FRENCH FAMILIES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY:
THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET ON THEIR INFORMATION SEARCH BEHAVIOUR AND THEIR DECISION-MAKING CRITERIA.

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Abstract

The consumers’ behaviour is in permanent change, it especially has changed very fast in the tourism industry with the growing influence of internet and social media. Many French tourism companies have suffered from the fast evolution of consumers’ expectations and needs. The aim of the study is to understand further the information search process of consumers when planning their holidays and what are their decision-making criteria. To be more specific, defining the different sources of information that they use, which one is the most influential, analysing the relation between internet/social media and holidays information search. Plus, the aim is also to identify the decision-making criteria for holidays and the role of family members in holidays planning.

A cross-sectional mixed methods research has been used. First, for the qualitative research, semi-structured interviews have been conducted among marketing managers of tourism companies and holidays makers. Concerning the quantitative research, a questionnaire has been administrated to holidays makers with high school children.

The findings indicate that the main sources of information are online sources but offline sources are still important. However, the most influential sources are official websites, comparison websites, friends/family and travellers’ reviews. Plus, several decision criteria have being highlighted (price, location and benefits) and the importance of reviews underlined. Reviews do not have a high important for choosing the holidays but they have a strong influence as an element of reinsurance to purchase to item chosen.

Finally, findings show that children have no importance in holidays planning and that women have a central role for both information search and decision-making.

To conclude, this research indicates guidance for tourism companies to have more visibility, increase their awareness and meet travellers’ expectations. It indicate also directions for further researches to investigate a wider population sample, the different role of children for holidays planning according to their age and the cross devices consumer’s behaviour for information search and the buying act.

Keywords: Holidays making, Consumers’ behaviour, information search, decision-making criteria, role of family members, France, French families.
I. Introduction

I.1 Aims and Rational for the Proposed Research

Consumers’ behaviour have changed with the development of social media and the use of the internet. Indeed, information from social media is now part of the decision-making process. Especially concerning the tourism market, the importance of social media and internet has been growing (Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. 2010). Many academic studies prove the importance of the role of social media in the decision making process for holidays (or hospitality). As a matter of fact, according to Aymankuy, Y., Soydas, M. E. and Sacli, G. (2013) social media highly influence decisions of people about holidays and accommodations. Furthermore, social media have a growing influence because consumers look for reviews generated by other consumers who have experienced the service (Bronner, F. and De Hoog, R. 2010). Indeed, they want to know the opinion of people like them and that they can trust.

The aim of the dissertation is to understand further the specific steps of information search as it has not really been researched, and what are the decision-making criteria that consumers look for and take into consideration. Indeed, there is a real need to research on this subject as tourism companies in France are in crisis and the majority of them loose many consumers because they do not succeed in meeting their consumers’ expectations and needs. Consumers’ behaviour in the tourism market needs to be better understood.

Regarding those areas of interest and previous academic studies, the research question will be: How the influence of social media/internet have changed the way French families with high school children look for information to choose their holidays abroad and what are their decision making criteria? To be more specific, understand what are their information research steps (to plan their holidays abroad), the role of social media, and their decision-making criteria. Also, understand if consumers take into consideration reviews from other people and how.

In the context of targeting French families with high school children who plan holidays abroad, the research objectives are the following:
- To analyse if social media/internet are strongly related to information search in the tourism market or not.
- To explore what resources or websites do they use to search for information and which one is the most influential on their decision making.
- To define what are their decision-making criteria to choose their holidays/destination abroad.
- To investigate if reviews by other customers have an important impact on decision-making.
- To identify the role of family members for the information search and the decision-making.

**I.2 Recipients for Research identified**

The main recipients for the research are the CEO and marketing departments of the two tourism companies that have participated in the interviews for the qualitative research. Indeed, dissertation will be sent to Voyage Privé and l’Officiel de Vacances companies. My dissertation supervisor, who helped and guided me through this dissertation, is also a recipient for this research. Moreover, I will also send my dissertation to my French business school ISEG at Lyon.

**I.3 New and Relevant Research**

Social media/internet are getting more power on customer’s decision-making process for holidays and even in other markets. It is therefore a relevant subject for companies to understand their influence. This study could benefit to tourism companies to know better their consumers, to improve themselves and their way of communicating. The tourism market is in a permanent change and this subject can help understanding the new challenges and the customers concerns and needs. Moreover, as the majority of French tourism companies are in crisis and see their turnover decrease, it proves that there is a real problem between the product/services they offer and consumers’ expectations. Indeed, many French companies have not adapted themselves to the consumers’ changes. Plus, this research will focus on a very specific target, the families with high school children. I chose families because they represent a major segment of tourism consumers and this target has not yet been researched on this particular subject. Indeed, there are many studies about retired people or students, but not on familial holidays, which are precious for the French population. In addition, my research will focus on a particular geographic area, France. I choose France firstly because there are many studies about the US, but there is none or very little research done on this subject in France. Also,
there are a lot of studies and statistics about the tourism in France and its evolution but not about the French population that is travelling away from France. Moreover, I thought that it could be interesting to confront my ideas and knowledge about the French tourism, as I already worked for a French tourism company, with what can be highlighted by this particular research.

To finish, my aim is to work in the online tourism industry, so that could be an opportunity for me to know better customers concerns and the primary step of their buying process. Indeed, because it is a highly important step as it drives customer interest or not.

**I.4 Suitability of Researcher for the Research**

First, I have worked for an online tourism company for 8 months, where I had the chance to fill different missions (buying new product, business analysis, marketing project development, managing online advertising and managing partner relationships). This permits me to understand deeper the concerns and challenges faced by those types of companies. Also, I have been responsible for qualitative recruitment in a marketing research agency for 5 months during a school summer holidays. Thanks to this experience, I have acquired competency in analysing questionnaire responses and designing questionnaires, which will help me in my primary research.

Also, I have obtained a certificate in Marketing from the University of Berkeley in California, where I have followed many social media courses. Moreover, I am well organized and work well under pressure, which can be a strength to do the dissertation. However, it can also be a weakness as it implies that I have a tendency to do last minute work, so I will need to be careful and stick to my calendar.

Plus, I have never conducted any interview before, so I have to learn and pay attention to details in order to get strong results from my qualitative research. Indeed, I have to pay attention not to influence the respondents and go deep enough regarding the questions/answers.

Regarding Kolb/Honey and Mumford learning style models, I am a mix between Activist and Pragmatism (see the learning style questionnaire in appendix IX.2 page 80). Activist because I am strongly involved when I do something and I like doing the best I can. Moreover, I love challenges but I get bored rapidly with long-term work. I will be able to be involved fully in the dissertation, but I may have demotivation moments that I will
have to handle effectively. Finally, Pragmatism as I need facts and figures to get my reasoning done. Moreover, I am very logical and like to see how things work in practice. This could be a strength for the primary research part to analyse and draw conclusion. However, I am impatient and hate wasting time so this could be a weakness, as I will need to be patient and take time to reflect for the literature review part.

I.5 Time, Cost and Project Management

The time schedule and project management phase of the research are detailed in the research Gantt chart in appendix IX.3 page 84.

I have planned my dissertation through 15 weeks. I have finalized to construct my quantitative survey and start the quantitative data collection in week 4&5 after having done the qualitative data analysis. Indeed, because I think that the qualitative research results could orient a little the quantitative survey. Moreover, I decided to allocate two weeks to the proofreading, as I would like to make it proofread by someone other than me in order to avoid as many mistakes as possible. Plus, I have decided to allocate nothing to week 8 in order to take a break in the middle of the dissertation writing or to catch up if I was late regarding to the planning. Also, I had a meeting every week with my supervisor in order to inform her about my work and get some advice, until the end of October. Then, I came back to Dublin at the beginning of December to do a final meeting with my supervisor. Indeed, in order to ask my last questions, present her my findings and work, and be ready to finish my dissertation. I have chosen to do everything to be able to meet my supervisor physically every time because I think it is highly important as we can have deeper discussions and exchanges this way. Indeed, for me it was essential to have qualitative meetings.

The cost of the research will include the printing of two paper copies of my dissertation and the cost to send the copies to the Dublin Business School. But also, a round trip to France to make my qualitative research (the interviews) middle of September. Indeed, I was going back to France only at the end of October and could not wait until then to start doing my qualitative research. Moreover, I also did a round trip to Dublin beginning of December in order to be able to do a last meeting with my supervisor. Other small cost have been taken into consideration and the total cost for the research is about 482€. Further details about the costs management are in appendix IX.4 page 85.
1.6 Limitations to the Research

The first limitation will be the limited number of respondents because of the small budget. In fact, the small number of respondents is a limit to the interpretation and the conclusions to be drawn from the results. Also, for the quantitative data collection, the questionnaire has not been administrated by myself but through internet and to be more specific by e-mails. So, this leads to less control on the way questionnaires have been administrated and who have answered, even though questionnaires had been sent to specific persons. Moreover, as it is a cross-sectional research it will provide a “picture” of the consumer behaviour and not a timeline analysis. In addition, I did not have access to all the academic articles I wanted about my subject because the DBS library does not provide them and they were expensive to buy. Furthermore, I have conducted qualitative interviews and I did not have any experience in doing them, so a bias can be found here as I may have influenced respondents or as the quality of the interview may be lower because they may be not deep enough. Plus, the time restriction didn’t permit to interview and survey a wide sample, so results may not be representatives enough. To finish, the research population is very targeted and questionnaires for the quantitative part have been administrated to a highly specific sample.
II. Literature Review

II.1 The consumer Behaviour

II.1.1 Changing behaviour and decision making process

The consumer behaviour is the result of unstable and complex processes to understand. It is the explanation of how consumers acts and make their decisions. Moreover, the consumer behaviour is constantly evolving and very quickly. Indeed, it is even more true with all the environmental changes like the development of social media. Before, consumers were waiting for companies to come to them (push message) but now they go directly on the internet and social media to interact with companies. According to Valentini, S., Montaguti, E. and Neslin, S. (2011), the decision process evolves rapidly over time and so marketers need to adapt themselves to each category of customers in order to be more effective. They need to adapt their communication messages but also adjust their communication channels to the consumers’ behaviour. In this research, they have considered the channel choice only and not the information search step of the decision process, so findings might not provide a wide enough picture of the decision process changes. Effectively, social media and the internet has fundamentally changed all decision making processes of consumers. Consumers do not narrow down their choices until the final decision anymore, they consider brands and evaluate them, according to the review of articles done by Hudson, S. and Thal, K. 2013. They have analysed different deep studies about the impact of social media on the consumer behaviour, but it remains secondary research. However, consumers decision stages have fundamentally changed and the online information source is now a key factor, as consumers will share their experiences (see the consumer decision journey in appendix IX.6 page 87). Consumers act differently by interacting with other consumers to collect information about products/services and opinion that they value. However, they also act differently with companies, now they need the brands to engage with them and create a real dialogue. Consumers have the expectations to be heard and taken into consideration by companies.

II.1.2 Information search step of the decision-making process

Several academic studies mention the importance of the information search step for the consumers’ behaviour decision-making process as one of the most important steps. Effectively, the information search step is the foundation of the decision because to be
able to make a decision consumers need to have information and especially for products/services with high level of involvement. With the growth of internet and social media consumers have changed the way they go through this information search step. Indeed, there are more and more intermediaries and consideration for consumer-generated content. According to Bieger, T. and Laesser, C. (2004) friends and relatives are still a valuable source of information for consumers but the role of the internet is strongly growing. Internet is an easily accessible source with wide information where consumers can find everything. Furthermore, a study from Bettman, J. and Park, C. (1980) point out the fact that prior knowledge of the consumer about the object of its purchase highly influence their behaviour. Indeed, the prior knowledge makes the decision process shorter and considers mostly brands. However, this study is very old (1980) regarding to the fast changing consumers behaviour and it is an observational study of a fake purchase, so it may not be completely accurate.

The information search step is essential in understanding the consumers and their decision-making process but no academic study really discusses it in detail or analyses it.

### II.1.3 Family unit decision-making process

More than the changing consumers’ behaviour and its new implication through social media and internet, a main concern about the decision making process is the identification of individuals’ role. To be more precise, identify the role of family members in the decision-making process. Indeed, according to Koc, E. (2004) the women have a central role in the decision-making process. They are the family member the most influential regarding a number of purchase tasks and particularly for holidays they have an essential role for information searching and defining package holidays to purchase. However, this research has been done on a specific type of decision, precise geographical area (holidays in Turkey), and it is a qualitative search only, so results may need to be statistically tested with quantitative research. Quantitative research on this subject has been done with a study, conducted by the CRIOC (Hanson, 2011), which is the French Research and information centre of consumers’ organizations, on the role of men and women in buying decisions. The study measures the influence and importance of each of them for several purchase decisions. The study, conducted on French couples, demonstrates that women have an essential role concerning most of daily and high involvement items purchase decision. However, the women and the men take most of the
decisions together. Indeed, women usually have a dominant role for the information search step but then the final decision is taken together. Furthermore, looking at the role individuals in the family unit decision-making process is also taking into consideration the role of the children. Children have always been considered as having an influence on decision-making and even more for holidays. According to Wang et al. (2004), children have an influence on the final decision for package tours but not on the information search. Moreover, younger children (0 to 6 years old) have less importance than older children (7 to 18 years old) for information search and the final decision. To finish, consumers’ behaviour is constantly changing especially with social media and internet that tend to have an essential function for the decision making process. However, the role of family members is essential for holidays making.

II.2 The role of social media/internet

II.2.1 Social media/internet usage
Consumers’ behaviours have strongly changed with the development of social media and the use of the internet. Internet is a massive virtual source of information that has diverted consumers from physical intermediaries. Indeed, consumers decreasingly go to physical tourism agencies to make their holidays and prefer online service providers or virtual tourism agencies. Only a few specific variables (like travel style and age) can drive the consumers to go into a physical agency instead of online (Gronflaten, 2009). According to a governmental organization, in 2012 the French population has made only 15% of their holiday’s reservations through tourism agencies (DGCIS, 2013). Holidays makers now tend to go on the internet and buy from service providers. Furthermore, social media are channels or platforms based on user-generated content and user participation. They are websites like social networks, blogs, bookmarking sites, media sharing, etc. Indeed, according to the survey of Bronner, F. and De Hoog, R. (2014), information from social media is now a central factor of the decision-making process and particularly for high involvement decisions. Consumers need to be reassured that they are making the right choice and to do so they want other consumers’ opinion on the product/service they consider buying. Moreover, they have found that negative messages are not taken into consideration, whereas recommendation messages are highly considered. However, this conclusion has been made using only four social media and not
all types of social media were represented (such as forums, micro-blogging,...). The influence of comments by other consumers seems to vary according to their nature (negative, positive). Social media allow consumers to share their experiences, give their opinions, post reviews and recommendations and so feel helpful.

Almost all consumers use social media and internet every day. It is even more true with the increasing usage of mobile and tablet devices for information searching. Indeed, 32% of smartphones users look for information about products every week on their mobile (Tradedoubler, 2012). However, only a few percentages will buy through mobile device.

II.2.2 Influence of social media/internet on purchase decision

Moreover, regarding Hajli, M. (2014) study, consumers use social media in order to share information and they are easily trust by consumers in this sense. It makes consumers share their opinions and discuss about almost everything. These interactions between consumers establish a feeling of trust in the network they use. This trust ability in social media leads to a real impact on buying intentions. That is why websites using social networking generate a growing interest from consumers and see their sales increase thanks to this element of reinsurance. Also, it is important to note that questionnaires for this study were collected from one city only and a theoretical approach was used. Plus, social media is not only a way of interacting with other consumers but is also tool to engage with brands. This engagement contributes to create a link between brands and consumers, which is often used to make customers loyal and so create an impact on sales. Effectively, findings from Powers, T, Advinctula, D, Austin, M, Graiko S, & Snyder, J (2012) research demonstrate that consumers have gained power through social media and that brands need to be active in order to engage with them and create a strong relationship. Moreover, they have identified that consumers share a lot their experiences on social media. They share also negative experiences, even if the most frequent emotion expressed is joy. This study has been conducted on a representative sample of the US internet population, but it does not really give representative details about how consumers use social media for decision-making purpose. Moreover, Bronner, F. and De Hoog, R. (2014) agreed that brands perception is a strong component of the decision making and that is why companies need to engage on social media. Plus, M, Graiko S, & Snyder, J (2012) do not define if consumers actually take negative comments into consideration. According to their study, most of the experiences shared are positives
(joy) but consumers often share negative experiences, especially when the product failed to meet consumers’ expectations. However, the previous study of Bronner, F. and De Hoog, R. (2014) explains that negative comments are not taken into consideration in decision-making whereas recommendations are.

To finish, internet and especially social media have an important role in the consumers’ behaviour and decision-making. Effectively, social media have a strong influence on the decision-making process and product perception.

II.3 Tourism marketing

II.3.1 Consumer behaviour in tourism decision making

In the highly competitive market of Tourism, understanding the changing consumer behaviour is essential. In 2014, the holidays departure rate for the French population was 75.1% (DGE, 2014). Tourism is a huge market in France and consumers’ behaviour has changed. Effectively, tourism agencies are less used for holidays making with only 14.7% of holidays booked in tourism agencies or tour operators. Consumers prefer booking with services providers that are often online. However, when going deeper and analysing the holidays booking means for travelling abroad, the percentage tourism agencies used is a lot higher (41.2%) even if it is still not the majority. When the holiday’s involvement is stronger, consumers use both online and offline sources and the number of intermediaries used through the buying process have increased. Indeed, travelling abroad implies in the decision-making more responsibility and risks. Furthermore, Gursoy, D. and McCleary, K. (2004) have developed a theoretical model in order to understand the consumer’s behaviour for tourism products. They have explained that consumers use internal and external information in order to choose their holidays. Moreover, the familiarity and expertise of the consumers with the destination are highly influential factors to take into consideration. Also, the perceived cost of the information search will also guide the consumer’s behaviour. However, this study is a theoretical model based on existing theories and literature, so those findings and relationship between variables cannot be confirmed. Indeed, the model has not been tested. Consumers’ behaviour regarding the tourism market has also changed a lot with the growing importance of social media. The importance of social media in consumers’ decision was previously explained and it is even more true for holidays making. In fact, studies have highlighted the impact of social
media in tourism as a media that help consumers to plan their holidays. Moreover, social media have a strong influence on decision-making for holidays because holidays makers seek for other travellers’ opinions about their experiences in order to take the best decision. Indeed, travellers trust more electronic word-of-mouth than traditional marketing (Lange-Faria and Elliot, 2012) that is why social networking websites have a significant role in the decision-making.

II.3.2 Consumers and marketers generated content
Social media have an influence because when looking for subjective information consumers look for content generated by other travellers who have already experienced the service, according to the study made by Bronner, F. and De Hoog, R. (2010). Consumers are more confident in their peers even if they do not know them personally. They search for independent information from people that have no interest in writing them, and in those they can have confidence. However, when they want more objective information (like prices) they look for marketer-generated content. In this study, it is highlighted that people visit more marketer-generated content websites than consumer-generated content websites. Those two types of content are essential and complementary for the decision-making process regarding holidays purchase. Another finding is that electronic word-of-mouth is a very powerful factor, which can give great value to marketer advertising. This finding complies with Lange-Faria and Elliot (2012) conclusion that travellers trust electronic word-of-mouth more than traditional marketing. That is why marketers need to integrate user-generated content in their communications to reassure consumers (Litvin, Goldsmith and Pan, 2008). Indeed, as Almeida et al. (2012) explained word-of-mouth recommendations and marketing communication combined increase direct booking probability. The information shared about travel experiences by consumers are like an essential marketing information source. Companies need these to promote and improve their services/products. Furthermore, several studies describe how consumers like to share their experiences through social media and post reviews, in the tourism market. However, it is difficult for companies to control the quality and quantity of those reviews/comments (Kang, M. and Schuett, M. 2013). User shared content about holidays can be a wonderful tool to promote but can be harmful for the company if contents are mostly negatives for example.
II.4 Social media/internet & Tourism

II.4.1 Role of social for the information search step in tourism

Especially concerning the tourism market, the importance of social media has been growing fast. Indeed, the study conducted by Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010) investigates the extent to which social media appears in search engine results in the context of travel-related search to measure its importance. The findings are that social media are highly related to travel information search. Also, that virtual communities and consumers reviews sites are the social media the most represented. However, we can attribute a lack of comprehensiveness to this search due to a limited number of destinations and keywords tested. Moreover, their cross-sectional approach does not permit to be certain that these data are still accurate as search engine results pages change all the time. Social media appear a lot in search engine results but the question remains about why consumers would rather search information on social media than on organization’s websites. According to the research findings of Parra-Lopez, E., Bulchand-Gidumal, J., Gutierrez-Tano, D. and Diaz-Armas, R. (2011), consumers use social media for travel planning because they expect certain benefits. To be more precise, the benefits expected are functional, psychological, hedonic and social. Indeed, for example the availability of the technology and the trust of user’s information exchanged. From a critical point of view, this study has limitations because it was conducted on a small geographical area (Canary Island) and respondents were self-selected.

Social media is one of the most used sources by consumers when searching for information to plan their holidays. Holidays makers like to go on this type of media for various reasons and social media play a key role in their decision making. Effectively, consumers have a significant preference for virtual communities and reviews websites where travellers share their experiences and opinions.

II.4.2 The influence of social media/internet in holidays making

Moreover, social media and internet are present in the consumer’s daily life and are increasingly influential. According to the research of Aymankuy, Soydas and Saçlı (2013), social media have a strong influence on tourist decision about holidays. Indeed, findings in this research assure that negative comments by other travellers have a big influence on the consumers’ decision-making and even more than those that are positive. This
affirmation goes against the findings of Bronner, F. and De Hoog, R. (2014) mentioned before, about the fact that consumers do not take into consideration negative comments by experienced travellers. However, there might be some bias in Aymankuy, Soydas and Saçli (2013) search as they have conducted face-to-face interviews that can have influenced respondents, also they have interviewed a small number of people from the same place and work environment. Moreover, another study discusses the importance of social media for tourism matter and has contrary findings. Effectively, according to Jacobsen and Munar (2012), social media do not play an essential role in this context of holidays making, but the Web 1.0 does. It is explained that internet has a strong influence on holidays making and social media have no influence. Their findings are that the main sources of information for holidays are family/acquaintance (other than social media), the word-of-mouth and internet (other than social media) and are highly influential. Therefore, word-of-mouth and internet using are definitively important but the question remains about social media as several other studies have strongly highlighted their importance. However, those findings cannot be fully approved as in their study they have considered only Facebook for the social media relation. Facebook is just one type of social media but they have forgotten to consider forum, micro-blogging and review websites for example. Especially when other studies demonstrate that the important social media in the decision-making are virtual communities or reviews content websites. Furthermore, online and offline sources of information regarding holidays making co-exist but the online part is growing in importance. In fact, Tan, W. and Chen, T. (2012) have found that for expensive destinations (most of the time holidays abroad) consumers give more importance to sources with a high social interaction. Indeed, they look at social media like tourism blogs, forums, etc. Therefore, the impact of social media on the decision-making for holidays depends on the level of confidence in the source, according to Ayeh, Au and Law research (2013). Indeed, they explain that the credibility and the trustworthiness of the source have a strong relation with the use (or not) of user generated content.
II.4.3 Decision-making criteria for holidays

The decision-making for holidays is a complicated process to understand. It involves demographic variables (age, incomes,...), travel behaviour type and consumers criteria. Many studies analyse what factors or variables can influence the decision-making but very few try to discover upon what criteria does the consumer take the final decision. According to Ozdipciner, Li and Uysal (2010), the most important criterion is the price, then comes discounts offers, the brand’s accommodation and friends/relatives recommendations. The holidays cost seems to be the number one criteria as they consider the price but also promotions. Indeed, the budget is usually determined before the holidays planning and has to be respected. It is even more true for families for which costs are inevitably higher. Moreover, as previously explained reviews are very important for holidays makers and even more when planning holidays abroad. In other words, reviews are also part of the decision criteria. Effectively, the nature of reviews influences the purchase intention (Sparks and Browning, 2011).

Furthermore, an important factor for the consumers' decision-making is the agreement of people who travel with him. Families often make a joint decision with all the family members (Ozdipciner, Li and Uysal, 2010). Another research explains that some family members have more influence than others and it is true for women/wives (Kozak, 2010). However, Kozak results join the previous research by saying that the final decision is nevertheless taken together by both partners.

To conclude, many academic studies tend to prove the importance of the role of social media and internet in the decision making process for holidays. Social media are strong influential factors and involve different aspects that affect consumers decision-making for holidays planning (like reviews by others, experience sharing ...). However, there is a gap in the literature about the decision-making criteria of consumers in the context of travelling. Indeed, there is a need to define the key decision criteria in order to understand better the influence of internet/social media and allow marketers to use them more effectively.

(Funnel of the literature review in appendix IX.5 page 86)
III. Research Methodology

III.1 Research Hypotheses & Research Objectives

The research objectives are the following, in the context of targeting French families with high school children who plan holidays abroad:

- To analyse if social media/internet are strongly related to information search in the tourism market or not.
- To explore what resources or websites do they use to search for information and which one is the most influential on their decision making.
- To define what are their decision-making criteria to choose their holidays/destination abroad.
- To investigate if reviews by other customers have an important impact on decision-making.
- To identify the role of family members for the information search and the decision-making.

III.2 Research Philosophies & Research Approach

Three research philosophies have been identified as a possible match for the research I am interested in, according to Saunders et al. 2009.

The first one is positivism, because it requires quantitative research in order to collect data and get “scientific” findings. However, my research topic is not observable, I have not be able to use a large sample and subjectivity is part of my research, so positivism is not the appropriate philosophy (Gill, J. and Johnson, P. 2010).

The second one is realism, because it is about thinking that people’s behaviour are affected by external forces. Indeed, this research tends to understand how social media/internet have changed the behaviour of families planning their holidays. However, the research philosophy is more like critical realism because I give importance to a multi-level study here by interviewing companies, then individuals and conducting a quantitative survey. Indeed, I believed that my qualitative research with companies and individuals were going to change my understanding of the subject and so orient the quantitative research (Saunders et al. 2009).
The last philosophy is interpretivism, because it is about understanding a human behaviour and this is the heart of my topic. Moreover, the research has been conducted among people and is an analysis of individuals’ actions drawn by social behaviour. Also, interpretivism is the main philosophy of this research as it includes a part of subjectivity and the choice of the topic/objectives have also been oriented by my knowledge and interests (Saunders et al. 2009). Indeed, I value interaction with respondents that is why I have chosen to use interviews in order to understand better the subject and be able to construct a more efficient quantitative research. In addition, the changing consumer behaviour regarding the tourism industry linked to social media / internet is a relatively new subject. Therefore, interpretivism seemed to be the most adapted to this very changing world of social media influence.

To finish, the research philosophy of this dissertation is a mix between interpretivism and critical reality, which have helped to have a broader view on the research. However, interpretivism remains the philosophy that is the most important in this research. Indeed, because it indicates that people cannot be separated from their environment and so that the reality is socially constructed and subjective.

Saunders et al. (2009) identified two types of approach that can be used: inductive and deductive. However, they also recommend combining those two approaches, as it can be often advantageous. Regarding this research study, I have decided to combine both approaches. Indeed, I will be using a double movement of reflective thought with induction followed by deduction.

Induction has been used through my qualitative research as I have interviewed companies and individuals in order to understand deeper the research context. Also, the qualitative research has permitted to develop my theory.

Then, a deductive approach has been used for the quantitative research. Indeed, I have collected data in one take and had a short time to do this study. Moreover, the aim was to move from theory to data and explain the relationship between variables (Creswell, J. 2009; Gill, J. and Johnson, P. 2010). For example, the relationship between social media and the decision making process of families for holidays. Also, I wanted to determine a sample size big enough in order to have significant results and draw interesting conclusion.

To conclude, I have used an inductive approach with my qualitative research and then a deductive approach with my quantitative study.
III.3 Research Strategies

For the dissertation, I have used exploratory and explanatory survey research strategy. I have used an exploratory strategy for the first part of my research (primary research and qualitative ones) because it is a new subject and I wanted to seek for new insights and understand the consumer’s behaviour. In addition, I wanted the study to be adaptable to changes if necessary as my qualitative research may lead to changing some objectives or questions about my quantitative research. Then, I have used explanatory strategy for the quantitative part because my quantitative study have been used to collect a large amount of data in order to explain relationship between specific variables (Saunders et al. 2009). For example, analysing the relationship between customer reviews and holiday planning choices.

I have chosen the survey strategy as it is the one that seemed to be the most adequate. Indeed, it is related to the deductive approach and permits to collect many data for a small cost. Moreover, this type of data could allow a large number of data collections and, an easy analysis/comparison to draw valuable findings and conclusions (Saunders et al. 2009).

Moreover, for my research choice a pluralistic method has been used and to be more precise a sequential mixed-methods. Indeed, because I first have conducted the qualitative research in order to understand deeper the research context and key elements, then I have continued with quantitative research. Here the quantitative part has been influenced by the previous qualitative study. Regarding my research area and objectives, I decided that this was the best way to have interesting findings and strong conclusions (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003). The pluralistic methods are also good for the research in order to first collect data with the interviews to understand the key issues and then to collect explanatory data with the questionnaires (Lund, T. 2012) and obtain statistics.

Concerning the time horizon, this research is cross-sectional because the time for the research study is short. So, data have been collected at one take and not during several periods. The research is like a “picture” of a moment and does not aim a study change.
III.4 Ethical Issues & Procedure

First, the research topic seems not to be intrusive and did not require sensitive/taboo information. So, the topic has not been confronted to ethical dilemma. Moreover, I assure that all my research processes have been done in a moral and responsible way in order to avoid ethical issues. Researches were conducted in an ethical way and plagiarism has been avoided.

Plus, for the qualitative research, I have provided to each respondent an informed consent agreement sheet (see appendix IX.7 page 88) and I haven’t started the interview until they had read and signed this form (see appendix IX.9 page 92 for signed forms). They also had the possibility to withdraw from the research at any stage and could have chosen to stay anonymous or not. Participants also had the choice to allow me to quote their answer in the report or not. Indeed, the aim was to make sure that all participants were aware of their right and freedom to choose. But also, it has permitted to create an atmosphere of trust with the interviewee and helped demonstrating the seriousness of the meeting. In addition, the audio tape of each interview was only available for me and I kept them in a safe place (Saunders et al. 2009).

Moreover, for the quantitative research, all respondents had the choice to participate or not and data have remained anonymous. Indeed, no names were collected during the questionnaire and the sampling frame is not provided in the appendices to respect the demand of the organization to keep the file confidential.

For the complete primary research, all participants were aware of the topic of the study, the aim of the results and about people who were going to have access to the data. No one has been forced to participate and every respondent had the possibility to withdraw from the study at any stage.

However, I have encountered some ethical issues for my quantitative research as organizations that I contacted to do the study were not all willing to give me access to their “consumer” base. Therefore, to face this difficulty I first tried to have access to their data by explaining the aim of my research, how I was going to use the data and that it was for my personal use only. Second, if they still did not want to give me access, I asked them if they could spread my questionnaire to their subscriber. Indeed, this way the ethical issue was smaller and I did not have access to any personal data. The third, solution, was to survey “customer” going out of the organization (sport club). However, one organization agreed to give me a file of their database with only the e-mail addresses...
of their members after having warned them and allowed them the possibility to withdraw from the file they were going to give me. So here, the ethical issues were respected because I had no access to name or personal data except the e-mail address. Plus, members of the database have been informed about my intentions before I obtained the file, and they could refuse to have their address e-mail transmitted to me. The other organization that helped me for the study did not accepted to give me their e-mail address database. However, they were only willing to spread my questionnaire themselves among their database. Indeed, this way the organization was reassured that I will not use their database for any other reasons and they had the control on what was sent to their members. To finish the link of my questionnaire has been sent to the sample on their personal email address with a message explaining my research topic and aim. They were under no obligation to use the questionnaire link. All the results have been collected thanks to the Google form where my questionnaire was created.

III.5 Population & Sample

First, it is impossible to collect data from the entire population since it is too wide and because of time and financial restrictions.

I have defined different populations and samples for my qualitative and quantitative research.

- **Qualitative research:**
  For the qualitative research, I had two populations that are marketing manager or CEO from tourism companies and members of French families with high school children that go on holidays abroad.

Samples of those two populations has been part of non-probability sampling as it is qualitative data, and that I just wanted to get some insights and directions to shape my quantitative research. That is why I have chosen to have a very small sample size. Moreover, according to Patton 2002, the insights and understanding gained from the research is more about the data collection and analysing skills than the size of the sample regarding qualitative studies.

Concerning the companies, I wanted to interview three persons from three different tourism companies because I wanted to have the point of view of different type of companies. Indeed, the organizations I have chosen offer different types of
products/services for holidays abroad. One is offering premium package, the second one is more oriented on well-being services with the travel (like spa at the hotel, massages ...) and the third one is a website that regroup all the best offers that can be find on the internet (specially with low prices or exceptional quality/price ratio). However, due to unexpected and persistent last minute difficulties the interview, with the company offering well-being holidays, never happened. Indeed, so two interviews have been conducted among online tourism companies.

Concerning the members of French families with high school children, I have decided to interview 12 persons, in order to get insights from them for my qualitative search. Moreover, according to Guest et al. (2006) 12 interviews are sufficient to get good results, as the population is homogeneous. Moreover, I have interviewed 8 women and 4 men because many studies show that for family decisions women are always more present and have a bigger influence even for holidays. Indeed, I wanted to collect the most information as possible regarding planning process and decision-making.

To finish, for this qualitative research I have used the self-selection technique to define the sample as it was for face-to-face interviews and the cost was low.

• Quantitative research:

For the quantitative research, the research population are French families with high school children, which go on holidays abroad. As this population is broad, I have decided to target parents from children that are members of sports clubs. I have decided to choose sports clubs to be sure to have access to people with children and so that are close to the research population. I have been to France from the 9th of September to the 25th of September in order to visit different sports clubs and negotiate the access to their data. I have contacted a dozen of sports clubs but finally got access to two of them: a rugby club and a tennis club in Aix-en-Provence.

Moreover, I had access to a sample frame for one of the sports clubs but not for the other one. So, I used probability sample with the sample frame for the rugby sport club. Indeed, I wanted to have a representative sample in order to highlight significant results. The sample frame was composed with email addresses of parents of children aged between 11 to 17 years old. The sampling frame does not appears in the appendices because of a concern of respecting the data protection that the organization asked. However, for the tennis sport club I had no choice but doing a non-probability sample as I had no list of my population. Indeed, the questionnaire has been sent to people of the
organization’s database with children between 6 to 17 years old children, by its own administration.

For the sample size, I have defined my population as being around 588 people so the minimum sample sizes required with a 95 per cent confidence level and a margin of error 3% is 340 persons, according to the table 7.1 page 219 of Saunders et al. 2009. However, I wanted a minimum of 50 responses in order to have meaningful results and considering I knew that I could not have a 100% response rate, I needed to consider this and calculate the actual sample size. I have considered an adjusted minimum sample size of 50 and a response rate of 15%. According to the formula of Saunders et al. 2009, the actual sample size required (n) was equal to: (the adjusted minimum sample size X 100) / the response rate. So, the actual sample size required was = (50 X 100) / 15 = 333.33. The final sample size of the quantitative survey of French families was determined as being 334 persons.

Furthermore, I had to use a sampling technique only for the rugby club population as I did not have access to the database of the other sport club. Indeed, for the sampling frame I had decided to use a systematic sampling technique. To do so I have given a number to each person in the sampling frame from 1 to 395. Then, I have calculated the sampling fraction which is : actual sample size/total population. Here the actual sample size has been determined as 167 persons. Indeed, the final sample size is 334 persons with half from one sport club and half from the other. So, the sampling fraction is : (167/395 = 1/2,36). As the fraction is complicated, to do the sampling I had to increase the sampling population for this sport club until a simpler sampling fraction was calculated. Finally, the sampling population size become 197 persons and the sampling fraction was 2 (197/395=1/2). Then, I have chosen a random number (which was 3) and I continued to select every second person until I had gone through the sampling frame. To continue, for the tennis sport club population, I decided to use the non-probabilistic methods of the quota. As I had no access to the database, I had not much choice but fortunately I have been able to use quota technique sample. Indeed, I wanted the sample to be the most representative as possible and this technique seemed to be the most appropriated. As Kervin (1999) and Patton (2002) defined, quota technique is a good alternative to probability sample with a reasonable to high likelihood of the sample being representative. So, it is the non-probability sampling technique closest to these of probability. I have determined the following quota: 60% women/40% men. Indeed, I have decided to survey more women than men because in most case decision for holidays are taken by the couple (CRIOC, 2011) but women are more active in researching for
information. Moreover, I also want to take into consideration families that are monoparental, and as most of the time the women have the custody, it is essential to survey more women. So, the size of this sample was 167 persons as determined before (half of the sample size required which was 334). For more details about the number of people by quota see appendix IX.8 page 91.

To conclude, the total sample size of the quantitative research was 364 persons (197+167).

III.6 Data Collection, Editing, Coding & Analysis

• Qualitative research:

For my qualitative research, the data collection has been done through a non-standardized interview in order to collect reliable information for my research question and objectives. Indeed, I wanted to be able to gather depth insights and focus on one individual instead of being distract by a group (when focus group) not to miss any valuable information. Also, interviews have allowed that the respondent had no pressure from group behaviour and so to avoid biased answers. To be more specific, I conducted semi-structured interviews to have all the answers needed but also to leave the respondent free to speak in order to obtain information I have not thought about in the first place. However, I first thought about unstructured interviews because the aim of my qualitative research is to gather wide information to shape my quantitative questionnaire, but I wanted to be sure to have discussed all the points necessary. That is why I have finally chosen semi-structured interviews. Indeed, semi-structured interviews are also a good technique when conducting exploratory studies (Saunders et al. 2009).

Moreover, this semi-structure has also permitted me to identify some questions that I then wanted to use in my quantitative questionnaire survey.

Moreover, I went to each interviews’ house so the questioning can be conducted face-to-face. I have chosen to do face-to-face interview firstly because people are more likely to give detailed information when they do not have to write. Also, because I wanted to be able to create a truthful relationship with the interviewee in order to have access to complete and may be sensitive information. Plus, I thought that this way if a respondent did not want to answer a question I would know why and it will help me design the question in another manner for the quantitative questionnaire.
To conduct the interview, I made a list of themes and questions that I needed to cover but the interview was not formalized as themes could be discussed in a different order. For more details about the themes and questions asked, see appendix IX.10 page 94 for the interviews preparations. Moreover, I chose semi-structured interviews because I also wanted to be able to ask questions that were not planned if I felt the need to obtain further information about something the respondent mentioned. Indeed, I have used open and also probing questions. The companies’ interviews have allowed me to collect data about the perception they have about consumers’ behaviour and its changing behaviour regarding social media, the companies’ strategies to face those changes, the knowledge they have about the customers’ behaviour for information search, and also how they do to be more attractive to the customers. In addition, what they do not understand and would like to know about consumers’ behaviour. For the French families’ interviews, I needed to gather information about how they look for information to plan their holidays, where they look for information, and what they take into consideration. Also, if internet is a main source of information, how they use social media and its influence on their decision, also who is the main decision making members of the families and if children are real influencers.

The complete interview has been audio-recorded each time, thanks to a microphone in order to collect the data. However, I also took notes in order to highlight the main points of the interview and show to the respondent that his answers matter. The interviews have taken place on the company’s site in a conference room for the marketing manager and CEO and at individuals’ home for the families. Indeed, I had chosen those places because I wanted the interviewee to feel comfortable, a location where the interview was less likely to be disturbed and calm so the audio-record would be easily exploitable.

To finish, for the analysing part, first I needed to transcribe the audio recordings as soon as possible in order to prepare the data for analysis. Indeed, I have translated and transcribed all the words on a word document on my computer. For more details on the transcript of the interviews, see appendix IX.11 page 96 for families interviews and the appendix IX.12 page 111 for the companies interviews. Indeed, interviews were made in French but I have transcribed the interviews in English for everyone to be understandable. As the purpose of this qualitative research was inductive, data are less structured and rely on my interpretation. As a result, I wanted to be able to identify key themes that needed to be explored further for my quantitative research. To do the analysis, a categorising approach was used in order to regroup and compare similar
information. Indeed, I have defined categories in relation with my research question and objectives. I have analysed the families’ interviews through three typologies of consumer that I created thanks to the association of similar behaviour among the interviewees. To finish, I have analysed the data through a narrative analysis because I wanted to give meaning to the data and this mean of analysis matches with my objectives.

• **Quantitative research:**
  For the quantitative research, I have used a survey questionnaire in order to collect a lot of data and be able to analyse them quantitatively. Moreover, as the purpose of the quantitative research was explanatory, the questionnaire seemed to be the most appropriate tool in order to explain relations between variables as for my objectives. To be more specific, the questionnaire has been self-administered internet-mediated as it was administrated electronically via e-mail. Indeed, I have chosen this method because self-administered avoid all possible interviewer bias (facial expression, ton...). Moreover, it permits to perceive anonymity and so gets sensible answers. Plus, I have chosen e-mail administration because it allows to have a low cost per responses and it is fast to send. Also, it is useful to stop people who do not fit with the target before they have answered the full questionnaire. Indeed, screening questions has been included at the beginning of the questionnaire in order to respect the sampling population. Moreover, self-administration by e-mail allows people to do it when they have the time. Indeed, the sample had received an e-mail with a message explaining the research topic and aim and a link to the online questionnaire. For further details on the questionnaire see appendix IX.13 page 118 for the online questionnaire (in French) and the appendix IX.14 page 124 for the translated questionnaire (in English).
  The questionnaire has been designed carefully and used a clear layout in order to respond to all the objectives. Moreover, I tested it before using it in my research in order to have the chance to see if it was a good questionnaire and what needed to be improved. Also, I have designed it in order to respond to the research questions and objectives. Indeed, that is why I needed attributes, behavioural and filter questions type. I have used filter only in order to stop people doing the questionnaire if they do not correspond to the target.
  Moreover, the questionnaire have been designed with logical flow through the layout, with detailed instructions and structured questions to be able to draw statistics from it. For example, questions such as closed questions, ranking questions, list questions, have
been asked. Plus, it is essential to remember that the questionnaires is being refine by
this qualitative research.
As mentioned before the questionnaire was online, so to design the questionnaire, collect, code and analyse the data I have used Google Form, which is an automated online free tool. 111 people have responded to the questionnaire, which correspond to a total response rate of 30.49%. However, among the 364 email sent 9 were not correct so the active response rate was 31.26%.
Data are mostly categorical, as they determine behaviour. First, I have used an exploratory data analysis approach in order to understand and explore my data. Then, I have looked for interdependence and relation between data in order to answer to my objectives, which needed an explanatory analysis. However, before the analysis I have erased from the results the people that did not fit with the determined sample population. Indeed, I made sure that all respondents have at least one child between 11 and 16 years old and that they have travelled abroad with their family at least once within the past year. This filter questions made erased 21 responses, so the final amount of responses to analyse was 90.
IV. Data analysis/ Findings

This chapter is dedicated to the presentation of the qualitative and quantitative search results. First, this chapter will analyse the qualitative data of the interviews for both the consumers and the companies. Then, the chapter will analyse the quantitative data from the questionnaire given to consumers.

IV.1 Qualitative research

Two qualitative researches have been conducted: one among the consumers and one among the companies.

IV.1.1 Typology of holidays makers

For this research, 12 consumers have been interviewed with 8 women and 4 men all with at least one high school child. The interviews were semi-structured and that is why there is not the same draft of answers for each interview. However, this method helped to highlight some distinctive typologies within the people interviewed.

I decided to spread these interviews into typologies so it is easier to analyse them and give a real overview of the results. Typologies allow to understand better the different consumer behaviours for holidays making. Indeed, I have notice during and after my interviews that there were really three main types of behaviours regarding the research area.

To make the typologies, three main variables have been determined from one consumer to another regarding holidays planning which are: their internet and social media usage, the reason why they use internet/social media, their main step for holidays making and their role in the planning process. Regarding those characteristics, I have highlighted three typologies.

The first one is “Truly Internet Connected holidays maker”: They usually do every step of the planning process online, they are internet “savvy”, like to get advice from other travellers, seek the best quality, know where to search and have habitual websites.

The second one is “Bargain Hunters holidays maker”: they do offline and online research for holidays planning, pay more attention to prices and offers than on consumers’ reviews.
The third one is “Lazy travellers”: they do not like to plan, prefer to let the professionals take care of everything or their companion, do not give a lot of credit to reviews from consumers.

**IV.1.1.a Truly Connected holidays makers**

Truly Connected holidays makers are highly represented among my interviews. First, these are people that do everything online. Indeed, they use internet for the information search, to compare prices and offers, to know where to go, to choose and buy their holidays. For them, internet is an easy way to get all the information needed and to investigate the quality of the product they will buy themselves.

Moreover, they are internet savvy and know how and where to search on the internet in order to be the more efficient as possible. Indeed, they are so much used to navigate on the internet that they know exactly what type of websites will give them the information they need. For example, some of them will directly go on the website Booking to look for a hotel. Plus, Truly Connected holidays makers pay a real attention to reviews made by other travellers. Indeed, reviews are an important criteria for their decisions. As they look first for quality, they want to hear about other consumers experiences. However, they really take the time to read the comments as they assume that everyone is different and some people might have different expectations than themselves. Indeed, they generally pay attention to the content of the reviews and not only to the “nature” positive or negative of comments. They read the comments in order to make their own opinion.

Also, they like to buy the transport and the accommodation separately as they really know what they do or do not want and how to search for it. Plus, buying transportation and accommodation separately is in order to be independent, have more choices and have a better control on prices and features (time travel, stopover, benefits, ...).

Plus, half of Truly Connected holidays makers post reviews on the internet when they come back from their trip. Indeed, they share both their negative and positive experiences and especially when those experiences are memorable (so extremely positive or extremely negative). However, the interviewees are still more willing to post positive comments.
IV.1.1.b Bargain Hunters holidays makers

Bargain Hunters holidays makers are people who use both online and offline to plan their holidays. Indeed, they are familiar with internet but do not trust this media enough to rely only on it. So, they usually contact physical tourism agencies, look at books/magazines and ask friends advice. Specially, physical tourism agencies are a great means for Bargain Hunter to compare prices and see what special offers are on the market. Contrary to Truly Connected who think they can find everything by themselves alone, Bargain Hunters still have a true confidence in tourism agency to propose great deals. That is why physical tourism agencies are like a baseline for them. Indeed, they will compare offers with the offers of the tourism agency they have seen and will choose the best one.

However, their objectives are to get the best offer with the greatest price and benefits. Indeed, this is their main decision criteria, which is why they seek online and offline in order to be sure to have the best quality/price ratio.

Plus, for their research online they often like to go onto comparison websites like Booking, TripAdvisor, Expedia, ... Indeed, those websites allow them to compare prices, benefits, location, photos and reviews. Furthermore, reading reviews from other travellers is really important for Bargain Hunters holidays makers as they trust consumers to be objective. Indeed, reading reviews help them to make their own evaluation of the product. Plus, they are truly influence by negative comments. As they are looking for a good quality/price ratio, negative comments will lead them to have doubts about the product.

Also, Bargain Hunter have some tricks in order to find the best promotions and offers. Indeed, for example once they have chosen their accommodation they go directly on to the provider’s website because without any intermediaries prices are often cheaper.

IV.1.1.c Lazy travellers

There are two types of Lazy travellers. The first one, are people who leave their partner to do all the work (research, selections, ...) and they participate only in the final decision. Those interviewees are mostly men. Indeed, usually the men are the lazy travellers and let their partner (women) organize everything. However, once their partner shows them what they have pre-selected then Lazy travellers participate in making the final decision. In the case of Lazy travellers, they do not participate to the
planning process either because their partner is “the organizer” in the couple or because their partner is more “internet savvy” and knows better how to do all the research. The second one, are people who don’t want to take care of anything of the holiday planning process and think that professional of the market will do it better than them. Indeed, they do not like to plan or spend hours looking for information, they are not confident in their skills to choose the perfect holiday travel and want to be relax. To do so, they contact either a physical or online tourism agency in order to let them plan everything. Lazy travellers give the agency their expectations, needs and criteria and let them came up with a proposal. Travellers just have to discuss with the agency until one proposition suits them. Usually, once they have booked their trip they then go on the internet to look at where they are going, what is around about, and what they are going to do. This type of travellers does not give credit to reviews made by others and prefer to trust the tourism agencies.

IV.1.1.d Other qualitative findings

Other findings can be highlighted in this qualitative research. First, most interviewees prefer to buy accommodation and transport separately in order to get a better prices and more independence. Plus, the majority of interviewees are internet savvy and use it a lot during their planning process. Indeed, it is an essential tool for them to get information and select their holidays. They know how and where to search to be more efficient even if they still spend a lot of time on this tool. Moreover, comparison websites like Booking and TripAdvisor are highly used and especially people like to read reviews by other travellers on those websites. The reviews are an essential criterion for their decision-making however, their pertinence is essential. Interviewees really read them in order to make their own opinion about the product and there are not only looking at the number of positive reviews versus negative ones. They put comments into perspective by judging if what is highlighted as a negative really is negative for them (or vice versa). So, reviews have an influence on their decision but the relevancy of reviews really matters. Moreover, a book that almost all the respondents love and use before and during their holidays is Le Guide du Routard. Indeed, they like using it before their travel to have tips on where to eat, where to sleep, the points of interest and the habits of the country. Respondents also always bring this small book with them when travelling as it will be
their only source of information available that they really trust when they need advice. Indeed, because they are not sure to have access to the internet. Also, what can be noticed is that among couples with children there is usually only one of them managing all the research and pre-selecting choices of hotels, trips, …. Then they look at the pre-selection together and do the final decision. So, we can say that in couples there is one that is more active than the other. Moreover, most of the time women are the “organizer” and main decider and the men are more a “follower” and participate only in the final choice. Indeed, men trust their companion to do the best choices. Also, men have a complete confidence in their judgment as their companion knows what they will like or not.

Furthermore, an important thing that comes out from those interviews is that children never have their word to say. Indeed, the parents take care of everything regarding their wants and do not really ask their children’s opinion. The children just follow the lead and do not participate to the planning process. However, when choosing their holidays parents still take into account the fact that they need to go to a place where there are adapted activities for the children to have fun.

To finish, even if reviews are essential for the decision-making, interviewees do not often post comments when they come back from their holidays. Indeed, mostly by laziness and also because they do not think about it. However, people who do post reviews are mostly Truly Connected holidays makers and share both positive and negative experience. It is important to notice that they are more likely to share extreme experience, either on the positive or on the negative way.

**IV.1.2 Online companies’ interviews**

For the research two different companies have been interviewed about their consumers’ behaviour, the change they have noticed on the market, how they adapt to those changes and their new strategy.

The first company is an online tourism company selling premium package holidays with huge promotions. The second one is a media website company that regroup on their website all the best offers that can be found on the internet.
IV.1.2.a First company

The marketing manager of Voyage Privé, first has explained the changes observed about the consumers’ behaviour and then the different actions of the company to adapt their strategy.

- **Consumers behaviour changes:** First, people are increasingly buying their holidays online. Tourism agencies have difficulties facing the new behaviour because they are losing market share to online tourism actors. Indeed, consumers now like to make their own research on the web and especially compare offers. Moreover, the interviewee highlights a tendency to go to customized holidays with a will to “make their own trip”. They want to choose everything so they compare prices and read reviews in order to get the best offers. Also, an important behaviour is the interest and influence of reviews made by other travellers. Indeed, according to the interviewee, reviews are really part of the decision criteria. They are used like a certification and to be reassured on their choice. Price and quality are the two main criteria for decision-making but reviews help finalizing the decision. To finish, consumers use multi-devices when searching information or to buy their holidays. Indeed, there is a growing use of mobile device for information search, however the conversion rate on this device in very low. Consumers like to search information on mobile but they do not trust this device enough to buy through it, computer/laptops are still preferred. Consumers feel a lack of security with the mobile device.

- **Impacts on the strategy:** To follow consumers’ changes and expectations the company is going to implement different actions. First, do improvement on their product presentation. Indeed, are going to highlight the call price of the product in order to be more trustable, also implement reviews to reassure consumers, and put bigger pictures so consumers can have a better idea of the product. Plus, the company is going to propose new products that will be more flexible and so customizable products. Moreover, a particular attention is given to their mobile device performance. Indeed, they want to improve themselves on mobile in order to reassure consumer and make them confident to use this device for buying holidays. The company tries to have efficient templates on every device. Finally, they use social media for awareness only.
IV.1.2.b Second company

The marketing manager of l’Officiel des Vacances, have described the different new consumers’ behaviour regarding online tourism but also the changes implemented by the company to adapt to consumers wants/expectations.

- Consumers behaviour changes: The first new behaviour mentioned is the need for consumers to make their own holidays. Indeed, they want to choose everything and buy them separately (transport, accommodation, activities,...). Then, the interviewee evokes the fact that consumer have a growing interest for owners to owners deals. Indeed, several websites are specialized in that kind of offers for transport and accommodation. Moreover, consumers are more and more internet savvy and know how and where to search to make their holidays. Indeed, they now need to compare the offers on different websites but also offline before buying. This lead to an increased number of intermediaries before choosing their holidays, which make the buying process more complicated. Plus, before buying the product/service they have selected for their holidays, a lot of consumer also go directly on the provider’s website in order to be reassured about the offer and have a lower price by cutting intermediaries. To finish, reviews by other travellers are strongly influential. Indeed, consumers need to read the opinion of people like them to make their final choice.

- Impacts on the strategy: First, the company has a need to reassure consumers about the confidence they can have in them and the quality of its offers. Do to so, they already give advice on the offers but they want to implement reviews by other travellers to reassure the consumers. Moreover, they have invested a lot in Facebook for their awareness and acquisition of new members. Indeed, they only do awareness and acquisition on Facebook because there is a very low conversion rate on this platform, but performance for awareness is great. Plus, they have decided to reduce the solicitation of their database and so send less emails. Indeed, the majority of their website traffic comes from emails but they need to preserve their members. Also, they have implemented the possibility for members to customize their email alerts. Consumers can now choose the type of offers they will receive regarding their preferences. To finish, the big change for 2015 is that they are going to affiliate themselves with another company that offers services for consumers, who want to go on holidays. Indeed, they offer advice
for holidays planning and price checking for flights managing a small cost. The aim here is to be closer to consumers and understand their deep needs and wants.

IV.1.2.c Summary

To conclude the big consumers’ behaviour changes are:
- The want to customized holidays, by doing all the search and buying everything separately to be more flexible and get the best offers.
- The important need to compare offers a lot using comparison websites and going directly on the providers’ website.
- The growing interest for owners to owners deals.
- The importance of reviews made by other travellers and their influence on the decision.
- The increasing use of mobile device for information searching.

To face these behaviours companies need to be flexible and adapt themselves to those changes. Do to so they modify the way they present their products, propose new products/services, develop social media campaigns, adapt their communication and develop their presence and performance on the new devices used by consumers.
IV.2 Quantitative research

The quantitative research has been conducted among French people with high school children, who go on holidays abroad with their family. 111 responses have been collected however only 90 have been kept and analysed. Indeed, 21 responses did not correspond to the research population defined.

IV.2.1 Sampling issues

![Pie Chart](image)

**Q1. Have you travelled abroad with your children in the past year?**

- Yes: 81%
- No: 19%

**Figure 1:** Travelling abroad families, within the past year (Q.1)

81% out of the 111 respondents have travelled abroad within the past year with their children. So, the 19% could not continue the questionnaire because they did not fit with the population sample determined. Indeed, it was needed that respondents have travelled at least once with their children within the last year in order to have answers that are more accurate.
This pie chart above shows the repartition of the gender among the 90 respondents. 62% are women and 38% are men.

The bar chart above shows the age of the respondents’ children. Each respondent have at least one child between 11 and 16 years old.
IV.2.2 The Holidays Makers Planning process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages/ Rank</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date choice</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination choice</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact a tourism agency</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package choice</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy package</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online information search</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek information from peers</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at online reviews</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Planning process steps (Q.3)

The table above presents the steps followed by the respondents to plan their holidays by order of importance. As we can see the date choice is the first step of their planning process (62% for the first rank), followed by the destination choice (40% for the second rank), then the third rank is allocated to online information search (44%). Looking at online reviews and seeking information from peers are fighting for the 4th and 5th rank. However, it can be noticed that looking at online reviews seems to be more important than seeking information from peers (with 24% for the 4th rank against 16%). The 6th step of the planning process seems to be the package choice (31%) and then buying the package (with 27% for the 7th step). To finish the last step named by respondent for 56% of them is contacting a tourism agency.
IV.2.3 Information search behaviour in planning holidays

The diagram above shows what intermediaries respondents use the most to gather information for their holidays. The main intermediaries used are search engines (64%) and directly on specialized websites like booking, Trivago, AirBnB, ... (60%). Also, 47% of the respondents declare using tourism Books/ Magazines and official internet sites (Tourist Office, Embassy, ...). However, it can be noticed that only 13% of them will use tourism agencies.

Figure 4: Intermediaries used to gather information (Q.4)
Figure 5: Level of importance of the intermediaries (Q.5)

The diagram above represents the level of importance of each intermediary to gather information for holidays making, on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high).
First, social media are quite to very important for 32% of the respondents (ranks 3 to 5 on the scale). This portion of the respondents who give an importance to social media could seem low. However, it can be highlighted that as only 38% of respondents declare using social media (see question 4) and this can change the meaning of those results. Indeed, we can say that out of the 38% of social media users, 16% find them quite important and 16% more find them very important.
Then, books/magazines are intermediaries not so important according to respondents. Indeed, 34% consider that they have a low level of importance and 31% medium level (grade 3 on the scale). However, 35% of respondents think that books/magazines are very important to gather information for holidays making.
Family/friends seem to be significant for respondents as 22% have answered that it is very important and 25% extremely important.
Search engines are mostly considered as an intermediary that has a medium level of importance (45% of respondents). Still, 35% of respondents find it very to extremely important. But 20% of respondents think it has a low level of importance. Moreover, the most essential intermediaries are official internet websites with 40% of respondents who allocate them an extremely high level of importance and 22% a high level of importance. Only 13% of respondents consider that they have a low level of importance.

Plus, tourism agencies are considered as having a low level of importance with 33% for extremely low and 22% for low level. However, 26% of respondents still declare that tourism agency have a high level of importance. Which seems to be a very good results considering that only 13% of respondents use tourism agencies to gather information when planning holidays (see previous question Q4.).

To finish, the last intermediary is “directly on specialized websites” that respondents already know. This intermediary is also considered as strongly important. Indeed, 58% of respondents think that it has a very to extremely high level of importance. Only 25% of respondents consider that this intermediary has a low level of importance. It is essential to notice that the intermediaries with the highest level of importance are: official internet websites, going directly on specialized websites and family/friends.

**Figure 6:** Level of internet usage for information search (Q.6)
This diagram above shows how important is internet for information search to plan family holidays. Indeed, 67% of the respondents declare that their internet usage is extremely high. Moreover, all respondents consider their internet usage level as quite important because they have all rank their level of usage on the scale as medium and plus.

![Q7. How important is your social media usage when searching for information:](image)

**Figure 7**: Level of social media usage for information search (Q.7)

The diagram above shows that 62% of respondents consider their social media usage to be low when searching for information to plan their holidays. Indeed, only 22% consider it as high.
Figure 8: Type of websites used for information search (Q.8)

The diagram above represents the type of websites that respondents use when searching for information on the internet. It can be noticed that the most used are official websites (69%) and comparison websites (64%). Also, 33% of respondents go directly on the contractor’s website when searching for information to plan their holidays. To finish, 24% use social media like blogs, forums, etc.
IV.2.4 Decision making criteria for selecting holidays

Q10. Do you read reviews about the products/services you are looking at on the internet?

82% Yes
18% No

Figure 9: Proportion of respondents reading reviews (Q.10)

The pie chart above shows the proportion of the respondents who do or do not read reviews before buying. 82% of the respondents read reviews made by other consumer before choosing their final product/service. Only 18% do not pay attention to reviews.

Q11. How influential are other travellers reviews about products/services on your buying decision?

7% Extremely low
22% Low
51% Average
18% High
2% Extremely high

Figure 10: The influence of reviews of the buying decision (Q.11)
The diagram above represents the influence of reviews on the respondents’ buying decision. It shows that for 20% of them, reviews have a very high influence. However, for the majority of the respondents the influence by reviews on their buying decision is medium (51%). To finish, 29% of respondents declare than reviews have a very low influence on their decision. However, we need to remind that 18% of respondents do not read reviews so eventually for them reviews have no influence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q12. What do you do if there are as much negatives as positives reviews for the product/service you want to choose?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I buy it, because I trust my own opinion (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not buy, because I rely on negative comments (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy it, because I rely on positive comments (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not buy, because I do not know what to think (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 11:** Behaviour of respondents regarding reviews (Q.12)

The diagram above shows the influence of the nature of reviews (positive or negative) on the buying decision. The aim of the question was to know if the nature of reviews has an influence on the buying decision and which one of the positive or negative comments are more considered. If there are equally positive and negative reviews, 47% of respondents will still buy the product/service concerned because they trust their own opinion. However, 22% of the respondents will not buy the product/service because they trust more comments that are negative. On the other side, only 11% of the respondents will still buy the product/service because they trust positive comments better. To finish, 20% of respondents will not buy the product/service as they don’t know what to think about it because of the divided reviews.
The diagram above shows the different decision criteria and their level of importance in making the final decision. The criteria that are the most influential in the decision-making are the price (94% find it very to extremely important) followed closely by the location (91% find it very to extremely important). The third most important criteria will be the benefits offer (like breakfast, access to the pool, ...) with 77% of the respondents who think it is very important. Then, comes the interest in offers/promotions. Indeed, 31% of respondents think it is quite important but 56% of them think that is it at least very important for the decision. Also, the fifth criteria by order of importance would be the pictures. Indeed, 49% of respondents declare that photos are very important in making the final decision. Then, activities available on holidays are considered as very important for 42% of the respondents. To finish, reviews are considered as quite important by 33% of respondent in making the final decision and very to extremely important by 25% of them. However, 42% of respondents think that reviews have a low impact on their final decision. It can be noticed that several criteria are really important to take the final decision.

**Figure 12:** Decision making criteria's importance (Q.15)
Q16. Do you have any other important criteria? If yes, which one(s)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with my budget = Price</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability dates: school holidays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family opinion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kid Club = Activities available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and the country's health system when travelling with children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence or absence of political problem / social / health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities offered by the structure or around which can involve the whole family: children / adults</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of holiday vouchers by the structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coup de coeur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality price ratio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from points of interest = Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want a location far from airport or other noise. I prefer to rent a car or take public transport to visit. = Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations by people around me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have 4 children and almost no hotel offer is satisfying for a family of 6 people with children. We are therefore forced to rent apartments or aparthotel. We have a very tight budget: the overall price of the week (flight + accommodation + food + activities) is calculated before departure and we have no margin. I buy everything separately to optimize everything, it takes more time, but it is cheaper! = Price

**Table 2: Additional decision criteria (Q.16)**

The table above, presents different other criteria that respondents take into consideration for their final decision. Some comments have been link to the criteria mentioned in the previous question because they were the same (written in red in the table). Indeed, the criterion considering the distance of the accommodation from points of interest is equivalent to considering the location. However, the different other decision criteria raised are the opinion of the family, school holiday dates, security and health system of the country where travelling and recommendations by peers.
IV.2.5 Role of family members in buying holidays

**Q18. What is your role when planning your family holidays?**

![Bar chart showing roles in planning holidays]

**Figure 13:** The role of respondents in holidays making (Q.18)

The diagram above represents the role of respondents in holidays making. Most of the respondents handle everything and just include their partner to take the final decision (58%). Also, 27% of respondents say that their partner manages everything to plan their holidays but nevertheless they participate to the final decision. Then, 13% of respondents declare doing everything alone and 2% of them handle nothing.
The diagram above represents the role of the children in holidays making. 60% of respondents say that their children do not participate to the planning process or decision making for their holidays. Indeed, those respondents take all decisions without asking their children’s opinion. However, 31% of respondents declare that their children participate in the destination choice. Only 2% of respondent’s children do participate in the accommodation selection. To finish, 7% of respondents say that their children participate both to the destination and accommodation selection. It is important to notice that most of the children do not have a role in holidays making.
Figure 15: Difference in the role of respondents for holidays making regarding gender (Q.18 vs Q.20)

The diagram above shows the difference between men and women concerning their role in holidays making. Most male respondents let their partner handles everything and participate only to the final decision (56% of them). However, 32% of men do handle everything and take the final decision with their partner. But also, 5% of men deal with nothing at all concerning holidays making. On the contrary, a large majority of women respondents declare handling everything alone to plan family holidays but take the final decision with their partner (74% of them). Moreover, 16% of women organize their family holidays on their own. To finish, 10% are women who let their partner handle everything and participate to the final decision only.

It can be notice that women are more active to plan family holidays than men.
IV.2.6 Other quantitative findings

Figure 16: Proportion of respondents sharing their experience when returning from holidays (Q.13)

The pie chart above represents the percentage of respondents that post or not comments when returning from holidays. A large majority of respondents do not share their experiences when returning home. However, 33% say that they do post reviews once their holidays are finished.
Figure 17: Nature of reviews respondents are more likely to post (Q.14)

The diagram above shows what type of experience respondents are willing to share. 67% of respondents are likely to share both positive and negative experiences. However, 27% of them are more likely to post positive reviews. To finish, a small part of respondents (6%) are more willing to share negative experience and so post negative reviews.

Figure 18: Type of devices used for information search (Q.9)
As it is shown in the diagram above, devices the most used for gathering information are Laptop (76%) and tablet (62%). Also, it can be noticed that mobile device is used by 27% of the respondent and 40% of them for the computer. To finish, it is essential to mention that respondents are obviously multi-devices when searching for information.

The diagram above presents the devices used by respondents to buy their holidays. It can be noticed that the preferred device to buy online is the laptop. Indeed, 78% of respondents use laptops. Then, the computer is used by 44% of respondents and 40% for tablet. Also, mobile device is only use by 9% of respondents to buy holidays whereas 27% of respondents use mobile to search for information to plan their holidays (seen in question 9). To finish, it is important to highlight that respondents use several devices to buy their holidays but with a strong preference for laptop.
V. Discussion and Conclusion

This study intended to define the influence of social media and internet in the context of information searching for holiday planning. Secondary and primary data have been collected, with both qualitative and quantitative research. Data has enabled reaching the objectives defined in order to be able to answers to the research question. Objectives will answer one by one by analysing the research findings and discussing the results with the literature review.

V.1 Relation between social media/internet and information search

The first objective was to analyse if social media and internet are strongly related to information search in the tourism market or not. Results of the research has confirmed the literature review information that social media and internet are major sources of information but not the only ones. The qualitative researches have highlighted that some offline information sources are still very important like friends/family and travel books (Le Guide du Routard). The quantitative data also has confirmed those findings. Effectively, 47% of respondents use travel books or magazines and 40% of them ask their family or friends. However, online searching is the main activity when looking for information to plan holidays. Internet is definitely a central source of information as 62% of respondents do online information search within the three first steps of their planning process. Furthermore, the findings of this research comply with academic articles (Bronner and De Hoog, 2014; Bieger and Laesser, 2004) that internet is an essential tool for travellers because it is a wide source of information, they like to compare and get other travellers opinions and experiences. Internet is now totally part of the consumers buying journey and is very present in pre-purchase and post-purchase phases as explained by the qualitative findings. Most of the interviewees use only internet when searching for information for holiday planning, to gather valuable information, read reviews, make their own opinion about offers, and compare prices or offers. Concerning social media, the literature review had contrary findings. Some studies argue that social media have a central role in information search (Lange-Faria and Elliot, 2012) and others explained that internet do has a central role but it is not the case for social media (Jacobsen and Munar (2012)). The difference in findings might be due to a different definition of what
social media is. The current research has consider social media in the broad sense as being platforms based on user-generated content or user participation like social networks, blogs, forums, media sharing, bookmarking, reviews websites,... Qualitative and quantitative findings of this research permit to argue that social media is, in its larger sense, a minor source of information with only 38% of respondents using social media to gather information and 62% confirming that their level of social media usage is low when searching for information. However, beside these results showing the relative usage of social media, findings have also strongly demonstrated the importance of reviews, which are part of social media but obviously not considered as such by travellers. In fact, in the qualitative research professionals of the tourism industry have highlighted the importance of reviews/recommendations and the necessity to integrate them on the websites. Plus, the interviewees have almost all declared looking at reviews and comments made by other travellers. Those findings have been verified in the quantitative research where 82% of respondents have agreed reading reviews when searching for information. Those findings also join Xiang and Gretzel (2010) study that demonstrates that virtual communities and reviews websites are the most represented websites when searching for holiday information. Thanks to secondary and primary researches, it can be confirmed that internet and social media have a strong relation with information search. However, some reserves need to be highlighted. Indeed, Internet has definitely a key role for consumer to search for information but social media have a strong importance only regarding the reviews/recommendations. Consumers are very selective with the reviews.

V.2 Sources used by travellers for information searching

The second objective of this research was to explore what resources or websites do families use to search for information and which one is the most influential on their final decision. Secondary and primary researches have confirmed that consumers use offline and online resources to search for information to plan their holidays and a lot of intermediaries. The professionals of the tourism industry and the travellers interviewed have reported that, when planning their holidays, travellers use mostly internet, travel books/magazines, family/friends, social media and in a lesser degree tourism agencies. Concerning offline sources, the most important source of information according the quantitative data are family and friends. They are people in which consumers have the
most confidence and that is why they ask for their opinions and recommendations. However, the qualitative results have revealed that most of the time holidays makers ask their friends and family for information only if they have already been to the chosen destination. The other sources used by travellers, that qualitative and quantitative findings have highlighted, are travel books or magazines. Effectively, 47% respondents declare using it when searching for information and 35% think that it is a very important source of information. However, especially one book has been quote by almost every interviewee, which is Le Guide du Routard. In fact, travellers like using this book because they have a strong confidence in it and it regroups all the needed information to go on holidays, with good tips for accommodations, restaurant, points of interest, cultural habits, etc. and they can travel with it. The last offline information source is tourism agencies. The literature review has underlined the importance of tourism agencies and especially concerning holidays abroad for the French population (DGE, 2014) with a high level of usage. However, the current research investigation goes against those findings. Effectively, the qualitative and quantitative researches have highlighted the fact that travellers do not often use tourism agencies. The few people who have mentioned tourism agencies in the interviews used them mostly to compare prices or because they only plan their holidays with tourism agencies. Plus, only 13% of respondents in the quantitative research declare using tourism agencies to gather information for holiday planning. But still, 26% of the same respondents have also declared that tourism agencies have a very high level of importance. With this relatively high level of importance regarding the small percentage of respondents using tourism agencies, it can be assumed that a few people use this means but the ones who do use it considered tourism agencies has essential. Concerning online sources, the first one is search engines. Effectively, the findings of this research have found that the search engine is the number one source of information with 64% of respondents using it but with a medium level of importance for 45% of respondents. It seems that search engines are used a lot but do not really have an influence. Moreover, another significant source for holiday makers are comparison websites (like Booking, TripAdvisor, Easyvoyage,…). The importance of this source has been underlined in the qualitative findings, with most of the interviewees saying that they like to go on these websites in order to find the best offers regarding the quality/price ratio but also like to look at reviews that are on these types of sites. Furthermore, the high importance of comparison websites for information searching and decision-making has also been demonstrated by the quantitative findings, with 64% of
respondents using them. Another source of information highlighted in both secondary and primary researches is reviews/recommendations. It is essential to consider reviews in its own right because it is how travellers consider them, as reviews give them special types of information (trustworthy information in the travellers’ experience). Indeed, the quantitative research shows that 82% of respondents read reviews when looking for information and that 71% of respondents think that reviews have a medium to extremely high influence on their decision. Those research findings agreed with the literature review studies (Bronner and De Hoog, 2014; Hajli, 2014) which argue that reviews have a central role in information searching and a relative influence on decision-making. The last essential source of information is “official” websites like tourist office, embassy and city council for example. The literature review does not argue about this source however, the qualitative and quantitative results of this research do emphasize its importance. Effectively, travellers in the interviews use official websites because it is for them one of the sources in which they can have the most confidence regarding veracity on information. Moreover, 69% of respondents say using official websites when looking for information to plan their holidays and 62% of respondents think that they have a very high to extremely high level of importance in holidays making. To finish, the main sources of information are official websites, comparison websites, reviews, friends and family, and travel books/magazines. However, the sources that have the most influence are respectively official websites, comparison websites, friends/family and reviews.

V.3 Decision-making criteria for holidays abroad

The third objective was to define what are the families’ decision-making criteria to choose their holidays abroad. Results of the research are supporting the findings in the literature review that the decision and decision criteria are influenced by the profile of the travellers and the familiarity or expertise regarding the destination (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004; Bettman and Park, 1980). Effectively, the qualitative research confirmed that travellers will not have the same approach for the holiday planning if they have a prior knowledge of the destination or not. In other words, interviewees have argued that they will not have the same criteria if they have already travelled there because they know exactly what to expect and what they want. Moreover, it has been highlighted from the qualitative findings that the criteria depends on the type of travellers and so their priority and aims for their holidays. Indeed, for example if they are more adventurous or
just want to relax and do nothing. Nevertheless, the main criteria used by holidays makers to choose their holiday are (by order of priority) the price, the location, benefits (like spa access, breakfast included,...), offers/promotions, photos, activities available and finally reviews, according to the quantitative and qualitative findings of the research. Effectively, price is very important for 94% of respondents, location is very important for 91% of respondents and benefits are very important for 77% of the respondents. These are the three most influential criteria. Another criterion that can be underlined for holidays abroad is the political and health system condition of the country. Indeed, some respondents have underlined this criteria as very important when going on holidays in foreign countries for a security matter.

V.4 Impact of reviews on the final decision

The forth objective to be reached in this research was to investigate if reviews by other customers have an important impact on decision-making. Academic studies are conflicting about this subject. Some argue that reviews have no impact and especially negative ones (Bronner and De Hoog, 2010), other support that they have an influence and that negative reviews have a strong impact (Aymankuy, Soydas, and Saçlı, 2013). The qualitative findings of the current research support that most travellers are influenced by reviews (both negative and positive) even if some travellers do not consider them at all. Effectively, interviewees say that reviews have an impact on their decision because they think that they can trust these information as it is written by other travellers like themselves. That finding supports Lange-Faria and Elliot (2012) study that demonstrate that travellers trust more electronic word-of-mouths than traditional marketing. However, the content of the reviews is strongly important such as the credibility of the writer. The qualitative findings also highlight that reviews are taken into consideration but not for their nature (positive or negative) but for their content in order to allow the consumer to make his own opinion. It has been confirmed with the quantitative research with 47% of respondents saying that if there are both positive and negative reviews for the item of their choice they will still buy it because they trust their own opinion. So reviews have an influence but only to a certain extent. However, according to the research findings negative reviews seem to have a bigger influence seeing that 42% of respondents will not buy the holiday item they wanted to purchase in the first place if there are as many positive as negative comments, because they trust negative comments
more or do not know what to think of the item anymore. Reviews have an impact on the decision-making but they are involved at the end of the process, just before acting and purchasing the holiday. Effectively, as seen previously reviews do not have a significant importance as a decision criteria. However, the consideration of reviews occurs once the choice is made, but before the purchase, as reinsurance element to confirm the purchase choice. Indeed, it is confirmed by the quantitative research with respondents declaring that they will not buy the chosen item if there are as many positives as negatives reviews. It is also confirmed by the qualitative research with most of the interviewees saying that they look at reviews only after having made a pre-selection of their first choices, for accommodations for example.

V.5 Role of family members for information search and decision-making

The last but not least objective of this research was to identify the role of family members for the information search and the decision-making. The research findings go against the literature review concerning the role of children for holidays planning. Wang et al. study (2004) found that children do not have a significant role for the information search step but that they have a high influence on the final decision. However, the current research has found contrary results, both with the qualitative and quantitative studies, which highlight that children do not have any influence or role in holidays making, whether for information search or decision-making. Indeed, 60% of respondents declare that their child/children do not participate in planning holidays because their opinion is not requested. Concerning the role of the grown ups, the results of the research support the literature review, which have demonstrated that women (wives) have central role in the holidays making process (Koc, 2004; Hanson, 2011). Effectively, qualitative and quantitative findings have shown that women have a more important role for information search but also for decision-making. The qualitative findings have highlighted that most of the time women do all the research, make a pre-selection of holiday (accommodation and transport) and then propose to their partner to take together the final decision. Indeed, the same results appears in the quantitative research with 74% of female handling everything but taking the final decision with their partner against only 32% for males. Therefore, women really have a significant role in information search and have more power on the decision. However, as mentioned previously, both
the men and women take together the final decision. Effectively, 85% of respondents take the final decision with their partner. For holidays making the role of each family member is well defined. Children have an insignificant role or not all whereas women have the central role and are the “organizers”. Finally, the partners take the final decision jointly. However, it is not always the women who do all the research and selecting. Indeed, qualitative researches have highlighted that the partner who mostly do all the holiday planning is the one who is the most internet “savvy” or have the freest time.

To conclude, the presence of internet and social media have changed the way French families look for information. First, travellers are abandoning “historical” sources of information for holidays planning and mostly the physical tourism agencies. Effectively, they go to more flexible and easily accessible information that are on the internet. That can be related to a benefit for the users, as the time cost with internet is low. In fact, internet is fast and accessible all day. Also, there is a real importance for user-generated content and mostly reviews. However, it is essential to notice that the main sources that were used before, “officials” sources, still are very important for travellers. They do not go to or call embassies and tourism offices but they still access them virtually on the internet. French families spend now more time on the internet when searching for information to plan their holidays but some sources stay the same, they have just changed their medium (official websites and online tourism agencies). Then, with all those information available travellers are also more comparison minded, they compare prices, benefits, reviews, photos,… In fact, that is also why they like comparison websites, so they have everything on the same website to be able to find the best offers for their expectations and needs. Obviously the influence of internet and social media have also made holidays makers use a lot more intermediaries than before as everything is so easily available. Plus, concerning the decision criteria, the most important for holidays makers to choose their holidays are generally the price, the location and benefits. In other words, they want the best quality/price ratio offers. Moreover, another important variable is reviews. Effectively, they are not important for choosing the holidays but they are important to validate the purchase, as an element of reinsurance of the choice made. To finish, it mostly the women or the most internet savvy partner who do all the research and pre-selection, before doing the final choice together with their partner.
VI. Recommendations & Further research

The research findings, secondary and primary data, have highlighted major points that tourism companies should take into consideration in order to improve themselves and meet consumers’ expectations and needs. The points underlined are about the online presence, the product presentation, the distribution channels and the communication target. According to the research findings, recommendations have been made for each point highlighted.

• Necessity to be present online: As the quantitative and qualitative have underlined, online information is the main source used by holiday makers when searching for information. That is why all tourism companies have to be present on the internet even if they have a physical point of sale. Effectively, being on the internet will give the company more visibility. For example, tourism agencies must have a website to propose their service online and not to lose clients that only go on the internet. Moreover, for both online and offline companies, having a website is not enough they must work on their SEO (search engine optimization). The results of the research show that travellers might not give important to search engines but they used this tool a lot when searching for information. It is therefore necessary for all tourism companies to optimize their natural referencing in order to increase the traffic on their website.

• Product presentation: Research findings have highlighted several important items that travellers look for when planning their holidays and that have influence on their purchase decision. Companies have to be careful of how they present their offers in order to be the most efficient possible and attract consumers. Qualitative and quantitative results have shown that price, location and benefits are the most important criteria for holidays maker so tourism marketers have to work on those items. The price has to be clearly written and easy to find. Also, travellers pay attention to promotions so if the price is crossed or benefits added for the same price this can be an added value. Benefits are also a main preoccupation of travellers so companies should highlight the benefits included in the offers and those that can be available onsite. Finally, reviews are weakly considered to choose the offer but they are highly influential on the act to purchase. It is
strongly important to integrate reviews by other travellers on offers in order to reassure the consumer and facilitate the buying act.

• **Channels:** The quantitative and qualitative researches have highlighted several sources of information that are essential for holiday makers which are comparison websites, official websites and travel books (Le Guide du Routard). Tourism marketers have to enhance the presence of their company on as many channels as possible. Indeed, this way they will be more visible, gain awareness and be present on important channels in order to be chosen by consumers. The offers they want to “push” should be relayed on comparison websites. Plus, companies must also be present on relevant tourism office websites. Effectively, being on tourism office websites will provide them legitimacy and increase the confidence of travellers in their company. It is the same thing for companies’ presence in travel books, like Le Guide du Routard, that have a strong image and which advice are trusted by travellers. As the primary and secondary researches have underlined “trust” is a strongly important factor for holiday makers. To finish, the research findings show that social media is not a valuable communication channels and other channels (more “traditional”) should not be abandoned in favour of social media. Social media channel should be used as a combination with other channels like emails and display advertising for example.

• **Communication target:** Research findings have also allowed to underline characteristics about the persons doing the information search and taking decision for buying holidays. The qualitative research have highlighted that women have an significant role in planning holidays but also that the family member in charge of all the planning and pre-selection is often the most internet savvy partner. Moreover, it has been explained that children do not have a role in planning holidays. As a result, marketers should then concentrate their efforts on women and people who spend a lot of time on the internet. To begin with, communication messages should be designed to attract women, as they are generally the most powerful family member. However, there is no need to target children according to the research findings, as they do not participate to the holiday planning and influence the decision-making.

The study has limitations like the sample size for example. Therefore, some further research can be indicated. First, it would be interesting to extend the research to a
larger sample and with a wider population diversity, in order to have results representative enough of a larger population. The population diversity should be extended by having respondents from different backgrounds, other than from sports clubs. Plus, it would be interesting to survey families with different children’s age brackets. Indeed, it might be interesting to see if the role of children is different depending on their age. Then, qualitative and quantitative researches have underlined that tourism companies need to understand the consumers’ behaviour on the different devices for information search but mostly for the buying step to be more efficient. Effectively, quantitative research has shown that tablets and mobile devices are used significantly for information search but not for purchasing. 62% of respondents use tablets to gather information but only 40% use it to purchase and 27% of respondents use mobile to look for information but only 9% use it to purchase. So there is a real need to understand cross devices consumers’ behaviour for companies to fill the gap about what holidays makers need to be able to purchase on tablet and mobile devices.
VII. Self-reflexion

First, concerning my dissertation, I have worked on a subject that I particularly like and which can be helpful for my future work. Indeed, to define my subject I have thought about what I would like to read and learn about. I have directly thought of consumer behaviour and tourism. Then, I have searched about those areas in order to find a subject that needs to be researched and from which findings could be relevant to the tourism industry to use. That is how I came up with my dissertation subject. I started by searching as many articles as I could find on this particular topic. However, for most of the articles that seemed to be the most interesting, I could not have access to the full articles through the DBS. Fortunately, I have managed to find someone from another school that had access to these journals and who gave me the access. At the beginning of my research, I had assumptions about what the results would be and what consumers would say. However, with the literature review, I have encountered some studies that have found contrary findings to what I assumed. It was also true in the primary research. For example, before truly working on the subject, I assumed that high school children had a significant influence on the holiday decision-making, which was finally false according to my qualitative and quantitative findings. Nevertheless, most of my assumptions where confirmed by the findings.

The MCS in Marketing program and my dissertation have made my academic knowledge grown, developed my personal skills and helped me to acquire practical business skills, which will be useful for my career but also for my personal life. Effectively, I have always worked hard for every assignment given regularly, for all my courses. I have tried to get the best grade possible for my personal satisfaction but also to really learn from the work done. Until today I have always managed to get great grades, which prove that I did not worked hard for nothing.

Furthermore, all the assignments (including the dissertation) have been a real asset for me to develop new skills and improve the existing ones. I have been able to work on practical and complex cases that allowed me to put the theory seen in class into practice and acquired new competences. I am thinking especially of assignments about working on a complete digital strategy, creating a strong integrated marketing strategy, building an entire business plan, or conducting a dissertation.
Plus, thanks to all the group assignments I had the chance to take a step back to analyse my strength and weakness for team work. I am a very good communicant and naturally take the lead in organizing and structuring the work to do. However, I am very demanding and dynamic which result in a lack of patience. I need to be more patient, flexible and more sensitive to other people’s feelings. I have worked on these sensibility and patience skills and I have succeed to manage this weakness by accepting that I have to trust other’s people work and that I cannot handle everything.

As an individual, I am very logical and like to structure/organize. However, I often do my work at the last moment. Effectively, I’m more efficient when I’m in a rush and I like to work under pressure but I need to be careful about the time managing. With the dissertation, I have learnt that starting the work long time before is preferable but not enough or the point through success. Indeed, the most important is to be well organized to manage the time allowed. For me, the best way to managed my time and be sure to move efficiently forward was to make a daily list of actions to carry out by the end of the day. Furthermore, the dissertation made me acquire a strong knowledge about consumer’s behaviour online, the information search process for holidays making, the decision criteria for holidays and the role of family members for holidays planning. It is a very interesting and useful knowledge: first because I enjoy very much understanding how consumers behave and tourism is one of my favourite subjects, as I love travelling and the promise made by tourism companies to consumers with their products/services. Moreover, I would like to work in the online tourism industry and the knowledge acquired thanks to my dissertation can be an asset to understand better tourism companies’ challenges and consumers’ expectations.
VIII. Bibliography


IX. Appendices

IX.1 References


• Sparks, B. and Browning, V. (2011). The impact of online reviews on hotel booking intentions and perception of trust. Tourism Management, 32(6), pp.1310-1323.


IX.2 Learning style questionnaire

Kolb’s learning styles have been adapted by two management development specialists, Peter Honey and Alan Mumford. They use a four-way classification that closely resembles that of Kolb but is simplified for use in a practical training situation. You can find out your own learning style by completing and scoring the following questionnaire. A description of the Honey and Mumford classification follows for use after the questionnaire has been scored.

**Table 3: Learning style questionnaire**

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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I have strong beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad. ✔</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>I often act without considering the possible consequences,</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>I tend to solve problems using a step-by-step approach</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>I believe that formal procedures and policies restrict people. ✔</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>I have a reputation for saying what I think, simply and directly. ✔</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>I often find that actions based on feelings are as sound as those based on careful thought and analysis. ✔</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>I like the sort of work where I have time for thorough preparation and implementation.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>I regularly question people about their basic assumptions. ✔</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>What matters most is whether something works in practice. ✔</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>I actively seek out new experiences. ✔</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>When I hear about a new idea or approach I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>I am keen on self-discipline such as watching my diet, taking regular exercise, sticking to a fixed routine, etc.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>I take pride in doing a thorough job. ✔</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>I take care over the interpretation of data available to me and avoid jumping to conclusions. ✔</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives.</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>I’m attracted more to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>I don’t like disorganized things and prefer to fit things into a coherent</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>I accept and stick to laid down procedures and policies so long as I regard them as an efficient way of getting the job done. ✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I like to relate my actions to a general principle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>In discussions, I like to get straight to the point. ✔</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work.

I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different.

I enjoy fun-loving, spontaneous people.

I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion.

I find it difficult to produce ideas on impulse.

I believe in coming to the point immediately.

I am careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly.

I prefer to have as many sources of information as possible — the more data to think over the better.

Flippant people who don’t take things seriously enough usually irritate me.

I listen to other people’s points of view before putting my own forward.

I tend to be open about how I’m feeling.

In discussions I enjoy watching the manoeuvrings of the other participants.

I prefer to respond to events on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than plan things out in advance.

I tend to be attracted to techniques such as network analysis, flow charts, branching programmes, contingency planning, etc.

I tend to judge people’s ideas on their practical merits.

Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me feel uneasy.

I often get irritated by people who want to rush things.

It is more important to enjoy the present moment than to think about the past or future.

I think that decisions based on a thorough analysis of all the information are sounder than those based on intuition.

I tend to be a perfectionist.

In discussions I usually produce lots of spontaneous ideas.

In meetings I put forward practical, realistic ideas.

More often than not, rules are there to be broken.

I prefer to stand back from a situation and consider all the perspectives.

I can often see inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people’s arguments.

On balance I talk more than I listen.

I can often see better, more practical ways to get things done.

I think written reports should be short and to the point.

I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day.

I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in social discussion.

I like people who approach things realistically rather than theoretically.

In discussions I get impatient with irrelevancies and digressions.
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<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>If I have a report to write I tend to produce lots of drafts before settling on the final version.</td>
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<td>56.</td>
<td>I am keen to try things out to see if they work in practice. ✓</td>
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<td>57.</td>
<td>I am keen to reach answers via a logical approach. ✓</td>
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<td>58.</td>
<td>I enjoy being the one that talks a lot.</td>
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<td>59.</td>
<td>In discussions I often find I am the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding wild speculations. ✓</td>
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<td>60.</td>
<td>I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind. ✓</td>
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<td>61.</td>
<td>In discussion with people I often find I am the most dispassionate and objective. ✓</td>
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<td>62.</td>
<td>In discussions I’m more likely to adopt a “low profile” than to take the lead and do most of the talking.</td>
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<td>63.</td>
<td>I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer term bigger picture</td>
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<td>64.</td>
<td>When things go wrong I am happy to shrug if off and ‘put it down to experience’. ✓</td>
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<td>65.</td>
<td>I tend to reject wild, spontaneous ideas as being impractical.</td>
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<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>It’s best to think carefully before taking action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>On balance I do the listening rather than the talking.</td>
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<td>68.</td>
<td>I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach. ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>69.</td>
<td>Most times I believe the end justifies the means. ✓</td>
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<td>70.</td>
<td>I don’t mind hurting people’s feelings so long as the job gets done. ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>71.</td>
<td>I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling.</td>
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<td>72.</td>
<td>I’m usually one of the people who puts life into a party ✓</td>
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<td>73.</td>
<td>I do whatever is expedient to get the job done ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>74.</td>
<td>I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work. ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>75.</td>
<td>I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning things and events.</td>
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<td>76.</td>
<td>I’m always interested to find out what people think. ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>77.</td>
<td>I like meetings to be run on methodical lines, sticking to a laid down agenda, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>78.</td>
<td>I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>79.</td>
<td>I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation. ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>80.</td>
<td>People often find me insensitive to their feelings.</td>
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**SCORING**

You score one point for each item you ticked

There are no points for items you crossed

Simply indicate on the lists below which items were ticked
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<th>Activist</th>
<th>Reflector</th>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Pragmatist</th>
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## IX.3 Gantt chart

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## IX.4 Budget table

### Table 5: Cost management

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<th>Unit Cost</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>One round flights to go to France in order to make my interviews and ask for access to organization data for my quantitation sample frame middle of september + one round flights to go to Dublin to meet my supervisor beginning of december.</td>
<td>80 €</td>
<td>320 €</td>
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<td>482 €</td>
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</table>
IX.5 Funnel

Figure 20: Dissertation funnel

- **I. Consumer behavior**
  1) Changing behavior / decision making process
  2) Information search step
  3) Family unit decision making process

- **II. Role of social media/internet**
  1) Use and importance of social media
  2) Influence of social media/internet on purchase decision

- **III. Tourism marketing**
  1) Consumer behavior in tourism decision making
  2) Consumer and marketers generated content

- **VI. Social media / tourism**
  1) Role of social media in the information search step
  2) Influence of social media on the decision making process for holidays
  3) Main decision making criteria for holidays
IX.6 The consumer decision journey

Figure 21: “The Consumer Decision Journey Today” - Court et al., 2009

1. The consumer considers an initial set of brands, based on brand perceptions and exposure to recent touch points.

2. Consumers add or subtract brands as they evaluate what they want.

3. Ultimately, the consumer selects a brand at the moment of purchase.

4. After purchasing a product or service, the consumer builds expectations based on experience to inform the next decision journey.
IX.7 Informed consent agreement sheet

Please read this consent agreement carefully before you decide to participate in the study.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of the study is to understand what are the information research steps of French families to plan their holidays abroad, the role of social media here, their decision-making criteria. Also, if this population takes into consideration reviews from other people and how.

Type of Research Intervention: This research will involve your participation in an interview that will take about half an hour to one hour.

Participant Selection: You are being invited to take part in this research because we feel that your experience as an online tourism expert (or citizen) can contribute much to our understanding and knowledge of online tourism consumer behaviour.

What you will do in the study: The interview is to clarify the subject in order to validate my quantitative objectives or/and identify other variables that can be researched. The complete interview will be audio taped in order to keep all information and analyse them easily.

Procedure: You will participate in an interview with me (Cécile Woolford). The interview will take place in a conference room. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions during the interview, you may say so and the interviewer will move on to the next question. No one else but the interviewer will be present unless you would like someone else to be there. The entire interview will be tape-recorded, but no one will have access to the tape except me.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. You may change your mind later and stop participating even if you agreed earlier. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The audio tape of the interview will be destroyed if you decide to withdraw. If you want to withdraw from the study, tell the interviewer to stop the interview there is no penalty for withdrawing. If you would like to withdraw
after your materials have been submitted, please contact Cécile Woolford by email (cecile.woolford@lyon.iseg.fr).

**Time required:** The study will require about 30 min to an hour of your time.

**Risks:** There is a risk that you may share some personal or confidential information by chance, or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. However, we do not wish for this to happen. You do not have to answer any question if you feel the question(s) are too personal or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research study. The study may help us understand the changing consumer behaviour for holidays planning and the importance of social media for the information search step.

**Payment:** You will receive no payment for participating in the study.

**Confidentiality:** The information collected will be only used for the purpose of this particular research and will not be given to anyone else. If you wish to keep the anonymous, your name will not be collected or linked to the data.

**If you have questions about the study, contact:**
Cécile Woolford
MSC in Marketing at the Dublin Business School, Dublin 2
Telephone: +3353 8 31 96 39 02
Email address: cecile.woolford@lyon.iseg.fr
Title of Project:

Name of Researcher: Cécile Woolford

Please initial all boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated [DATE] for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without any penalty.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

Please tick the boxes

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.

Yes   No

5. I agree to the use of anonymized quotes in publications.

Yes   No

Name of Participant  Date  Signature

Name of Researcher  Date  Signature
IX.8 Quota sampling table

**Figure 22:** Quota sampling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quota</th>
<th>Sample characteristics</th>
<th>Minimum respondents</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>% of sample</td>
<td># of sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IX.9 Signed consent forms

Only the two consent forms of the marketing managers (tourism companies) interviews are included. The private individuals consent forms have all been signed but I do not provide them to keep their anonymity.
FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT

Projet: La recherche d'information des familles françaises pour planifier leurs vacances à l'étranger et leurs critères de décision.

Nom de l'enquêteur: Cécile Woolford

1. Je confirme avoir lu et compris la page d'information relative à l'étude. J'ai eu la possibilité d'y réfléchir et j'ai eu des réponses satisfaisantes à toutes mes questions.

2. Je comprends que ma participation à l'étude est volontaire et que je suis libre de me retirer à tout moment sans avoir à me justifier et sans aucune pénalité.

3. Je suis d'accord pour participer à la présente étude.

4. Je suis d'accord pour que l'interview soit enregistrée.

5. Je suis d'accord pour être cité anonymement dans des publications.

Nom du participant: [Signature] 23/03/14

Nom de l'enquêteur: [Signature] 23/09/14
IX.10 Interviews preparations

Following, themes and questions that will be discussed during the interviews are detailed.

• Interview for tourism companies (marketing manager)

Consumer behaviour change:
- What change did you notice about consumers’ behaviour? Compare now with before
  Information search
  Decision making criteria
  Use of social media/internet

Company’s strategy:
- How did you manage consumer changes?
  New strategy
  Managing product presentations
- Do you use social media? And how?

Understanding and wanted information:
- What would you like to understand better about consumer behaviour?
  Information search step
  Role of social media, review by others
  Decision making criteria

• Interview for members of French families with high school children

Information search:
- What do you do to plan your holidays abroad?
- How do you look for information to plan your holidays?
  Describe different steps
  Cite important sources of information
- Kind of information you consider the most reliable and why?
- How do you use social media/internet regarding holidays planning? And which ones you use?
Decision making criteria:
- What criteria do you take into consideration? Classify by order of importance
- Do social media have an influence? And how?
  - Ranking site
  - Reviews by others

Family members’ influence:
- Which family member usually takes the final decision? Why?
- How important for the decision-making are the children? How?
  - Constraints
  - Their opinion
IX.11 Transcript of interviews: Families

Number 1: Female - Brigitte

Interviewer: What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

Respondent: So first, I need to know the possible dates for my husband holidays because he is the one who earns most of our family revenue and has the least flexibility. Then, I need to see which dates suite my own work but also the children’s school holidays. In other words, managing and fixing the holidays dates.

Once we have decided the dates we then choose the destination. Whether visiting family (France or England) or travelling abroad. If we have less than 5 days we will rather choose a close destination like Spain, but if we have more holidays then will we choose a further destination. We mostly go to Barcelona because we love it.

Interviewer: Okay so you choose first the holidays dates, then the destination and what do you do next?

Respondents: Yes, and then we obviously define the budget. Also, how we are going to travel: by plane, by car, by train, ... and the choice of the accommodation. All this, according to our budget but also our wants. For example, we once rented an apartment and we won’t do it again. Because it is like your are at home with the cooking, cleaning constraints, etc. So, we want a place to be relax and where we don’t have anything to do. We always sleep in hotels because I would rather travel less but feel really good and comfortable than travel more but with inconveniences.

Interviewer: You said that you look for the means to travel and the hotel. How do you search for those?

Respondent: In fact, when travelling in France, and if it is not far, we travel by car and sometimes we find the hotel directly when we arrive. But, usually to find our hotel we search on the internet. So, I type in the destination where we want to go on Google and see what comes out. Also, we go on the website of the tourism information office of the city.

Interviewer: Why is it important for you to go on the tourism information office website of the city?

Respondent: I think it is because it is an official website so with more trustworthy and secure information. And also I think that the information on it are more accurate because this is their job. After, I search on the internet through Google as I said and look at several websites to check the prices.
Interviewer: Okay so you look at other websites. What type of websites are they?
Respondent: I take a lot of time to do my search. How I proceed is that I check all the first links with hotel offers that appeared on my Google search. Mostly on websites like Booking, TripAdvisor, Expedia, Trivago,... so I can have a list of hotels and compare them. Plus, when I’m interested in some hotel/B&B I go directly on their website, if they have one, to see what they propose. Indeed, this way I have more information and more photos.
Interviewer: So first, how do you do to make your selection?
Respondent: I go on a website like Booking which provides a list of multiple hotels in the city chosen. To make a selection I pay attention to the quality/price ratio, the localisation, the price. I also read reviews made by other travellers but I don’t really take those reviews into consideration. Indeed, we don’t really know if we can trust those comments as we are not sure who wrote them. If there are negative reviews, it means that reviews might be written by people who went there and not by the owner’s hotel himself. I look if what has been written as negative really is negative for me, otherwise I don’t care about it.
Interviewer: So would you say that you have more confidence in negative reviews than in positives ones?
Respondent: Definitely yes, I think it is human. I don’t really trust positive reviews so that is why I go on the hotel website to see more photos if possible, and make my own opinion. I don’t go on Booking and TripAdvisor to read the reviews but really because they are two websites that I know well and trust. Also, I go on the Guide du Routard website because it is a trustable source and they give a lot of advice.
Interviewer: What are you decision criteria by order of importance, to choose you hotel?
Respondent: The first one will be the price, then the localisation and the breakfast included.
Interviewer: And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work ? Who does the search, the decision, ... ?
Respondent: First, I decide with my husband where we want to go so I can do the search. Then, I do all the search on my own (flights if necessary, hotels, places to view,...). After, I do a selection that I will propose to my husband. Finally, we make the final decision together. When we travel abroad, we like to move and travel around so we create our own tour and I try to integrate the wants of every member of the family. So, yes I do all the research and pre-selection because I’m the one who has more time
to do it. However, usually my husband validates all the things that I propose because he trusts me. But, sometimes we can modify one hotel or one stop of our road trip. The final decision is really made by the two of us.

**Number 2 : Male - Didier**

**Interviewer:** What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

**Respondent:** Not much, because most of the time I don’t decide anything.

**Interviewer:** What do you mean? Who is in charge then?

**Respondent:** Usually we don’t plan our holidays. I mean my wife takes care of everything and I follow.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so she decides everything or she presents you what she has found and you decide together?

**Respondent:** I let her do everything, she has absolute free rein for the holidays.

**Interviewer:** So, everything is a surprise for you?

**Respondent:** No, sometimes I search for information on the internet. I like going on Le Guide du Routard because they give a lot of advice and it is a trustable source. However, I never read reviews by others because I don’t care. It is people’s opinion and I don’t mind.

**Interviewer:** Right, so what do you look at then?

**Respondent:** I look at the location because it is essential that I like it.

**Interviewer:** And what do you look at to know if you like it?

**Respondent:** I look at photos directly on the website where I go, like the hotel’s website, the city’s website, etc.

**Interviewer:** Okay and so how do you choose your destination?

**Respondent:** I look at a map and define where I want to go. I also go to tourism agencies to see if they have special offers or magazines. So, mostly through tourism agency and I use internet only once everything is decided in order to gather additional information. My decision criteria will be first the price, then the location, and photos. But as I said it is usually my wife who decides everything.
Number 3: Female - Emmanuelle

Interviewer: What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

Respondent: First, I like hot weather so I will choose my destination regarding the weather, the sea temperature, if it is the right time to go, if there is a kids club. Usually we travel to relax and not to run everywhere.

Interviewer: Once you have chosen your destination, what do you do next?

Respondent: Next, I look for airplane tickets directly on the internet. Air France will be my gold standard and then I search for other flights to see what they can offer. My choice will be done regarding the price but mostly regarding the stopovers time. I want the shortest journey possible in order to do not to lose any time. Then, I will search on TripAdvisor to see their hotels selection, but also on other websites (like Booking) to see where I can find it at the best price. But I don’t book anything, then I buy Le Guide du Routard to know what we really have to see and to not miss.

Interviewer: And on what type of website do you go to search for information?

Respondent: For the flights, I go directly on Air France, Opodo and Expedia. One of my criteria is that I don’t want a low cost company. Also, I search for the flight on one computer but I don’t buy with the same computer because it will be more expensive. Indeed, when I take another IP address the price is the same as the first time I looked. Whereas if keep the same IP address the price is much more expensive.

For the accommodations, I also only use internet. Mostly Booking, TripAdvisor and also I have discovered a website named Allhotel that really break prices. Indeed, on this website there are the same hotels than on booking but cheaper. First, I go on TripAdvisor or Booking to choose my hotel and then I usually buy it on Allhotel. Sometimes, I also go directly on the hotel website because I have noticed than it is cheaper than through an intermediary. I like to create my own holidays and chose everything rather than buying a package.

Interviewer: When you are searching for a hotel what do you take into consideration to make your choice?

Respondent: I look at the grade first and the reviews. After, I look at the location and the comfort because it is very important.

Interviewer: If you had to prioritize your decision criteria, what would it be?

Respondent: First, the grade and reviews. Then, the location, the price and finally the comfort. Plus, to know where to go I usually look at the points of interest suggested by TripAdvisor, but I also buy the Guide du Routard book and call the embassy to get
information (maps, rules, ...). The sources that are reliable in my opinion are user information shared websites (TripAdvisor, Forums, Booking, etc), the embassy and Le Guide du Routard. In this book, I read mostly the sections about cultural rules and points to view.

Interviewer: Opinions from others seem to be important. What do you really take into consideration in the reviews?

Respondents: I mostly look at positive comments because people are so negative that I found negative comments not relevant most of the time. So, I read negative comments but I will retain them only if there is something that can bother me.

Interviewer: As reviews are important for your decision, do you also post comments after your holidays?

Respondent: Yes. I do it all the time with Booking because they send me the questionnaire every time. For Allhotel, they don’t ask you to fill a questionnaire after your trip and it is not always easy to post a comment. But I try to do it especially when I’m happy.

Interviewer: And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision, ...?

Respondent: I’m most of the time in charge of doing all the research. Also, because I have more expectations. So, I propose everything to my husband once everything is decided and he trusts me. Once he has agreed on the destination, I manage everything else.

Interviewer: Do your children also have a role in the planning? How?

Respondent: No never, once everything is decided we tell them and they are happy.

Number 4: Female - Florence

Interviewer: What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

Respondent: For our last trip we decided to go to London because we wanted a place where it is easy to travel around without taking a car. Once we have decided the destination, we search on the internet for airplane tickets. So, we went on AirFrance and we compared with EasyJet, Ryanair, etc. Low cost companies offer less expensive prices but with more constraints like impossible hours. We look at the prices first but also the journey (hours, stopovers, ..) We finally chose AirFrance and we bought it on the internet. We also bought the book Le Guide du Routard in order to have tips and information about the destination, things to do/see, advice for accommodation,
information on where we need to go there… And we use it also at the destination. Then, we search for an accommodation directly on Booking and TripAdvisor because they are two websites that we know well. We look at the reviews and we choose an interesting district with lot of things to do and easy to take public transport to be near everything. We also look at the photos of the hotel and its neighbourhood.

So first, we look at the district, then the pictures and reviews. But the price is also important.

**Interviewer:** Please prioritize your decision criteria by order of importance.

**Respondent:** The price is highly important and the location too (next to public transport and points of interest). Then, the reviews and photos are at the same level of importance. Also, we talk with friends, who have already travelled there, to have some tips like for the underground for example. Moreover, when we really don’t know about the destination I can ask for information on forums.

**Interviewer:** How do you consider the reviews ?

**Respondent:** If there are negative reviews I will really consider them because generally on internet you always find positive or neutral information. So within the reviews I’m going to look for negative points in order to have an objective view of the product. Also, I read them attentively because a lot of people moan for nothing so I evaluate if the information is negative for me too or not. For example, people who will say that there was dust on the window I won’t consider it. Whereas someone who says that the hotel is noisy I will consider as a real negative point. Once I have done a round of the negative reviews and that I still consider the hotel, I look at the positive reviews. I seek for honest comments.

**Interviewer:** And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work ? Who does the search, the decision , … ?

**Respondent:** I usually tell my idea of destination and place that I want to see and my husband is in charge of finding the accommodations, restaurants where we must go. Once he has done all his researches, he makes a pre-selection that he shows to me and we decide together. However, our children do not participate at all the planning process. We still pay attention to have adapted activities for our children where we go so they can have fun.

**Interviewer:** To finish, you said that reviews were important for your decision. Do you post yourself when returning from your holidays?
Respondent: Sometimes yes. We post mostly when we have positive experience to share and to propose enhancements to do.

Number 5: Male - Maxime

Interviewer: What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?
Respondent: The first thing I will do is go on Wikipedia, type the name of the city and look for basic information like the weather, the period when to go, the points of interest. Also, I look at Le Guide du Routard to have information and tips. Moreover, if I know people who already went, I ask them about their experience.

Once I have chosen the destination and dates, I will search for a flight and an hotel. For the flights, I look at websites that propose different flights and companies like Kayak and Liligo. I pay attention to the price and the duration of the journey. I choose the most direct flight not to lose time and also regarding the price. For the accommodation I mostly use Booking because I think it is a reliable source and that it gives good advice on the hotels (with the grade and reviews). Plus, I use Trivago, Expedia, Hotels.com but all the offers are almost the same. So, what I do sometimes is that I call directly the hotel to have information and ask the prices. I also go on their website to see more photos.

Otherwise, I like Booking and TripAdvisor to read reviews by others travellers. However, I find that there are always negative comments, people are never happy. But still I read them because it give a perspective. Plus, I use TripAdvisor for the restaurant too, to look where we should go.

Moreover, I think that usually the grade by users on Booking are right so I trust them when I search for an hotel. The website that I use the most are the Club Med website, Air France and Booking.

Interviewer: What are your decision criteria and how important are they?
Respondent: I look first at the grade and reviews because I think it is important. Then, the price and the location, both have the same level of importance. Indeed, we want a good price but still with a great location near the main points of interest. Plus, I consider the benefit/equipment like the free wifi and breakfast for example. Moreover, it is necessary to have activities available for children in or near the hotel.

Interviewer: How do reviews impact your decision? (positive and negative)
Respondent: Negative reviews don’t have any impact I mostly look forward to read the positive ones to strengthen my choice. I give more importance to positive comments.
Interviewer: Reviews are important for you and do you post reviews when returning from your holidays?
Respondent: No rarely. Sometimes when I very happy I want to do it but I never really do...
Interviewer: And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision, ...?
Respondent: Usually my wife looks for all the information and does a pre-selection. Then we look together and make the final decision.

**Number 6: Female - Nuria**

**Interviewer:** What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?
**Respondent:** I’m in a situation where I’m looking for a job so I plan my holidays regarding this. If I’m working I don’t travel, also if I have hope of working then I don’t travel... So I travel only if I know that I will have nothing for few weeks. To choose the flight I go only on internet and mostly on Ryanair because they are the cheapest for where I usually go (Spain). I’m still old school, so I will read a travel magazine that I receive every 6 months (Voyage Loisirs) in which they offer lots of packages. I really don’t like the internet but I will go sometimes on internet to compare prices for the package I’m interested in. I pay attention to reviews, prices and the location near points of interest.
**Interviewer:** What do you think about reviews?
**Respondent:** If there is one negative review I won’t consider it because whatever you do there will always be people to complain. If there are a lot of negative then I won’t consider the product.
**Interviewer:** And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision, ...?
**Respondent:** I decide everything and my daughter follows. However, if she wants to do or see sometime I will listen to her but I decide most of the things.

**Number 7: Female - Patricia**

**Interviewer:** What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?
**Respondent:** When I want to go on holidays I go on internet and look at countries where we have never gone, which match with our likes (trek, nature). I go on the website of some organisations specialized in auto tour. So organisations that propose different
tours, I take a look at what exists. And then I create my own tour and I ask for a quote to a physical or online tourism agency.

Interviewer: So what do you use internet for?
Respondent: I use it to choose my destination mostly. Also to select the place to see and points of interest, what people usually do and what they think about it. For example, next summer we want to go to Canada, so I search where people go for the first time in Canada, look at TripAdvisor, Le Guide du Routard online, Venere,... to get advice and a clear vision of what we need to do. Then I mix all the info I have gathered and I create my own program. After, I ask for a quote to a tourism agency. Indeed, when it is a far away travel, I prefer to let professional take care of everything because we are not savvy enough, unless we have already gone several times.

Interviewer: How do you decide? What are your decision criteria?
Respondent: When I look on TripAdvisor, Le Guide du Routard or forums I seek for places that match our own criteria. Our criteria are to be close to the nature, not in very touristic place, to meet the local culture. I also look at the reviews but I read them to see if they are in accordance with our vision of the travel, also the age of the people who posted it because if we are not around the same age I guess that we don’t really have the same needs and wants. I might be wrong but that is how I do it. Concerning negative and positive comments I try to make my own opinion that why it is important for me to read the reviews. Because something negative for someone might be positive for me and the reverse. Therefore, I don’t look at the number of positive versus negative but I read them.

Interviewer: How do you choose your accommodations?
Respondent: Generally, we give our expectations to the agency and they select the accommodations. Once they have given me the details, I look on the internet where it is located and what is around in order to finish organizing our trip and activities. However, when it is for a short journey like Morocco for example we don’t ask an agency, we do it ourselves. In this case, I look on the internet on Airbnb, Booking, TripAdvisor. I also always buy a guidebook (paper), I love Le Guide du Routard because there is a lot of advice for everything (local culture, to eat, to go out, to take a drink, points of interest,...). So I use Le Routard on internet to read the reviews and on paper because I can travel with my small book.

Interviewer: What are your decision criteria and how important are they?
Respondent: The first one will be the budget, going to a destination we never went to and with activities that we like (hiking for example). But also the reviews. We look for simplicity and tranquillity.

Interviewer: Reviews are important for you and do you post reviews when returning from your holidays?

Respondent: Yes sometimes, on Airbnb but mostly positive ones.

Interviewer: And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision, ...?

Respondent: At the beginning, we define the budget and we suggest together some destinations. Then, I do all the researches on internet to make a pre-selection. Once this is done we look together to make the final choice. Plus, I didn’t talk about the flights, but sometimes I book them separately from the trip from the agency. To get the flight I only go on the internet. I type my research in Google and see what comes out. I pay attention to take flights without a lot of stopovers and with the shortest journey possible.

Number 8: Male - William

Interviewer: What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

Respondent: First, we take a long time to choose where to go. It can be by recommendation from peers but it is mostly on the internet. I begin by going on a lot of Tourism organization websites, also a lot on YouTube because there is often people who visit a country with a Go Pro and do small reportages so I can get some tips. Once I have landmarks I go on websites like TripAdvisor, L’internaute, Booking, ... I read all the reviews concerning the destination and thanks to that I see what's interesting to visit. Internet is really my main source of information. And we try to take an hotel in the city centre near all the main points of interest so we can easily walk around and take public transport.

Interviewer: How do you choose your accommodation?

Respondent: For the accommodation, I go on internet and look first at the prices of hotels but I also like apartments so I can cook. I choose also the area, near the city centre. Once I have defined a budget I select accommodations that comply with my budget and in the area that I want. After, I read the reviews about them. I go on TripAdvisor, Booking, Expedia, ... all the websites where there are reviews. Also, we always buy the Guide du Routard because we can take it with us to travel and look at it
when we want. Indeed, we don’t have an internet connection everywhere. However, my criteria will be the reviews, the location and the pictures.

**Interviewer:** What are your decision criteria and how important are they?

**Respondent:** The first one is the location, then the reviews, the price and finally the photos.

**Interviewer:** Concerning the reviews, how do you take them into consideration?

**Respondent:** I read them because I know that people are always unhappy. So, I read them to make my own opinion even when there are bad comments. If there are negative comments that are pertinent I won’t chose the product.

**Interviewer:** Reviews are important for you and do you post reviews when returning from your holidays?

**Respondent:** Depends but sometimes yes. I post when I’m very happy or when I very disappointed.

**Interviewer:** And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision,... ?

**Respondent:** I do all the research and then I show what I have found to my wife. She trusts me for all flights, restaurants,... She doesn’t even look at what I have selected. However, for the accommodation and the points of interest we do the final decision together.

**Number 9:** Female - Astrid

**Interviewer:** What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

**Respondent:** I always go on the internet. I look at *Le Guide du Routard*, forums, or similar websites with advice and plenty of information. Once I have found the information on *Le Guide du Routard* for the destination, I type the destination in Google and I look at forums to see what people say or recommend. Concerning the choice of the flight I use comparison websites like Edreams, Liligo,... and I choose regarding the price but also regarding the duration of the journey. I don’t want flights with more than 2 stopovers.

For the accommodation, I also look at *Le Guide du Routard* and see what they recommend. Then, to book the hotel I usually go on Booking. However, for example when I went to Thailand, I contacted directly the hotel that *Le Guide du Routard* recommended because it is easier and cheaper than Booking. For my search on Booking,
I choose my criteria (location and number of stars) and then I look at the hotel that they suggest.

**Interviewer:** How do you choose your hotel?

**Respondent:** My first criteria will be the number of stars, the location near the main points of interest and then I read the reviews. However, if there is only one negative comment I won’t pay attention to this review because I consider that something special (unusual) might have happened.

**Interviewer:** Reviews are important for you and do you post reviews when returning from your holidays?

**Respondent:** I do it often on TripAdvisor for the restaurants and also for some hotels. Sometimes on Booking too. I also do some comments for the points of interest. I post both positive and negative reviews.

**Interviewer:** And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision,...?

**Respondent:** I’m always in charge of all the research and decisions. Indeed, for our last travel in Thailand my husband didn’t even know what we were going to do or where we would sleep. So, everything is a surprise even if he don’t like surprises. He would like to participate in the planning but I always do everything.

**Number 10: Male - Jack**

**Interviewer:** What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

**Respondent:** The first step is to search on the internet. We generally already have some ideas of destinations where we would like to go. Then we look for the different offers on the internet and also with the organization of my wife’s work because they can provide us special offers. Plus, we also go to tourism agencies to seek the different prices and offers in order to have an idea of the prices. But after we look on the internet for the best offers in term of prices and activities. We mostly like to go on cruise trips so, we also contact directly cruise companies to ask for the best prices. However, when we do a “normal” travel abroad (I mean not on cruise) we also use internet to search for the flight and hotels. Indeed, we go directly on websites like Booking, TripAdvisor, Airbnb, Voyage Privé, Very chic, ... that propose different offers, we choose our dates and see what comes out.

**Interviewer:** How do you choose? What do you pay attention to?
**Respondent:** We look at the prices and promotions. Plus, the quality of the hotel with the number of stars, we usually take 3 or 4 stars hotels.

**Interviewer:** What are your decision criteria and how important are they?

**Respondent:** The first one will be the quality of the hotel with good benefits like the access to the swimming pool, breakfast or dinner included for example. Then, the location is important, near the main points of interest and city centre. Also, I read reviews by other travellers and photos. So, I do a pre-selection (5 or 6) regarding the price and the quality of the hotel and then I look at the reviews to make my final decision.

**Interviewer:** Concerning the reviews how do you take them into consideration?

**Respondent:** I pay mostly attention to negative comments because they can really highlight good points. I also read positive comments but if there are as many negative as positive reviews I will transfer my choice on another hotel of my pre-selection because I think there might be a problem. So, negative reviews influence my decision but if there is only one I won’t consider it.

**Interviewer:** Reviews are important for you and so do you post reviews when returning from your holidays?

**Respondent:** No, rarely... By laziness ... We don’t want to or we do if really we are angry. We did it once when we were disappointed. So, we share more easily negative experience.

**Interviewer:** And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who do the search, the decision,...?

**Respondent:** It is mostly my wife who does all the research. Indeed, I don’t like spending a lot of time looking for information on the computer... Then she shows me the best things that she has found. And then, we do the final decision together.

**Number 11:** Female - Sophie

**Interviewer:** What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

**Respondent:** The first thing is the choice of the destination. I usually have an idea of where I want to go and then I search information on the internet and among my friends. So, I search on google and I see what they propose. First, I look at the price of the flights because it can be very expensive. Indeed, that is why I always plan my travel a long time before and I never do last minute travelling. I use Opodo because I know this website, thank to my last experiences, and it gives great prices because it compares
different companies. But I still check on good airplane companies like AirFrance if the prices are really more expensive because I have noticed that sometimes prices for low cost companies are not necessarily a lot cheaper than “comfortable” companies. My criteria will be the price but also the duration of the journey because I don’t want to lose time.

Concerning the accommodations, I also search on the internet. I mostly go on comparison websites like Booking, TripAdvisor, Expedia, … First, I look at the prices, then the location (near points of interest and city centre), the pictures and finally the reviews. I look at the reviews really at the end once I have already made a selection. Moreover, I buy also the book Le Guide du Routard so I can travel with it, because I like to have the information at any time. I look at the advice for the accommodations, where to eat, the points of interest not to miss, …

**Interviewer:** Concerning the reviews, how do you take them into consideration?

**Respondent:** I look at both negative and positive reviews. Indeed, sometimes people put negative comments for nothing, so I read them to make my own opinion. The positive comments are mostly to comfort me in my choice. And negative comments to be considered only if there are a lot of them. So, I give more importance to positive reviews. Social media really have an importance for my final decision.

**Interviewer:** What are your decision criteria and how important are they?

**Respondent:** The first criteria are the price, then the location of the hotel regarding public transport. Also, the picture and at the end the reviews.

**Interviewer:** Reviews are important for you and do you post reviews when returning from your holidays?

**Respondent:** Never… I am very egoist and I keep my opinion for myself.

**Interviewer:** And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision, …?

**Respondent:** I do all the researches and I show them to my girls so they can give their opinion but I mostly decide everything.

**Number 12:** Female - Carine

**Interviewer:** What do you do to plan your family holidays abroad?

**Respondent:** Either we go on a tour package or we make our own. I go to a tourism agency to see what they can offer. I generally buy through an agency. Then, once I have my package, I go on the internet to see more details and photos about what I have
bought. Indeed, I’m not confident with computers and the internet and I prefer to let professionals take care of everything. However, I like to go on the web to check where I will be sleeping, how is the area, what is there to visit,... I type the name of the hotel on google and then I also look mostly at the reviews about the hotel. Plus, I use internet a lot to plan what we will visit, where to go. Indeed, I look at forums, Le Guide du Routard and ask my friends if they have already been there. Also, I always buy the book Le Guide du Routard in order to take it with me for the travel. I mainly read the sections about the local culture, how to dress, the weather, points of interest, and where to eat.

**Interviewer:** Concerning the reviews, how do you take them into consideration?

**Respondent:** I look at positive and negative reviews and may be they will influence my behaviour on holiday. For example, to take (or not) excursions that the hotel proposes. However, I really read the comments to make my own opinion because people are often negative.

**Interviewer:** What are your decision criteria and how important are they?

**Respondent:** To be next to the sea, activities on site, a swimming pool in the hotel, etc. The first one will be the budget, then the location (next to the sea) and the activities.

**Interviewer:** Reviews are important for you and do you post reviews when returning from your holidays?

**Respondent:** I never do.. Because I don’t really know how to..

**Interviewer:** And concerning your organisation within the family, how does it work? Who does the search, the decision, ...?

**Respondent:** I do everything.. I do the information search and planning and then I propose to my husband (in order to let him participate) but I already have decided everything most of the time. And the children follow us, they don’t have any decision for the holidays.
IX.12 Transcript of interviews: Tourism companies

Number 1: Voyage Privé - Delphine Cosson

Interviewer: How consumers’ behaviour has evolved for holidays making?
Respondent: The main evolutions in the tourism industry for the last 10 years are first the increase of online buying. So, there is more and more comparisons possible and consumers do not trust anymore the small physical agency to give them the best offers. So, they go and look themselves on the internet to research for information and compare prices on different websites.
Also, all the system of reviews is very important now, and the certification of the products/services by other travellers on different criteria: the quality, the benefits, the activities, the location, the cleanliness, … So, the information is enormously shared between consumers and that is what make the success of the e-tourism.
However, it will be interesting to know the part of offline buying for travelling because it is still an important part of the tourism industry. Indeed, even if physical agencies have a tendency to decrease and us to increase they still have some market share.
Moreover, beyond this increase of the e-tourism there is another big trend which is to “make my own trip” (custom made) that is why customers compare prices, reviews,… in order to get the best offer.
Interviewer: How do you notice and measure those changes?
Respondent: We do not have indicators on our website so we don’t get quantitative information. However, we run qualitative tests that reveal that people compare and spend a lot of time on internet to be sure that we have the best price on market. Some people really trust us and don’t compare with other websites and so they buy directly on our website. But new members or new buyers need to be reassured that they are making the right choice that is why they browse other websites.
Interviewer: Okay, why types of test do you run?
Respondent: Depends, we can do a questionnaire online on our website or we do user testing. User testing is more qualitative, we sit next to a consumer and observe his behaviour on the internet to plan holidays that we asked them. For example, we tell the consumer “you need to plan a holiday travel in Spain” and we look how they do it, on what website they go, etc. Also we ask them “show us how do you search on Voyage
Privé website”, “If you haven’t been on Voyage Privé website how would you do”, “What information do you miss at this step to take your decision”, etc.

**Interviewer:** So do you have information about their main decision criteria?

**Respondent:** There are two main criteria. The first one is the price and the other one is what you can regroup under the item “quality”. That mean “is there a good quality/price ratio, will I really have premium benefit with Voyage Privé?” Indeed, because our business model is based on a very high promise to get the best prices. So, this criteria is really important for our customers.

**Interviewer:** How, all this knowledge about your customers, has influenced your strategy?

**Respondent:** For example, you noticed thanks to our survey that consumer had problems finding our call prices and also sometimes had the feeling that we were misleading because they couldn’t find it. So for the next website version that should be open beginning of 2015, we have found a solution to really highlight the call price so consumers can find it easily. That is just one detail among a bunch of them. Indeed, we need to adapt rapidly to consumer’s needs. Some of the other things that we are going to improve in the next website are to highlight the reviews, put bigger pictures so consumer can really see how it is on site. Also our customer ask us to propose customizable offers and not only packages, so we will have more flexible offers. Plus, we also highlight our phone number so customers who have questions or problems can call us easily. Moreover, we also do all those improvements on the mobile device. We pay strong attention to mobile devices because it is an important part of our traffic. However, it is not on this device that we have the best conversion rate. Indeed, people like to surf and look at offers on the mobile application, open their newsletter in the morning, etc. But they usually buy quietly at home on their laptop in the evening, with their credit card beside them. So, there is still a feeling of a lack of security on mobiles. We do everything to be good on mobile device because we know that there will be more and more traffic on this device. Mobile is a great source of traffic but not a conversion device.

**Interviewer:** Can you tell how consumer act cross-device?

**Respondent:** We actually do not have the means to track our customer on cross-device. So, no we can’t tell if the customer has been looking this offer on the mobile and bought it one hour later on his laptop... But we will get there. Indeed, we can actually tell that our customer our multi-device they do not only use their laptop or their mobile
but they use a bit of everything (mobile, laptop, tablet, etc.). However, they have a higher tendency to buy on their computer/laptop. In order of conversion rate the first is the computer/laptop, then the tablet and last the mobile. Furthermore, we try to have templates more efficient on each device which is not easy, so the newsletter is readable everywhere. So, in other words it is important to have communication materials that are well adapted on mobiles. Concerning social media, we use them more to do acquisitions and so gather new subscribers, but also to make the company known. However, social media are not a conversion means at all, it really is only for awareness. To do acquisitions we use mailing, Facebook and google (buying keywords).

**Interviewer:** Do you have special needs of information that you don’t have access to yet to improve your company?

**Respondent:** Yes, for example the behaviour cross-device as we mentioned it before in order to customize our communication and improve the conversion rate.
Interviewer: How has consumer behaviour evolved when planning their holidays?
Respondent: It is a big topic because it depends also on the type of holidays. However, there are big changes to notice. First, the trend to avoid “package” holidays. Indeed, 5/6 years ago a lot of packages were sold, so had transport and accommodation in one offer. Also, sometimes with tour included or things like that. However, now people are going increasingly toward making their holidays themselves. Indeed, by choosing themselves the accommodation, then the transport, the activities onsite and so on, but buying everything separately. So that is why historical actors of the market, like Nouvelles Frontières, TUI France, but also pure players like PromoVacances, have difficulties meeting with consumers’ expectations. Indeed, they were specialized and very good in proposing packages but they have to change their offers. However, now the new trend among consumers is to create your own package in order to have customized holidays and to have everything meet their expectations/needs. That is why on our website we relay a lot of “dry hotel” offers (only the accommodation) and “dry transport” (only the transport). Moreover, to meet the expectations of this new way of buying holidays big companies have developed their own DP (dynamic packaging). The dynamic packaging is between a package and buying everything separately. Indeed, dynamic packaging are offers that contains the accommodation plus the transport but with customizable features like duration of the stay, activities included or not, etc.
Moreover, we also notice another trend, it is people who will do a lot of owners to owners deals. Indeed, for accommodation that will be like AirBnB and Abritel. But also for car driving with websites like BlaBlacar. So this is also a huge trend among consumers and it made us change our strategy because now we relay those type of actors (BlaBlacar, AirBnB, etc.).
Interviewer: Did you also notice changes in the way that people search for information to plan their holidays?
Respondent: Yes that too. Before (4/5 years ago) people were not very educated about internet and about how to search and buy holidays online. So our website was mostly the last lever for holidays buying. Indeed, because we were proposing already the best offers, that consumers trusted us and bought the offers that they preferred. However, now consumers are internet savvy and know how to search for holidays, where to search and they like comparing. So now, our service is still working but people are less
confident and need to go on other websites to compare. Also, it is important to know that tourism is one of the market where there are the most intermediaries in the buying process. So before there were maybe 3 intermediaries but now there are around 20 intermediaries. Sometimes we are last lever but sometimes in the middle or at the beginning, really depends. This is a real problem because providers usually pay the last lever intermediary, so we have a decrease of our revenue. Indeed, consumer may have been aware of this offer on our website but will then type directly the offer in google to go directly on the provider’s website, and so the last lever here will be google. Consumer now often go directly on the provider’s website once they have chosen their product to see if by cutting intermediaries they could have lower prices. Providers are getting aware of this problem of remunerating intermediaries fairly, and start developing new means of remunerating intermediaries and not only the last lever one regarding the importance of each player.

Furthermore, we have the explosion of websites TripAdvisor, and comparison websites (mostly for prices like Liligo, Easyvoyage,…). Those comparison websites are really big competitors that are more and more requested but we position ourselves as a human comparison websites and so really different from them. So to answer properly to the question, consumers have changed their information search behaviour going more on comparison websites and requesting peers’ advice/opinion (through social media, reviews, family,…). Indeed, reviews by other travellers have an important role in the information gathering and in the decision-making criteria. To be more specific, opinions that have the most influence are first from family/friends that have already travelled to the destination and then, it is reviews by other travellers have an increasing importance. Moreover, there are tools to certify the reviews that are on your website, to reassure the consumer and prove that they are real. However, in my opinion that proves nothing, because the website is just paying a service provider to claim the authenticity of reviews. Paying to get a proof in my sense, it is not a real guarantee for the consumer. Plus, to be efficient and have an impact it would imply that consumer knows about the certification and they usually don’t. So for me those tools used by several websites is just to have a clear conscience.

Interviewer: How this has impacted your strategy ?

Respondent: We are currently searching for a good solution to reassure customers with reviews for each offer we push. However, it is complicated as we push all the best offers that people can find online and so different providers. To be able make reviews
appear we may have to go through one of our competitors like TripAdvisor for example. Indeed, as we don’t push the same offers all the time we cannot build our proper data of reviews... So, we are discussing this point and will find a solution very soon. Then, concerning social media we are not good at all. However, we have invested a lot this year in Facebook as they propose sponsored links. The problem is that it is very hard to set a real strategy on Facebook with projections on results because every 3 months they change the devices available (for paid communication), the print number, prices, etc. However, what we can say about Facebook is that there is a very low conversion rate. Indeed, here we reach people that are not in the perspective of buying. Facebook is a mean to make customer loyal and not to make them buy. Also, Facebook is a great tool for acquisition and so to make our subscriber database grown.

Moreover, in term of strategy, we reduced a lot the solicitation of our database. Indeed, the major part of our traffic comes from our newsletters. We were sending too many e-mails and our subscribers were getting tired of it, now we have divided our sending by 2 or 3. Also, now we have customized e-mails as we give the opportunity to consumer to select the type of offer they want to be informed about.

Interviewer: Do you see some result ?

Respondent: Oh yes. Clearly we have the same performance than before but shooting a lot less. So first, it is a lot cheaper as we send less e-mailing and we wear less our subscriber database.

Moreover, concerning our new strategy we are going to affiliate (buy out) ourselves to a new company in order to be closer to consumers and give them real personalized advice for the holidays they want to make or on the best prices. Indeed, each people who come to this website can do a price check for plane tickets to be sure they have found the best price of the market or they can explain their needs/wants for their future holidays and one expert will give them advice for everything. I can’t explain more because it is still a secret for now but it will be a new service that is complementary to our actual business. We are not expecting to generate more revenue with this new service but we expect mostly to understand better consumers’ behaviour and wants.

Interviewer: Do you have special needs of information that you don’t have access yet to improve your company ?

Respondent: The perpetual problematic is to know what people really want (destination, type of accommodations,... in other words product requirement)! Indeed, their wants and expectations are always evolving. Thanks to our new service that we
will propose soon we will be able to know exactly what consumers are looking for and so how to adapt our offers.

Plus, another huge problematic is the mobile device. Indeed, this summer 50% of our traffic was on tablet or mobile. However, the conversion rate on mobile or tablet is a lot lower than on computer/laptop. So, we have more and more traffic on those “new” devices but which deteriorate our conversion rate. We need to understand how to make people confident enough to buy on mobile and tablet. Also, the ideal will be to know when a consumer is at home and so near its laptop in order to remind him about the offers he saw on his mobile during the day, in order to increase the conversion rate. However, this technology is not available for the moment but some companies are working on it.
IX.13 Online questionnaire (French)

La planification des voyages en famille

Bonjour, dans le cadre de mon mémoire de fin d'année pour mon Master en Marketing, je réalise une étude sur les familles françaises qui partent en vacances à l'étranger.

Mon but est de recueillir des informations sur la façon dont vous recherchez des informations pour planifier vos vacances, le rôle d'internet dans ce processus et vos critères de décision.

C'est un court questionnaire que ne prendra que quelques minutes.

Merci d'avance de votre participation !

*Obligatoire

Avez-vous voyagé à l'étranger avec vos enfants au cours des 12 derniers mois ? *
- Oui
- Non

Quel âge ont vos enfants ? *
Possibilité de cocher plusieurs cases si nécessaire.
- 0 à 5 ans
- 6 à 10 ans
- 11 à 17 ans
- 18 ans et plus

[Continuer]
Recherche d'information pour la planification de vos vacances en famille

Quelles étapes suivez-vous en priorité pour planifier vos vacances ? *
Numérotez par ordre d'importance les choix ci-dessous de 1 à 8. Soit 1 le plus important et 8 le moins important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choix de la date</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choix de la destination</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rechercher de l'information sur internet</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacter une agence de tourisme</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lire les commentaires de d'autres voyageurs</td>
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<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rechercher de l'information auprès des pairs (famille/amis)</td>
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<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choix le vol + hôtel</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acheter le vol + hôtel</td>
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<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quels moyens utilisez-vous pour obtenir les informations dont vous avez besoin pour planifier vos vacances à l'étranger ? *

- Réseaux sociaux: Forums, Blogs, YouTube, TripAdvisor, etc.
- Livres/Magazines: Le Guide du Routard, Voyage Loisirs, etc.
- Famille/Amis
- Motex de recherche: Google, Yahoo, Orange, etc.
- Sites officiels: Office de tourisme, Ambassade, etc.
- Agences de tourisme
- Directement sur des sites spécialisés que vous connaissez: Booking, Airbnb, Edreams, Trivago, etc.
- Autre: ________________________

Quelle importance accordez-vous à ces moyens ? *
Notez sur une échelle de 1 à 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extrêmement faible</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Extrêmement élevé</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Réseaux sociaux</td>
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<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livres/Magazines</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Famille/Amis</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motex de recherche</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites Internet officiels</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agences de tourisme</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directement sur des sites spécialisés que vous connaissez</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quel est votre niveau d'utilisation d'internet quand vous recherchez des informations pour planifier vos vacances ? *
Notez sur une échelle de 1 à 5.
- 1 Extrêmement faible
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Extrêmement élevé

Quel est votre niveau d'utilisation des réseaux sociaux quand vous recherchez des informations pour planifier vos vacances ? *
Réseaux sociaux : au sens large, toute plateforme permettant une interaction entre internautes, par exemple : TripAdvisor, YouTube, forums, blogs, ... Notez sur une échelle de 1 à 5.
- 1 Extrêmement faible
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Extrêmement élevé

Quels type de sites web utilisez-vous ? *
- Officiels
- Blogs/Forums/YouTube
- Directement du prestataire
- Comparateur type Booking/TripAdvisor/Edreams
- Autre : ___

Quel(s) outil(s) utilisez-vous pour rechercher des informations sur internet ? *
- Ordinateur fixe
- Ordinateur portable
- Tablette
- Mobile
- Autre : ___

« Retour  Continuer »
Vos critères de décision pour choisir vos vacances à l'étranger

Lisez-vous les commentaires écrits par des personnes ayant déjà expérimenté le produit/service que vous regardez sur internet ? *

- Oui
- Non

A quel point les commentaires écrits par d'autres voyageurs influencent votre décision d'achat concernant les produits/service pour vos vacances ? *

- 1 Extrêmement faible
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Extrêmement élevée

Que faites-vous s'il y a autant de commentaires négatifs que positifs pour la prestation que vous voulez acheter ? *

- Je l'achète car je me fie à ma propre opinion
- Je ne l'achète pas car je me fie aux commentaires négatifs
- Je l'achète car je me fie aux commentaires positifs
- Je ne l'achète pas car je ne sais pas quoi en penser

Avez-vous déjà posté des commentaires pour partager votre expérience au retour de vos vacances ? *

- Oui
- Non

Si oui, que partagez-vous plus facilement ?

- Une expérience négative
- Une expérience positive
- Les deux
Quelle importance accordez-vous aux critères suivants lors de votre décision finale ? *
Notez sur une échelle de 1 à 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Extrêmement faible</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 Extrêmement élevée</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commentaires/Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion/s'Offres</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestations</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Localisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activités proposées</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Avez-vous d'autre(s) critère(s) de décision ? Si oui, le(s)quel(s) ? *
Précisez l'importance du critère pour votre décision.

Quel(s) outil(s) utilisez-vous pour acheter les prestations pour vos vacances sur internet ? *

- Ordinateur fixe
- Ordinateur portable
- Tablette
- Mobile
- Je n'achète pas sur internet
- Autre:

[Retour] [Continuer]
Rôle des membres de la famille pour la planification des vacances

Quel est votre rôle lors de la planification des vacances ? *
(recherche d'information, pré-selection, décision finale, ...)
- Je m'occupe de rien
- Mon conjoint(e) s'occupe de tout mais je participe à la décision finale
- C'est moi qui organise tout
- Je m'occupe de tout mais prends la décision finale avec mon conjoint(e)
- Autre:

Quel est le rôle de vos enfants dans la planification des vacances ? *
(recherche d'information, pré-selection, décision finale, ...)
- Il(s) participe(nt) au choix de la destination
- Il(s) participe(nt) au choix du logement
- Il(s) ne participe(nt) pas, son(leur) avis n'est pas demandé
- Il(s) participe(nt) aux choix de la destination et du logement
- Autre:

Vous êtes :
- Un homme
- Une femme

[Buttons: Retour, Envoyer]

N'envoyez jamais de mots de passe via Google Forms.
IX.14 Translated questionnaire (English)

Qualification:

1. Have you travelled abroad with your children within the past year?
   □ Yes □ No

2. How old are your children?
   □ 0 - 5 years old □ 6 - 10 years old □ 11 - 16 years old □ 17/+ years old

Information search and holidays planning:

3. What steps are you following when planning your holidays? Prioritize the stages from 1 most important to 8 less important)
   □ Date choice
   □ Destination choice
   □ Contact a tourism agency
   □ Package choice
   □ Buy package
   □ Online information search
   □ Seek information from peers
   □ Look at online reviews

4. What intermediaries are you using to gather the needed information for your holiday abroad?
   □ Social media: TripAdvisor, YouTube, Forums, Blogs, etc.
   □ Books / Magazines: Le Guide du Routard, Voyages Loisirs, etc.
   □ Family / Friends
   □ Search Engine: Google, Yahoo, Orange, etc.
   □ Official internet sites: Tourist Office, Embassy, etc.
   □ Tourism agencies
   □ Directly on specialized websites: Booking, Trivago, AirBnB, etc.
   □ Other(s): ........
5. How important are these intermediaries?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media</th>
<th>Extremely low</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 Extremely high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books / Magazines</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family / Friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search Engines</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official internet sites</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directly on specialized websites</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other(s) : .........</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. How important is your internet usage when searching for information:

Extremely low 1  2  3  4  5 Extremely high

7. How important is your social media usage when searching for information:

Extremely low 1  2  3  4  5 Extremely high

8. What type(s) of websites are you using when searching for information?

- Officials
- Blogs/Forums/Youtube
- Directly on the contractor’s website
- Comparison websites: Booking/Tripadvisor
- Other(s) : .....

9. What type of device(s) are you using when searching for information?

- Computer
- Laptop
- Tablet
- Mobile
- Other(s) : ...
Decision criteria for holidays abroad:

10. Do you read reviews about the products/services you are looking at on the internet, made by travellers who have already experienced it?
   - Yes
   - No

11. How influential are other travellers reviews about products/services on your buying decision?
   - Extremely low
   - 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely high

12. What do you do if there are as much negative as positive reviews for the service you want to choose?
   - I buy it, because I trust my own opinion
   - I do not buy, because I rely on negative comments
   - I buy it, because I rely on positive comments
   - I do not buy, because I do not know what to think

13. Have you ever posted comments to share your experience when returning from your holidays?
   - Yes
   - No

14. If yes, are you more likely to share:
   - A negative experience
   - A positive experience
   - Both negative or positive ones

15. How important are the following criteria in your final decision?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviews</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Offers</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. Do you have any other important criteria? If yes, which one(s)?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

17. What devices do you use to pay for your holidays on the internet?

☐ Computer ☐ Mobile
☐ Laptop ☐ I do not buy on internet
☐ Tablet ☐ Other(s): .............

Role of family members

18. What is your role when planning your family holidays?

☐ I deal with nothing
☐ My partner handles everything, but I participate in the final decision
☐ I organize/plan everything
☐ I handle everything but take the final decision with my partner
☐ Other: ..................

19. What is the role of your children when planning holidays?

☐ They participate in the destination choice
☐ They participate in the accommodation selection
☐ They participate in both the destination and accommodation selection
☐ They do not participate, their opinion is not requested
☐ Other: ..................

20. Gender

☐ Male
☐ Female