firm of management consultants in the USA.



*Figure 3. Boston Matrix*

The horizontal axis shows the market share compared to the largest competitor. The vertical axis shows the growth in the market.

**1/ Stars** – these are products with a high market share in a rapidly growing industry.

**2/ Cash cows** – Cash cows have a high market share in a slow growing, probably mature market. This means that the product benefits from high economies of scale and has lower unit costs than its competitors.

**3/ Question mark or problem child** – this product has a low market share in rapidly growing markets.

**4/ Dog** - this product has a low market share in markets where there is little or no growth. A dog is probably reaching the end of its product lifecycle. It should be dropped from the product portfolio. [4, p.359 - 360]

### 1.3 Marketing Research

It is the systematic design, collection, analysis, and reporting of data relevant to a specific marketing situation facing an organization. Marketing research can help marketers understand customer satisfaction and purchase behavior. It can help them assess market potential and market share or to measure the effectiveness of pricing, product, distribution, and promotion activities.

### 1.3.1 Marketing research process

The marketing research process has four steps:

- defining the problem and research objectives
- developing the research plan for collecting information
- implementing the research plan (collecting and analyzing data) and
- interpreting and reporting the findings.

#### 1.3.1.1 *Defining the Problem and Research Objectives*

Marketing managers and researchers must work closely together to define the problem and agree on research objectives. The manager best understands the decision for which information is needed; the researcher best understands marketing research and how to obtain the information.

Defining the problem and research objectives is often the hardest step in the research process. The manager may know that something is wrong, without knowing the specific causes.

After the problem has been defined, research objectives must be set. A marketing research project might have one of three types of objectives:

- The objective of *exploratory research* is to gather preliminary information that will help define the problem and suggest hypotheses.
- The objective of *descriptive research* is to describe things, such as the market potential for a product or the demographics and attitudes of consumers.
- The objective of *causal research* is to test hypotheses about cause and effect relationships.

#### 1.3.1.2 *Developing the Research Plan*

Once the research problems and objectives have been defined, researchers must determine the exact information needed, develop a plan for gathering it efficiently and present the plan to management (in a written proposal). The research plan outlines sources of existing

data and spells out the specific research approaches, contact methods, sampling plans, and instruments that will be used to gather new data.

The research plan can call for gathering secondary data, primary data, or both:

- *Secondary data* – consist of information that already exists somewhere, having been collected for another purpose.
- *Primary data* - consist of information collected for a specific purpose at hand.

Researchers usually start by gathering **secondary data**. The company's internal database provides a good starting point. However the company can also tap a wide assortment of external information sources, including commercial data services and government sources.

Secondary data can usually be obtained more quickly and at a lower cost than primary data. A study to collect primary data might take weeks or months and cost thousands of dollars. Also, secondary sources sometimes can provide data an individual company cannot collect on its own – information that either is not directly available or would be too expensive to collect. [1, p.113 - 116]

An inherent disadvantage of secondary data is that they were not designed specifically to meet the researchers' need. Thus, researchers must ask how pertinent the data are to their particular project. To evaluate secondary data, researchers should ask questions such as these:

- Is the subject matter consistent with our problem definition?
- Do the data apply to the population of interest?
- Do the data apply to the time period of interest?
- Do the secondary data appear in the correct units of measurement?
- Do the data cover the subject of interest in adequate detail?

The most common reasons why secondary data do not adequately satisfy research needs are (1) outdated information, (2) variation in definition of terms, (3) different units of measurement, and (4) lack of information to verify the data's accuracy.

Information quickly becomes outdated in our rapidly changing environment. Because the purpose of most studies is to predict future, secondary data must be timely to be useful. [2, p.149]

Secondary data provide a good starting point for research and often help to define problems and research objectives. In most cases, however, the company must also collect **primary data**. The data must be relevant, accurate, current and unbiased.

Research approaches for gathering primary data include observation, surveys and experiments:

- Observation research – the gathering of primary data by observing relevant people, actions and situations.
- Survey research - the gathering of primary data by asking people questions about their knowledge, attitudes, preferences and buying behavior.
- Experimental research - the gathering of primary data by selecting matched groups of subjects, giving them different treatments, controlling related factors and checking the differences in group responses. [1, p.117 - 119]

Mr. Baker in his book *Marketing Strategy and Management* talks about another method – simulation. He even declares that this and the above mentioned methods can be combined with one another. [7, p.151]

I will now look more closely on the *survey research* as this is the one which I have used in my marketing research.

Survey research, the most widely used method for primary data collection, is the approach best suited for gathering descriptive information. A company that wants to know about people`s knowledge, attitudes, preferences or buying behavior can often find out by asking them directly.

The major advantage of survey research is its flexibility – it can be used to obtain many different kinds of information in many different situations. However, survey research also presents some problems. Sometimes people are unable to answer survey questions because they cannot remember. People may be unwilling to respond to unknown interviewers or about things they consider private. [1, p. 119]

Information can be collected by mail, telephone, personal interview or online. In my research I have used the personal interview. This can take two forms – individual and group interviewing. *Individual interviewing* involves talking with people in their homes or offices, on the street, or in shopping malls. Such interviewing is flexible. Trained inter-

viewers can guide interviews, explain difficult questions and explore issues as the situation requires. However, individual interviews may cost three to four times more than telephone interviews.

*Group interviewing* consists of inviting 6 to 10 people to talk with a trained moderator about a product, service, or organization. The moderator encourages free and easy discussion, hoping that group interactions will bring out actual feelings and thoughts. At the same time, the moderator „focuses“ the discussion – hence the name focus group interviewing. [1, p.121 - 122]

Personal interviewings are defined as follows: structured (standardized), semistructured (semistandardized) and unstructured (non-standardized) interviewings, in which it is proceeded from exact adherence of procedures, exactly set sequence of questions to a completely free discussion. [3, p. 142]

In the unstructured interviewings there are two marginal types of discussion – a *Soft discussion* (the moderator seeks to achieve a maximal positive contact with the respondent) and a *Hard discussion* (the moderator seeks to gain true, hardly accessible information). [5, p. 81]

To gather information needed, we use different types of questionnaires. Except for a traditionally filled paper questionnaire, so-called **P+P** (paper + pencil) we can use also so-called **CAPI** (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing), which is interviewing by means of multimedia portable computers and an electronic questionnaire. [3, p. 142]

#### Distribution of questionnaires:

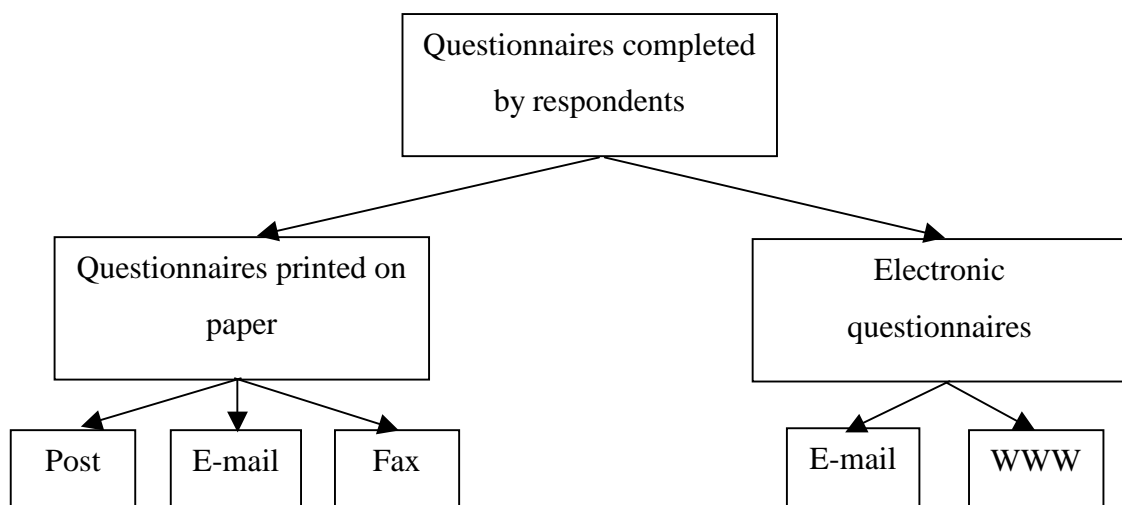


Figure 4. Distribution of Questionnaires [5, p. 82]

### ***1.3.1.3 Implementing the Research Plan***

The researcher next puts the marketing research plan into action. This involves collecting, processing and analyzing the information. The data collection phase of the marketing research process is generally the most expensive and the most subject to error. Researchers must process and analyze the collected data to isolate important information and findings. They need to check data for accuracy and completeness and code it for analysis. Then they tabulate the results and compute averages.

### ***1.3.1.4 Interpreting and Reporting the Findings***

The market researcher must now interpret the findings, draw conclusions and report them to management. He should not try to overwhelm managers with numbers and fancy statistical techniques. Rather, he should present important findings that are useful in the major decisions faced by management.

However, interpretation should not be left only to the researchers. They are often experts in research design and statistics, but the marketing manager knows more about the problem and the decisions that must be made. Therefore they both must work together closely when interpreting research results and also share responsibility for the research process and resulting decisions. [1, p.127 - 128]

## 2 PRIMARY RESEARCH OF VISITOR RATE OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS AREA ATTRACTIONS

In order to carry out primary research I had to establish what information should to be collected. Since the service for which I am going to produce a marketing strategy is *Promotion of tourism in Tunbridge Wells area*, I understand that I need to get feedback from the local people on how they see the tourism in the TW area. Do they know about the local tourist attractions, do they visit them, or do they prefer visiting different, more glamorous destinations, such as London and South East Coast resorts?

To get as representative a result as possible, I created 2 different questionnaires – one for the local people and one for more distant visitors to TW, because is obvious that local people know or should know tourist attractions in their home town. What was more difficult was to find out whether non-locals are aware of TW as a tourist destination. Even though I have both questionnaires ready to present, I mostly used the one for locals, as I did not have the opportunity to carry out the primary research elsewhere. Despite this obstacle I managed to get a few completed questionnaires from non-locals. These were a small group of colleagues in one hospital in London. My friend who works there conducted the questionnaires. I am aware that this may have been biased by the fact that these people do the same job, have the same household income and may know each other. However, I still consider their answers valuable as they give me an overview of how well, if at all, non-locals know the TW area tourist attractions. I asked about 50 people altogether.

In contrast to the couple of non-locals, who completed my questionnaire, this group of Londoners was mostly aware of TW as a tourist destination and had also visited it. They also welcomed the idea of tourist attractions being sold as a package with reduced entrance fees.

Before I went out to collect the data, I tried to think of the best way of doing it. Right from the beginning it was obvious to me that if I go to the center of TW, I will get to meet local people only; and as I mentioned before, these are bound to know and have visited the TW attractions. So I expected that the answers I would get will be “Yes, I know TW attractions”, and “yes, I have visited them all”.

But strangely enough, some of the people I asked did not know all of the attractions let alone visited them, and moreover, few of them did not even know what I meant by TW



tourist attractions. Then I had to name these to them and only then they were able to tell me that they heard of them, nevertheless, never visited them.

Maybe, now, I would hope, this small group of people may find time to go and see the attractions since this is the whole point of my project – find out whether the TW attractions are well-known and well promoted. Because if they are not well known, they cannot be well promoted and for this purpose I am going to produce a strategy to better promote TW at a later stage.

I carried out most of my primary research during my summer holiday in England, which was the time when I had more free time to do so. However, I was not able to collect sufficient number of completed questionnaires, (I could only ask a limited number of people as I found this rather time consuming because not everyone I asked was willing to spare a few minutes to answer my questionnaire) in order to get as representative result as I would want to or as to find out whether the TW area tourist attractions are really known and being visited. Maybe, the local people I asked, just happened to be the ones I wanted to meet, the ones who would answer that they have visited the attractions and think that these are well known and well promoted.

On the other hand, I also met a couple of people who were not locals at all; in fact, they were complete strangers to TW. They were not aware of TW as a tourist destination. This fact reinforced my idea that TW needs to be promoted not only locally but more so regionally and nationwide, as I consider TW and the surrounding area very attractive. Also, Kent, where TW is situated, is said to be The Garden of England, that is why it should be promoted as suitable not only for a day out, but maybe for a short break (2-3 days) and even for a longer holiday. If money could be generated from public-private partnership (council-hoteliers), it could be used to promote TW area more efficiently and effectively. It would be expected that people, who choose the TW area as a destination of their holiday (a short 2-3 days break), will spend more money as they would need accommodation, catering and transport services.

This would result in higher visitor rate, higher demand for tourist services and higher profit because it is a well-known fact that tourism industry in England is a significant source of national income.

*As I find the issue quite complex, I sought for some help to make the information I will collect as valid and reliable as possible.*

I contacted the SEETB in TW asking for a personal interview, but unfortunately they were not able to offer one as they were at the busiest points of the year. However, they sent me a leaflet with facts and figures about tourism in South East of England, which I can use for my secondary research together with a very useful website offering statistics and information on the September 11 events and the Foot & Mouth.

The SEETB informed me that they do not allocate resources to individual towns or attractions and pointed me towards the TW Borough Council TMU, as my survey is narrowed down to TW area tourist destinations only.

I arranged a personal meeting with a Marketing & Tourism Officer in TMU. I believe that the information I acquire will enhance my project.

***Report on meeting Juliet Steinmetz, a Marketing & Tourism Officer :***

I obtained several publications about marketing tourism in South East and in the TW in particular.

- *Tourism Strategy for the Borough of Tunbridge Wells 2000-2004*
- *The Economic Impact of Tourism, TW Borough 1997, 2000, 2003*
- *Awareness and Images of the Heart of Kent as a Tourist Destination, September 2000*

I understand better the principles of marketing tourism and principles of marketing in general after having spoken to Juliet. I got the idea what market segments the TMU is targeting.

I was pointed towards even further help, which is the TIC in TW, as the TMU was not able to provide information on exact visitor rate of individual TW area attractions. This will help me to decide, which attractions I should include in my potential creation of a one-day leisure program "A Day OUT at the Wells".

Unfortunately the TIC could not provide with the visitor rate, so I decided to refer to a questionnaire conducted by TMU on which the publication "*Awareness and Images of the Heart of Kent*" is based. This was a postal questionnaire sent out during July 2000 to all 1,600 people who had requested the Heart of Kent tourism brochure in the last year. This was a 100% sampling frame. [18]

**Conclusion:**

The service for which I am going to produce a marketing strategy is rather a complex issue, therefore it was important for me to study as many available information sources as possible. I have learned that despite the fact, that service is perishable, inseparable and above all intangible, it can still compete with tangible goods because well marketed service can deliver truly memorable experiences. To market my service in a right way, I will use marketing strategies mentioned earlier, not only the traditional 4 Ps, but also the so important fifth P – the people, the team, which provides customer satisfaction and makes the service memorable..

Marketing strategies which I find the most useful for my service are also Ansoff matrix and Product life cycle. I do not think that the Boston matrix can be used in my case. This technique does not really work with my service, as the service is quite complex issue and this matrix could over simplify the situation.

## **II. ANALYSIS**

### 3 METHODOLOGY OF ANALYSIS

Having learned the theory of producing a marketing strategy for a new service, I then started to carry out secondary and primary research in order to gather as much information as possible for my marketing strategy:

- I visited several institutions in TW trying to get the needed information
- I put all the obtained information together and then
- Carried out my primary research – the methodology I used was a personal interview, both individual and group interviewings
- I then analysed the responses and
- Prepared the PESTEL and SWOT analysis
- I applied the marketing strategies - Ansoff matrix and Product life cycle and finally
- I introduced the concept of a package of tourist attractions being sold for a reduced admission fee based on 4 Ps.

## 4 SECONDARY RESEARCH OF VISITOR RATE OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS AREA ATTRACTIONS

The secondary research, which is supposed to be easier and less time consuming than the primary research, was in my case far more difficult to carry out. I would see the reason for this in the fact that the service for which I am going to produce a marketing strategy is rather a complex issue.

Tourism is a dynamic industry, which changes all the time. So, when I wanted to get some up-to-date information about visitor rate in South East of England and more importantly in Tunbridge Wells area, I learnt that this was not going to be easy.

I tried hard to get some information from several institutions: *South East of England Tourist Board* (the official Tourist Board for the counties of Sussex, Kent and Surrey. It is an independent Limited Company with over 1,500 members, forming a three-way partnership between private enterprise, local government and central government, thereafter as SEETB), the *Tourism and Marketing Unit* of TW Borough Council [12] (thereinafter as TMU) and the *Tourism Information Centre* in TW (thereinafter as TIC) and I succeeded, apart from the fact, that all the facts and figures about the visitor rate are a year or two out-of-date.

I was not satisfied with this result so I went on to search the Internet websites. Towards some of them I was pointed by the SEETB and the TIC, and some of them I found by myself.

Except for the out-of-date facts and figures, I acquired:

- very useful information on marketing tourism in TW area, market segments which are targeted in this area,
- examples of questionnaires on tourism being conducted by TMU of TW Borough Council, together with the results (which are obviously very representative and will help me with my marketing strategy),
- information on what is happening in the tourism industry after the Foot & Mouth outbreak and the events of 11 September from marketing point of view, in TW area in particular .

## 4.1 Notes from the documents obtained

### 4.1.1 Tourism Strategy for the Borough of Tunbridge Wells 2000-2004

Tourism is defined as “*all aspects of visitor experience, whether the visitor is on a day trip, a short break or a long holiday, visiting for leisure or business, from this country or overseas*”. Components include core elements – tourist accommodation and visitor attractions, plus elements including the countryside, the built heritage, restaurants, pubs, shops, sport and leisure facilities, theatres, museums and galleries, transport and travel services, town centres and many more. Therefore, *a tourism strategy should address all key aspects of visitor experience: ‘the tourism product’*.

Within Kent, TW holds the second largest market share, attracting 14% of the overall tourist market. 1.2 million nights were spent in TW by tourist in 1997, with an additional 2.5 million trips occurring in the Borough for tourist and leisure purposes. Total expenditure by visitors £72 million, supporting 2,250 jobs locally. Visitor expenditure benefits the catering, retail, accommodation, transport and entertainment/attractions.

#### General visitor numbers to the Borough’s attractions in 2001

Gardens	404,134
Museums & Art Galleries	80,882
Historic Buildings	16,142
Others	286,728
	<b>787,886</b>

(Source: Kent County Council)

More from this document is to be used at a later stage, for planning the marketing strategy.

[15]

### 4.1.2 Awareness and Images of the Heart of Kent as a Tourist Destination

Prepared by Dr. Cheryl Butler, Kent Tourism Research Co-ordinator, Canterbury Christ Church University College, September 2000.

This document reports on research into visitor awareness of the Heart of Kent as a short break<sup>1</sup> destination, in order to inform the branding of the Heart of Kent and create more effective marketing messages and imagery. The research was done by a postal questionnaire, which was sent out in July 2000 to all 1,600 people who had requested the Heart of Kent tourism brochure in the last year. *This was a 100% sampling frame.* The mailing was incentivised and included a reply pre-paid envelope to maximise the response rate. Returned questionnaires were coded, entered into Excel, and finally the data cleaned and analysed within SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists).

The findings from the study will be used for future marketing activity in the Heart of Kent.

*The key markets targets for Kent:*

**Empty Nesters**, 45-70, children no longer living at home;

**Dual Income No Kids (DINKS)**, 25-45, with a joint income exceeding 50k;

**Caring Parents**, 25-45, interested in their children's education;

The Heart of Kent is already a very successful short break destination, with the key market of empty nesters + younger age groups and people with families. However, the branding at the moment is targeted more at the empty nesters. Products for younger generations (nightlife, entertainment, activities, events and festivals) need to be shown to them together with the core products (countryside, relaxation...). There needs to be a balance between the two offers for the two different customer needs, so that the Heart of Kent attracts both targets evenly. Possible solution: to target mostly at the empty nesters with separate marketing activities aimed at the younger markets.

- Most of the respondents fell into older age group, took short breaks (more often during spring and autumn) with their partner, without children living in and had high disposable income.
- The key motivators for their breaks are value for money, the countryside and quality accommodation.

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<sup>1</sup> Short break defined as 1 – 4 nights away from home for leisure purposes.



- In terms of places visited, the key destination was Tunbridge Wells, followed by Leeds Castle, Maidstone, Hever Castle, Sevenoaks, A Day at the Wells, Scotney Castle. TW was described in words History, Attractions, Shopping.

### **Socio-Economic Profile:**

There was a good cross-section of age groups represented in the sample population.

The largest age group were the 55-64s (28%), the 45-54s (25%), the over 65s (23%). This meant that the majority of the sample fell into the over 44 age (76%). However, 24% of the respondents were under 45 years old, indicating that the tourism product has wider appeal.

There were a higher percentage of females (59%) than males (41%) with people being married or living with a partner (79%), single (13%), divorced/separated (3%) and widowed (6%). Respondents having children still living at home only 15%.

29% of the respondents had a combined household income of between £10,000 and £20,000, 27% earned between £20,001-30,000, whilst a third (31%) earned over £30,000.

### **Travel lifestyle:**

The majority of respondents frequently took short breaks. 63% had taken between 2 and 5 short breaks in the last 2 years, whilst 22% 6 or more.

The majority of short breaks were taken in the spring (80%) and autumn (78%). In the summer 50% and winter 30%.

### **Motivations/Needs for Short Breaks:**

Respondents` key motivations for choosing a destination were: ‘good value for money’, ‘scenery and countryside’, ‘quality of accommodation’ and ‘good restaurants and cafes’.

‘Entertainment’, ‘activities/festivals’ and ‘nightlife’ appealed to those under 35.

**The forecast of UK short breaks** (£ million, '000 trips & million admissions), 2000-2004:

*Table 1. Forecast UK Short Breaks*

<b>Short break</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>
Trips	37,0	39,0	41,0	41,5
£ m	3,400	3,750	4,100	4,500
Admission to attractions	375	380	385	390

(Source: Market Review 2000, Key Note, UK Leisure & Recreation) [8]

**Places to visit:**

Places most cited by respondents as places that people might visit in the area as part of a short break were Tunbridge Wells (18%), Leeds Castle (16%), Canterbury only 9%, Hever Castle 6%.

**Places visited during trips made in past 5 years:**

The key destination above others was **Tunbridge Wells** (65%), followed by Leeds Castle (38%), Maidstone (38%), Hever Castle (34%), Sevenoaks (32%) and Tonbridge (30%).

About a third had also visited Chartwell, Knole House, A Day at the Wells, Scotney Castle.

[18]

*Table 2. Population of UK*

	<b>1951</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2021</b>
England	41 159	48 208	49 753	53 715
Wales	2 599	2 891	2 937	3 047
Scotland	5 096	5 107	5 119	5 058
Northern Ireland	1 371	1 607	1 692	1 821
United Kingdom	50 225	57 814	59 501	63 624

(Source: National Statistics Online, UK Social Trends) [11]

**4.1.3 The Economic Impact of Tourism in Tunbridge Wells in 2003**

Key headline figures for 2003:

- 312,000 staying trips
- £48,458,000 spent by staying visitors on their trip
- 3,734,444 tourism day trips
- £105,472,000 spent by tourism day visitors on their trip
- In total £153,929,000 spent by all visitors on their trips
- Of this expenditure, £141,803,000 directly benefits local business in terms of business turnover (a further £44,705,000 of business turnover is generated through indirect and induced spending).
- This income supported 2,712 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) jobs and 3,715 actual jobs

## 5 MARKETING STRATEGY ANALYSIS, PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS

### 5.1 Interpretation of results of the marketing research

I have piloted my questionnaire on a *focus group*, which in this case was a small group of 6 friends at the age of 16 to about 30. I presented them my questionnaire and they answered the questions and added their comments. They found the questions very relevant and interesting. They easily understood what I am trying to find out through the questionnaire that is whether tourist attractions in Tunbridge Wells are well known and well promoted.

It was agreed that I asked far too many questions (about 25), so I tried to narrow it down. I did manage to discard some of them, which was rather difficult as I considered all my questions necessary for carrying out a representative and valuable marketing research.

The group also suggested that I should use ranges when asking people age and income (as people do not like giving too detailed/personal answers) and more dichotomous (“closed”) types of questions because this helps organise and analyse the data I will collect better.

#### 5.1.1 Analysis of the responses

##### **GRAPH “A” – Where do you live?** (see Appendix III, Figure 1)

Most of the people I talked to were Tunbridge Wells residents. They all knew the TW area tourist attractions; however, some of them have not necessarily visited all of them. A few people were from Tonbridge and minority of them from other nearby towns (Uckfield, Paddock Wood)

##### **GRAPH “B” – How do you spend your leisure time?** (see Appendix III, Figure 2)

Here, it is clearly shown that most of the respondents spend their leisure time walking and travelling, which I expected. However, far less people were interested in visiting museums and galleries, which is why I would concentrate on promoting this type of attractions in my marketing strategy.

##### **GRAPH “C” – What is your age?** (see Appendix III, Figure 3)

Most of the respondents fell into the age range of 45-60, which is simply because I target my service at slightly older people, who could, theoretically, have a higher income (which was not always the case) with either no children, or children not living with them already.

**GRAPH “D” – How much money do you spend on leisure per week?** (see Appendix III, Figure 4)

Nearly half of the respondents spend an average of £20 per week on their leisure activities, one fifth spend £50 per week, which I consider to be a reasonable high investment into leisure. This fact suggests that people can afford to spend money on leisure and that they may as well be willing to visit attractions, which I will offer as a package with reduced fees.

**GRAPH “E” – Do you read the local newspaper Courier?** (see Appendix III, Figure 5)

I learn that vast majority of respondents do read the local newspaper “The Courier” and that they also read about the local events, which suggest that the promotion of my product should be placed in the newspaper, amongst other methods.

**GRAPH “F” – How would you prefer to pay for the attractions?** (see Appendix III, Figure 7)

The graph “F” says that there is demand for the idea of attractions being offered as a package already.

**GRAPH “G1” – Do you know the TW area tourist attractions?** (see Appendix III, Figure 8)

Nearly half of the respondents said that they know all the TW area tourist attractions, one third know most of them and minority said to know at least few of them. I listed all the attractions I could think of and asked 2 sub questions: Whether they are aware on these attractions and whether they visited them.

In most cases, when they knew the attractions, they usually visited them. This suggests that attractions, which are well promoted, have higher potential of being visited. So, the attractions, which are less known, I am going to promote more and also include in my “package” of attractions. Having the option of visiting these for less would probably make people go and see these attractions even though they may be less popular. By doing so, these would gradually gain the popularity and this is again what I am aiming for.

**GRAPH “H” – Which TW area tourist attraction do you like the most?** (see Appendix III, Figure 10)

Obviously I will also include the attractions, which were said to be the most likeable ones (such as, Pantiles, A Day at the Wells, Penshurst)

**GRAPH “G2” – Are the TW area tourist attractions well promoted?** (see Appendix III, Figure 9)

The TW area tourist attractions were said by most of the respondents to be well promoted, which I would link with the existence of the TIC in TW. I assume that the TIC is used by most of the visitors to TW since the majority of respondents was aware of it and also visited it.

## **5.2 PESTEL analysis of the region**

### **5.2.1 Political**

There is extra financial help needed from the local council (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council) to provide funds to help promote TW tourist attractions better.

-Local government is responsible for providing facilities for general open-air recreation (parks, gardens), museums and art galleries. Licences to operate within the tourism industry are issued by the government/local authority.

-Government is introducing legal guidelines on out-of-town developments: New potential tourist attractions cannot be developed in ‘green belt areas’. The local council is forced to regenerate town centres before it is given permission for Greenfield developments.

-Media regulations issued by the government: This may affect advertising of the attractions on TV, on the radio, in newspapers. The regulations do not allow misrepresentation of certain details about the attractions when being advertised.

### **5.2.2 Economic**

How the tourism industry in the Heart of Kent is doing, hugely depends on the economic situation within the UK and worldwide.

-What is the current economic situation of the country?

-What is the disposable income of people visiting the Heart of Kent?

- What market segments are targeted? (What is their disposable income?)
- What are the levels of interest rates, taxation, and unemployment? (Low level is good for businesses and people have more money to spend)
- What are the exchange rates? (Weak pound may encourage foreign visitors to come to England)

### **5.2.3 Social**

Statistics about population are important for business within the tourist industry. There is a need to monitor the size, structure, age, location of the population in the Heart of Kent and nation-wide to help target market segments more precisely.

- People are retiring earlier and are living longer, usually with a private pension, which means that they have more money to spend on themselves, or on leisure activities. Therefore this sector can be targeted more. Also there should be a concession on the admission fees for elderly people.
- Unpaid overtime, longer commuting hours put pressure on leisure time.

### **5.2.4 Technological**

The Internet is a modern way to promote the Heart of Kent, to offer the possibility of pre-booking entrance tickets over the Internet and to communicate with other businesses (for example TIC, hotels and individual attractions)

The Internet or online technologies have the potential to transform customers' lifestyles, in terms of the way time is allocated: less time will be spent on shopping, commuting and communicating and can be available to pursue more leisure activities. (This has not yet been proved.)

### **5.2.5 Environmental**

Kent County Council's 'Structure Plan 1996' recognises the need for sustainable development and looks for facilities and attractions to be consistent with environmental transport and green belt policies and to be sited and designed in sympathy with the landscape and setting.

- The need to support the public transport so that visitors can reach the attractions without using a car.

- Events organised at the attractions: Are those environmentally friendly? (bonfires...)
- The Spa Valley Railway: it burns coal, not environmentally friendly, but on the other hand, it is unique and they do not build new trains, only restore the old ones.

### 5.2.6 Legal

- Competition among businesses: there needs to be a control over possible monopolies if the attractions are owned by one source, however competition between areas and towns will force a competitive market.
- Equal opportunities legislation: to make sure that at all attractions there is the access for disabled.
- Take care when targeting a particular market segment, avoid possible discrimination.
- Need to negotiate with each attraction over the price of the entrance ticket for 'the package'. A legal procedure will be required when all the parties get together to agree on what discount could be offered. The ticket must be sold with all agreed conditions. Council should put some money into it as well. The price must be attractive (there is no point in adding the current prices together - a need to show the comparison of the two prices - of all attractions being added together and of the cheaper 'package') - the discount will encourage more people to come to TW. [15]
- A legal agreement with some hotels in TW (there will be some sort of advertising by the hotels. Example: If you stay in Spa Hotel, you get a *further discounted/free* entrance ticket for 'the package')

## 5.3 SWOT analysis of the region

### 5.3.1 Strengths

- Tunbridge Wells is a very popular, well-known spa town with 'Royal Charter'. So because of this fact, the surrounding area and the attractions are well advertised (as people coming to TW to relax, will also come across the tourist attractions, and even if they do not visit them, they will hear of them and may well recommend them to their friends, relatives.)
- The consumer confidence is high (may be only locally after the 11 September events), people are willing to spend more on leisure activities (falling interest rates)
- Investment by the local government in leisure sectors has improved facilities, services and tourist attractions.

- More adults and children take part in wider variety of leisure activities (there is a higher demand for entertainment and therefore for tourist attractions)
- Opening of the Channel Tunnel helped expand tourism and leisure. In 2006, cross-channel recorded a 1.5% rise in traffic, thus going from 30.1 million passengers in 2005 to 30.6 millions. [10] (Paddock Wood offers the Borough's direct rail link to the Tunnel via Ashford International Station. Therefore 'Destination Accessibility' is emerging as a key factor for tourists and investors. [15])
- Short breaks are identified as the dominant growth market, focused on 2-3 day visits.
- The average age of visitors is increasing and the typical 'visitor unit' is reducing from traditional family size units; therefore TW should target this market sector.

### 5.3.2 Opportunities

- To promote less known attractions (introducing them to 'the package' for less or even completely free of charge)
- To organise special events to depict the history of TW
- To improve public transport so that the attraction can be reachable by train/coach (see the Heritage Hopper bus service, which calls at local places to visit during tourist season. This encourages visitors to use other forms of transport as well as making it possible for visitors without their own transport to reach previously inaccessible attractions).
- To continue to issue the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council 'Residential Passport', which offers incentives for local residents and also targets the May to September period. This is governed by the seasonality of the attractions themselves.
- To concentrate TW Borough's resources on attracting high spending, staying visitors as these are thought to offer the best opportunity for the Heart of Kent in terms of economic value, growth potential, product interest, locational advantage and ease of influence.
- To work in close co-operation with the British Tourism Authority, SEETB, Kent County Council and the Heart of Kent partners to strengthen the Borough's position in the marketplace.
- Within Royal TW concentrate activity and developments in the town centre, in order to maintain a strong core that will help to sustain a healthy retail and restaurant mix, reduce local car journeys and support the arts, culture and an evening economy.



-To successfully launch the idea of Tunbridge Wells being sold as a ‘package’ offering several tourist attractions as a package with reduced entrance fees. (More on this in the actual Marketing strategy)

After the events of 11 September, the inbound tourism has decreased, but on the other hand, holidaying abroad also decreased (more domestic people are taking advantage of potentially safer and cheaper holidays within the UK). [15]

On 6 July 2005, the United Kingdom won the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, having shown how London will offer a world-class stage to the world’s greatest athletes. Between 50 and 70% of the net economic benefit for staging the Games measured over a 7 - 10 year period will accrue through tourism, with early estimates suggesting this might generate around £2bn for the international visitor economy of Britain. Almost two-thirds of this growth will occur in the four years after the Games. Focusing on what will be needed to achieve this growth within Kent, as well as a focus on getting the welcome offer right, are therefore the critical factors to delivering this tourism legacy with this county. [9]

### **5.3.3 Weaknesses**

-Tourism is seasonal; many of the Borough’s attractions close down in winter months.

-There is lack of high-profile attractions within the Borough. (many people prefer more glamorous tourist destinations, such as London, the seaside)

-People are busy working; commuting pressures plus childcare have eaten in to many peoples’ leisure time.

-Some attractions are more popular than others, and these are forced into marginal or supportive role. (Smaller/less known attractions are suffering as they do not get sufficient financial support.)

-Many companies/attractions use part-time, unskilled, and low paid workers, which may result in poor customer service.

### **5.3.4 Threats**

-Every industry would suffer (and the tourism industry in particular as it is one of the significant source of national income) if the national economy goes into recession.

-Every major political event or terrorist act within the UK and worldwide will have an impact on tourism industry. The events of 11 September have already caused a decline in travelling, which has a direct impact on tourism.

-Inbound tourism is affected, as people are afraid of flying. (Huge losses as Americans, who make a significant contribution to UK economy, were not flying.) [15]

## 5.4 Application of the marketing strategy

There are three main techniques for assessing possible strategies:

Ansoff matrix, Product life cycle and Boston matrix (this technique does not really work with my service, as the service is quite complex issue and this matrix could over simplify the situation). So I will concentrate on the first two:

### 5.4.1 Ansoff Matrix

There are two key choices in the Ansoff matrix: *to exploit the product or the market.*

#### Market based strategies

**1/ Market penetration** = expanding market share in existing market by using existing products. [4, p.349]

Persuading current customers to make use of leisure facilities/tourist attractions more

-By offering reduced entrance fees (please, see the final marketing strategy)

-By issuing Tunbridge Wells Borough Council 'Resident Passport'

-By promoting the Heritage Hooper bus service (which enables visitors without a car to reach the attractions AND encourages drivers to use public transport rather than their own, which is more environmentally friendly)

Converting non-users into customers + Poaching customers from competitors

-By promoting TW in such a way that it attracts more market segments

-By trying to persuade the visitors that The Heart of Kent and TW in particular is suitable for a short break and has plenty to offer, just like competitive destinations.

This strategy is safe - no need to invest too much in advertising, launching new products/services, etc. However, in my case it is not very useful as my primary goal is to entice MORE visitors!!

**2/ Market expansion** = using existing products to increase market share by moving into new markets. [4, p.350]

Catering for different market segments/ Finding new customers. Although TW area is a successful short break destination with the key market segment of empty nesters, it could also attract younger people and people with families. The branding of the area should be, therefore, turned to these groups as well. (The package offers discounted entrance fee for adults as well as children, concessions and family tickets.)

There is a need to carry out research of the service (I need to research new markets – as mentioned above – the younger people and people with young families); No need to spend much money on market research as this has been done already (through primary and secondary research).

### **Product based strategies**

**3/ Product expansion** = new product development = expanding/changing/adapting the product so that it sells to more people in existing markets. [4, p.351]

Finding new users for the product: this is linked to Number 2 (=market expansion): In addition to the core product (which is countryside, history and relaxation) targeted at empty nesters, other products (such as nightlife, entertainment, activities, events and festivals) need to be portrayed to younger age groups and people with families.

Both strategies number 2 and 3 are the most useful for my idea of selling TW attractions as a package because they reflect exactly what I am trying to achieve. That is to entice more visitors (new market segments) and expand/develop the already existing offer by introducing the same attractions BUT as a package under one distinguishable name "A Day OUT at the Wells".

The linkages between each of the matrixes are one of the weaknesses of this marketing strategy as it tries to put everything into a box, and as seen from above my service can be defined in more than one way, that is to fall into more than one box.

However, I consider this strategy (the Ansoff matrix) the most useful to my service as there is more than one area the service could come into and from the matrix it is seen that there is still space to expand: For example, in the future, the Heart of Kent may come up with an idea of a new product (new attraction), which could be introduced to a new market: This potential unique attraction would attract local people, more distant visitors as well as foreign tourists.

This would then come into the second matrix (product expansion – the new product would attract not only existing market but also, maybe, new markets) and also into the fourth

matrix - **Diversification** = developing new products in new markets, which is the most expensive and risky strategy as it requires intensive screening of both the idea for new products and the opportunities in new markets. [4, p.351]

#### 5.4.2 Product Life Cycle

My service is probably somewhere between the stage of *Maturity and Saturation*. However, at the same time it is still growing as more and more people are visiting TW, but the growth is slowing.

##### **Maturity**

This stage is characterised by an increase in competition, which could lead to increased costs because of extra advertising and promotion.

TW Borough needs to maintain its current customers and at the same time attract more visitors (from different market segments) and poach customers from competitors (please, see Ansoff matrix - market penetration)

The idea of selling TW as ‘a package’ will attract more customers as this offers many advantages in terms of reduced entrance fees and loyalty bonuses. Market segments are already developed and successfully targeted. (It is not difficult to attract lot of different market segments as TW area has already plenty to offer.)

The lifecycle approach to my service is certainly useful. It is a record of past events; it can show the past trends of tourism in the TW area and therefore predict the future development of tourism. The trends are very positive, the service (tourism in TW area) will remain at the stage of Maturity for a long time and it means that it is worth launching the ‘package’.

On the other hand, it also warns against the last stage of the lifecycle - **Saturation**. Then there will need to be some sort of re-launching the service in a different form to keep tourism in TW area dominant in the market. Here, the ‘package’ can play a vital and important role - to launch the idea of TW tourist attractions being sold for one discounted entrance ticket could help prevent tourism in TW area from moving into Saturation.

If nothing is done about the stage of saturation, sooner or later, visitors will turn to another, more promising tourist destination. Therefore, to stay at the stage of Maturity as long as possible, the TW Borough Council need to bear in mind the following:

- Co-operation with British Tourist Authority, SEETB, The Heart of Kent partners and TIC`s will strengthen the TW position in the marketplace.
- Total dedication to the customer from the staff in TIC and the attractions themselves
- Complete commitment from senior staff to innovation and creativity
- To train the staff to work as a team, to be flexible and dynamic and not constrained by rules and procedures, to take risks
- To concentrate efforts on developing activity that will attract visitors outside the summer months and maintaining a policy of developing low volume/high spent tourism, concentrating on overnight holiday segments.

## 6 CONCEPT OF PACKAGE OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS FOR A REDUCED ADMISSION FEE

### 6.1 The Marketing strategy based on 4 P's – Marketing mix

#### 6.1.1 Product

My product is intangible service - Tourism in TW area being sold as a package for one advantageous price called **'A Day OUT at the Wells'**.

##### *Feature of the product*

It is an all-inclusive price. This principle has already been tried and tested, for example: tour operators offering all-inclusive holidays, the customer knows beforehand what he/she is going to pay for (accommodation, food and drinks, transport).

With my product, all-inclusive means one price for an entrance ticket to more than one attraction. Which attractions will be included is based on my primary and secondary research.

##### *Benefits*

This idea will save money to the customers coming to TW for a short break, will encourage them to visit all the attractions rather than one or two and encourage them to visit the TW area more often. From the business point of view this idea will be profitable.

##### *The unique selling proposition*

1/ Unless there is any other town/tourist destination offering the same idea, **this idea of 'package' is UNIQUE**. However, there is a need to consider carefully how many attractions will be included! Only 2 attractions: it will not be worth introducing. On the other hand, too many attractions will put people off as the price will be too high and people do not want to spend their entire holiday running around the attractions!

2/ The number of attractions included in the offer will be about 5 and these are possible to visit over a longer period of time (a week) when the ticket is valid.

3/ Why stay in TW? It is a midway between the coast and London. It is a perfect place to stay as one can visit both the coast and the capital city of England within a week.

4/ Branding - the number of allurements within the TW area makes the area very attractive. There are a lot of antique shops, TW is famous for Tunbridge Ware (wooden inlaid

marquetry) and Pantiles (elegant colonnaded shopping area), in TW there is a cycling tour and 3,569 miles of footpaths and much more..

### 6.1.2 Price

The price of the ticket will be based on the prices of individual attractions being added together and then 30% will be taken off.

The attractions included are:

- **High Rocks** - ancient national monument in woodland setting, with acres of sandstone rocks interlinked with 11 bridges, 2 miles of TW
- **A Day at the Wells** - interactive exhibition of Georgian TW in the centre of TW
- **Penshurst Place** - a medieval baron hall, with state rooms, venture playground, toy museum, restaurant, shop and plant centre, 7 miles north west of TW
- **Penshurst Vineyards** - vineyards, wallabies, rear birds, exotic waterfowl, sheep. Wine and apple juice to taste
- **Spa Valley Railway** - steam trains to Groombridge via High Rocks, West Station
- **Heritage Hooper** - a bus service, which calls at local places to visit during the April to September tourist season.

This offer will be valid from April until September only as most of the attractions included are open during spring, summer and autumn time.

The price after reduction does look very promising and attractive. However, it is important to know whether all the attractions involved will accept this. If they assumed that they might make less profit or become less attractive when being compared to the other attractions, they may reject the deal. For example, Penshurst Place is likely to be less inclined to get into the scheme as they are quite well-known and successful in their own right. They have plenty of their own events and do not need to be supported by this joint scheme.

### **BUT:**

Why should the attractions accept the 30% off their prices? Because by having the all-inclusive price it encourages people to visit all the attractions rather than just picking one or two. This ensures that all the attractions are guaranteed an income rather than leaving it to people's discretion which attractions they may visit.

*It is better to have 70% than 0%.*

### **Working out the price for the ticket:**

*Table 3. Working out the Price for the Ticket (own source)*

<b>Attraction</b>	<b>Price/adult in £</b>	<b>Price/child in £</b>	<b>Price/concessions in £</b>	<b>Price/family ticket in £</b>
High Rocks	2.00	1.00	1.00	(6.00)
A Day at the Wells	6.50	5.50	5.50	17.00
Penshurst Place	8,50	5.50	5.50	23.00
Penshurst Vineyards	1.50	free	1.00	(3.00)
Spa Valley Railway	6.00	3.50	5.00	16.00
Heritage Hooper	3.50	2.50	2.50	(12.00)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28.00</b>	<b>18.00</b>	<b>20.50</b>	<b>77.00</b>
<b>TOTAL with the discount of 30%, in £</b>	<b>19.50</b>	<b>12.50</b>	<b>14.50</b>	<b>54.00</b>

(Note: The prices for family tickets in brackets are where the attraction does not offer a family discount ticket and is purely the sum of 2 adults and 2 children.) [14]

Getting a family ticket (2 adults and 2 children) works out cheaper than getting individual tickets for the family.

#### ***Justification of the 30% discount and the idea of the package:***

From my primary research I know that people prefer to pay for all the attractions in TW area as a package with reduced fees and that on average, most of them spend £20 on leisure activities per week. So my price of £19.50 is within the limit.

Why I need to be more competitive (by offering 30% discount)? The government policy made all national galleries and museums free of charge and this could lead to tourism in TW getting into decline in the product life cycle if nothing is being done about it. The 30% off should keep visitor rate in TW area high despite the attractiveness of free galleries and museums in bigger towns/cities.

### **6.1.3 Promotion**

#### ***Advertising***



From my primary research it is seen that people do read the local newspaper The Courier and that they also read about local events. This would give a good opportunity to promote my package on a local level. This way of promotion is less expensive than for example TV promotion, (which can target a wide range of market segments and has a better effect).

From the Ansoff matrix the primary market target are new visitors (people coming to TW) rather than locals. These non-local people from different parts of England and abroad could hear about the package through existing adverts in trade press, magazines and national newspapers already used by TW council.

An inexpensive way is advertising through leaflets, flyers and handouts. This can be delivered by hand or distributed as newspaper or magazine inserts.

Radio advertising offers access to a wide audience, which on a local level may be worth considering. However when advertising a tourist destination people like to see images of the places they are going to visit.

### ***Direct Mail***

This is now the fastest growing method of advertising and can be also more closely targeted. This can be based on postcodes, addresses of people who have ordered a certain brochure on tourist attractions in the Heart of Kent or on addresses of visitors to the attractions who filled in questionnaires, feedbacks.

### ***Internet***

This is very cheap, sometimes even a free way of advertising providing you are a member of SEETB. Again, based on my primary research, people would use the Internet to book their entrance ticket/accommodation and therefore advertising here is relevant.

### ***Public relations***

It is the process of communicating a specific message to its stakeholders (in my case, the visitors) so as to achieve favourable publicity. The objective is to plan and control news to get good publicity and avoid bad publicity.

Public relations involve:

- Keeping the media informed of a new product (in my case, of a new idea of TW being sold as a package), providing press releases, stories, facts, photos
- Lobbying: persuading journalists, TV presenters etc. to write or mention the package
- Organising functions and events with a famous personality.

### *Sales promotion*

It refers to the techniques and methods used by a business to sell more of its products.

The attractions can co-operate with accommodation and transport services and offer the visitors who will buy the package some sort of loyalty cards or offers.

#### *When promoting the package, I need to consider the following:*

-At whom am I aiming the message? Who do I want to get to accept the offer? Please, see the Ansoff matrix: These are going to be the current visitors (=in the Ansoff matrix - *Market penetration*), who have visited the attractions in the past and may have liked them. This would be an excellent opportunity for them to see the attractions again, for less. And obviously this offer should attract more visitors (=Market expansion), maybe even new markets - such as people who are coming to TW to relax and spend time in one of the hotels (=Product expansion). The hotel would have the contract with the package and the offer may persuade those visitors to go out and explore TW tourist attractions.

-What am I telling them? I need to emphasise the advantageous price of the ticket plus other discounts coming with the ticket.

-What are the objectives in trying to communicate with the customers? This is simply to make them aware of the offer and try to make them to take action (to actually go and buy the ticket)

-How much will the promotion cost? It does not need to cost much as the attractions are the same and already known. So I do not need to promote those, only the idea of the cheaper ticket. This can be done virtually for free - telling visitors about the launch of the package when they are actually visiting these places or the staff of TIC can emphasise this.

-How can I evaluate the communication campaign? The way to monitor the successful communications will be through the number of package tickets sold; through questionnaires conducted by TIC and the attractions themselves.

### **6.1.4 Place**

#### *How do I distribute my service?*

A service is intangible (nothing physical) so I need to use **the fifth “P” – People**, the customer service (getting advice, guidelines from a member of staff), which is very important for a service especially as well as for a product. The most important are the people in the SEETB, TIC, attractions themselves who deal with customers. The way they

treat the visitors may reflect the image of the attractions and the whole idea of the package itself. It is important that any staff dealing with visitors are well trained, they may have gone through a special training where they learn how to deal with customers, how to deal with complaints and how to understand them better (try to be the customer themselves)

**An image** may help remember the package and TW itself subconsciously. All the members of staff within the TIC wear a uniform, which makes them "stand out from the crowd" and simply makes them recognisable from the others so when a customer needs a help they know to whom to speak. The staff in SEETB do not wear a uniform, as they do not get into physical contact with a visitor at all. The only place for public to go and ask for help is the TIC. It would be probably too expensive to have a uniform for all the staff within the attractions and also, many of them do not even get into contact with visitors. Therefore they should at least wear a tag with their name and function to make them recognisable.

When promoting, the idea of the package it will have one or two visible, recognisable image, logo, something that is common to both TW as a town/tourist destination and the attractions. This could be represented by the logo/slogan '*A Day OUT at the Wells*'.

#### ***Where is the service?***

All the attractions are within the TW area, some are right in the town centre and other no more that 7 miles away.

When planning the itinerary, visitors are expected to be staying in TW at least for a weekend, as it would not be possible to visit all the attractions within one day. The visitors are free to plan the itinerary themselves over a week time, as this is the length of validity of the ticket. They will be given all the details about the attractions together with a timetable of the Heritage Hooper bus service. It runs quite often so this again, will not restrict them when deciding what place to visit when.

The visitors are also free to use their own transport if they wish to, but there will not be a refund of the part of the ticket including the price of the bus service. Emphasising the price of the bus service (which would normally be 30% more expensive) encourages the visitors to make use of the bus rather than go by car, which is not environmentally friendly!

In leaflets and brochures promoting the package, there should also be a full explanation of how the package works and its advantages with all the possible variants (hotel offers, etc.)

## CONCLUSION

My service is *Promotion of tourism in the TW area* and the product I have created is 'A Day OUT at the Wells'.

It is an idea of selling TW area tourist attractions as an all-inclusive package for a reduced entrance fee. (The reduction is 30%)

I included a couple of well-known attractions: A Day at the Wells and Penshurst Place and 3 less known attractions: High Rocks, Penshurst Vineyards and Spa Valley Railway.

The idea is to help promote TW as a tourist base, to encourage people to stay longer and visit more for less. The idea will be marketed in conjunction with a TW Borough Council existing strategy.

The Day OUT at the Wells is based on the most popular attraction A Day at the Wells expanded to include other attractions to make up the package. As most of the other attractions are actually situated outside the TW town centre, the package is called A Day OUT at the Wells.

How to achieve the idea to be put into practise:

- To persuade the TW Borough Council to support the idea and
- The attractions themselves need to subscribe to the idea

From the market research and subsequent analysis I have concluded that there would be a demand for an all-inclusive package of tourist attractions in the TW area. Data from my primary and secondary research proves that

- There is a demand for an all-inclusive price
- The price that I have set is within the budget of what people are prepared to spend on leisure activities
- TW already has an existing marketing department for promoting tourism in TW so this package could be easily incorporated within the existing marketing structure.
- The trend of visiting South East and specially Kent by UK and also overseas visitors is growing steadily. It means it is worth launching the offer as the demand for tourism is expanding all the time.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TW	Tunbridge Wells
SEETB	South East of England Tourist Board
TIC	Tourism Information Centre
TMU	Tourism and Marketing Unit
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
FTE	Full Time Equivalent (jobs)
PESTEL	acronym for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal influences
SWOT	acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

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## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX P I: Questionnaire for local people

APPENDIX P II: Questionnaire for non-locals

APPENDIX P III: Results of questionnaire

APPENDIX P IV: Photos of the attractions



**13/ Did you know that in the centre of TW there is a tourist information centre?**

Yes / No

If so, have you visited it? Yes / No

Were you satisfied with the service you received there?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Not satisfied

**14/ If you were to go to a tourist destination for a day out, would you prefer to pay**

a) for each attraction separately OR

b) for all attraction as a package with reduced fees?

Thank you for your time.

## APPENDIX P II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NON-LOCALS

1/ Do you live in a) Southeast England  
b) Greater London  
c) Other (please specify) .....

2/ What is your occupation? .....

3/ What is your household income level?  
a) Below £5000      b) £5000-£15000      c) £15000-£25000      d) Over £25000

4/ What is your age?  
a) Below 20      b) 21-30      c) 31-45      d) 46-60      e) Over 60

5/ Are you married?      Yes / No

6/ Do you have children living with you?      Yes / No

7/ How do you spend your leisure time? (please tick 3 which you do the most)

Travelling  
Walking  
Visiting museums/galleries  
Going to the cinema  
Playing sports  
Meeting up with friends  
Other (please specify) .....

8/ How much money do you spend on leisure activities per week?  
£0    £5    £10    £20    £50    over £50

11/ Are you aware of Tunbridge Wells as a tourist destination?      Yes / No

If yes, how did you hear of it

radio  
newspaper  
TV  
Tourist information office  
Recommendation from a friend  
Other (please specify) .....

AND: Which attractions do you know? (please tick)

1.A Day at The Wells,    2.Pantiles,    3.Spa Valley Railway,    4.Bluebell Railway,    5.Tunbridge Wells  
Museum and Art Gallery,    6.Penshurt Place,    7.Groombridge Place Gardens,    8.Scotney Castle 9.Other  
(please specify) .....

12/ Have you visited Tunbridge Wells?      Yes / No

13/ If you decided to visit Tunbridge Wells for a day, which of the following methods would you prefer to use for paying for the tourist attractions

a) cash  
b) credit card  
c) pre-booking over the phone  
d) pre-booking over the internet

14/ When you go to a tourist destination for a day out, do you prefer to pay for

a) each attraction separately OR  
b) all attractions as a package with reduced fees?

Thank you for your time.

## APPENDIX P III: RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

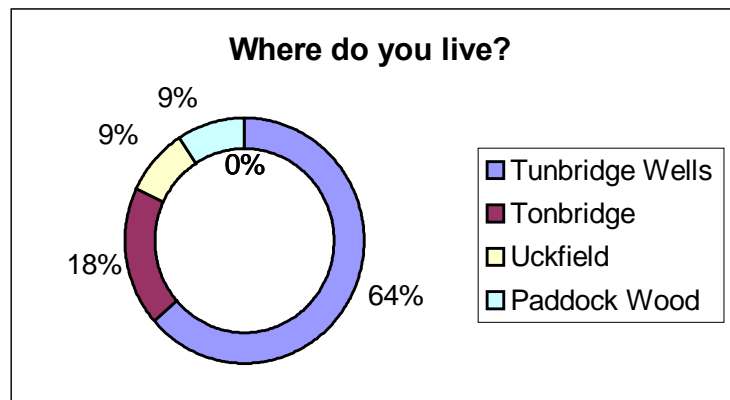


Figure 1. Graph A – Where do you live?

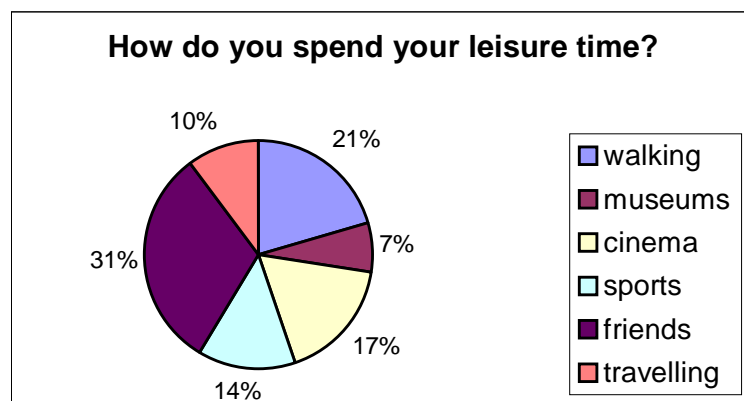


Figure 2. Graph B – How do you spend your leisure time?

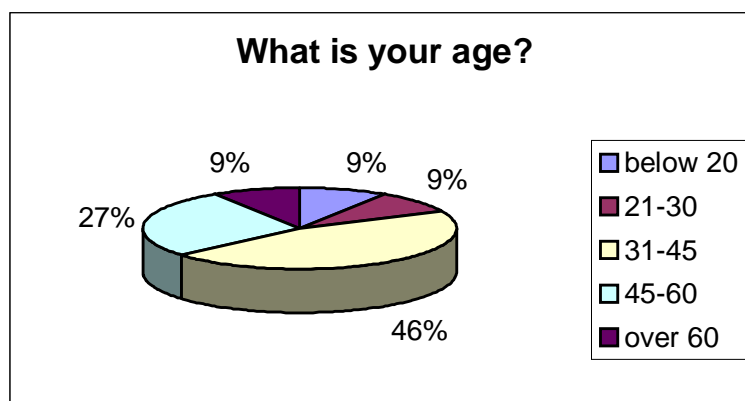


Figure 3. Graph C- What is your age?

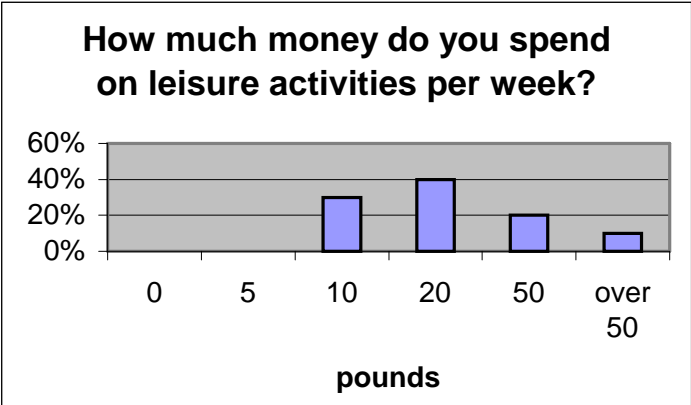


Figure 4. Graph D – How much money do you spend on leisure activities per week?

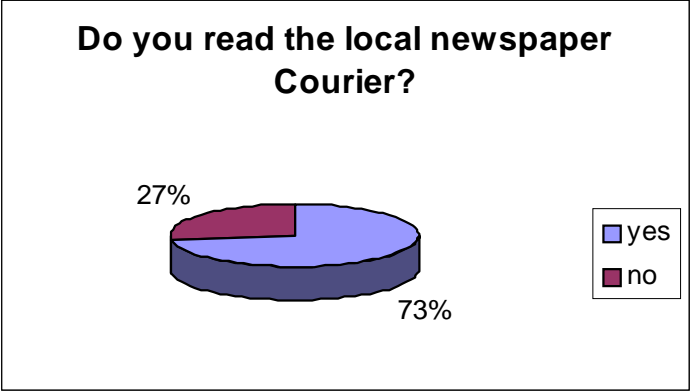


Figure 5. Graph E1 – Do you read the Courier?

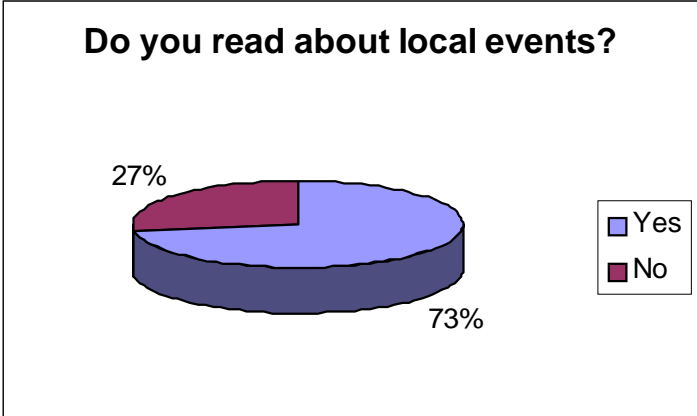


Figure 6. Graph E2 – Do you read about local events?



Figure 7. Graph F - Would you prefer to pay for.. ?

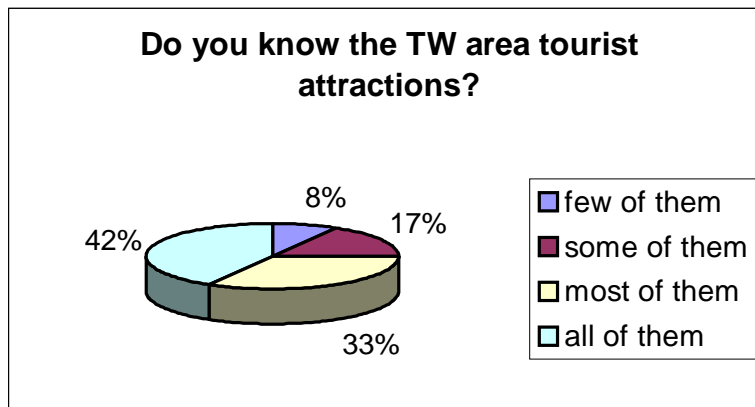


Figure 8. Graph G1 – Do you know the TW attractions?

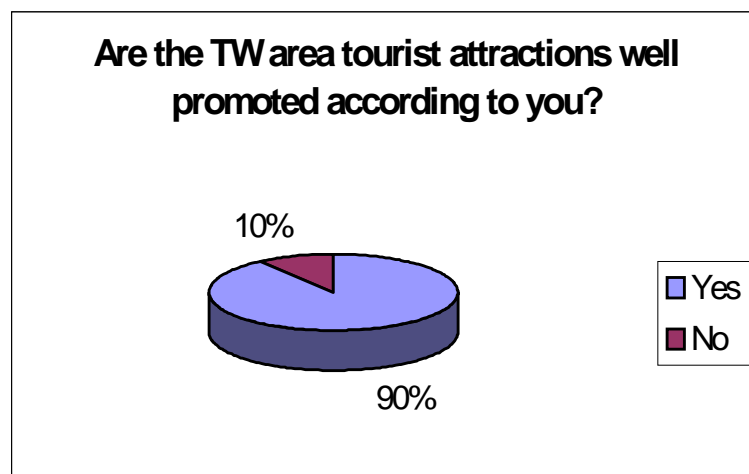


Figure 9. Graph G2 – Are TW attractions well promoted?



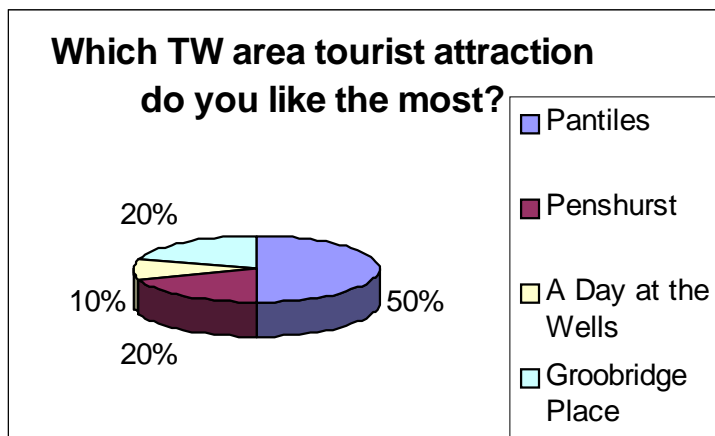


Figure 10. Graph H – Which attraction do you like?

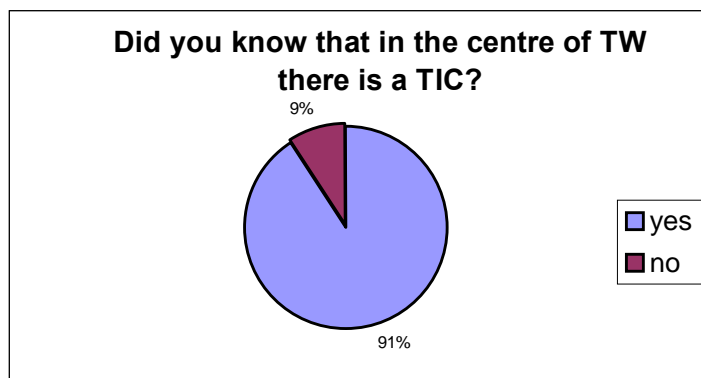


Figure 11. Graph I – Did you know that there is TIC?

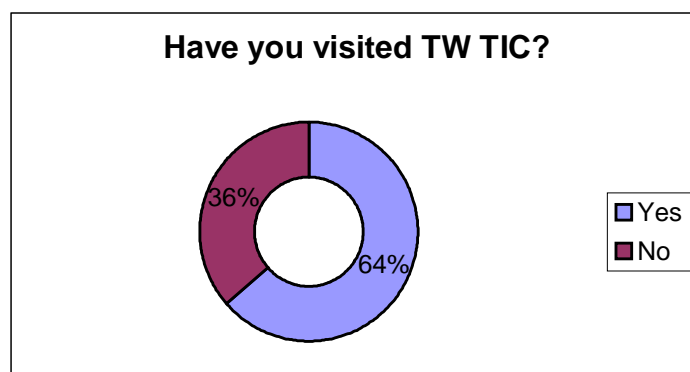


Figure 12. Graph J - Have you visited the TIC?

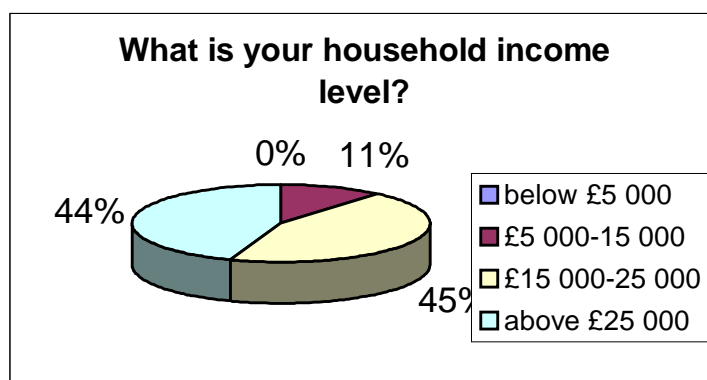


Figure 13. Graph K – What is your income?

## APPENDIX P IV: PHOTOS OF THE ATTRACTIONS



*Picture 1. A Day at the Wells*



*Picture 2. Penshurst Place*



*Picture 3. Penshurst Vineyards*



*Picture 4. High Rocks*



*Picture 5. Spa Valley Railway*



*Picture 6. Pantiles*