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A NEW PROPOSITION FOR SKYTEAM AIRLINE ALLIANCE

A NEW PROPOSITION FOR SKYPRIORITY CUSTOMERS OF SKYTEAM AIRLINE ALLIANCE

Master thesis
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PREFACE

What you're about to read is the final deliverable of my graduation project of the master degree program Strategic Product Design at Delft University of Technology. This project was commissioned by SkyTeam Airline Alliance. Always being intrigued by both aviation and other cultures and countries, graduating for SkyTeam Airline Alliance wasn't a real surprise for many. This thesis is the result of a 7 month journey full of research and design thinking. A journey that not just took me to SkyTeam's headquarters at Schiphol, but also to Gent, London and Shanghai. It has not only been a project in which I have put all my developed skills and knowledge into practice, but in which I learned to deal with the complicated world of airlines and alliances in a global playing field. I can't imagine a project that would have challenged me and allowed me to do what I love to do more. It was the perfect way to conclude my time in Delft.

I would like to thank my supervisory team for facilitating this learning experience. Christine, for your visionary and critical feedback and for making me keep challenging myself. Milene, for being up to speed so quickly, even though you missed the first couple of months, and your positive and hands-on feedback. Boris, for bringing my research to a higher level and for your weekly motivational messages. And last but certainly not least, I would like to thank David for checking in on me so often, making me believe in myself, letting me present my project in Shanghai and making me feel welcome at SkyTeam.

Additionally, I would like to thank my other colleagues at SkyTeam. Pascal, Fabio, Chris, Alessandro, Junxi, Anna, Beatriz and Danique: thank you for all the support, feedback and thinking along when needed!

Of course there are also a lot of other people that supported me throughout this process and who I would like to thank. First of all, my parents and brother for their endless support and motivational speeches. Paul for always making me believe in myself and cheering me up. Sarah and Donna for all the mental support, thinking along and making me feel relaxed. Marit, Marijke, Eva, Tjits and Josephine for listening to all of my graduation stories and the distraction. Maartje, Liselotte and Steven for all the breaks and pep talks. Michiel for loving to help me in thinking crazy. Lianne for your amazing Dfl skills. Steven for spending your holiday at the faculty with me and a lot of 'lekkere-vieze' coffees. Eva and Duco, for being the stars in my movie. Friends from back home for making me think of other things than graduating and laughing at me and my post-its. And last but not least, Douwe Egberts, for the coffee (although it might be the other way around as well).

I am excited to present you my master thesis. Enjoy!

Nienke Nijholt

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GLOSSARY

SU	AeroFlot
AR	Aerolineas Argentinas
AM	AeroMexico
UX	AirEuropa
AF	AirFrance
AZ	Alitalia
CI	China Airlines
MU	China Eastern
CZ	China Southern
OK	Czech Airlines
DL	Delta Air Lines
GA	Garuda Indonesia
KQ	Kenya Airways
KL	KLM
KE	Korean Air
ME	Middle Eastern Airlines
SV	Saudia
RO	Tarom
VN	Vietnam Airlines
MF	Xiamen Airlines
ST	SkyTeam
SAAM	SkyTeam Airline Alliance Management
FFP	Frequent Flyer Program
LCC	Low Cost Carrier

Operating Carrier
Marketing Carrier

The airline carrying the customer
The airline that sells seats under its own code on a flight that is operated by another airline



CHAPTER

01

INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

In this chapter, the graduation project, executed for SkyTeam Airline Alliance, is introduced.

First, some background information about SkyTeam and the context in which it operates is given. Additionally, the problem definition and assignment are introduced. The chapter concludes with an overview of the approach of the project and some guidelines of how to read the report.

1.1. SKYTEAM

SkyTeam is an airline alliance established in June 2000 that focuses on customers of all 20 airlines that are member of the alliance (see Figure 1). It was established in order to increase the market share of the members within the airline industry and to offer customers a more extensive network. Since its establishment, the alliance has significantly grown and currently offers its 665 million yearly customers 1052 destinations over 177 countries worldwide (Figure 2). As a result, the member airlines are able to offer their customers more seamless connections around the world. (Cantarutti, 2016; SkyTeam Airline Alliance, n.d.-a, n.d.-d)

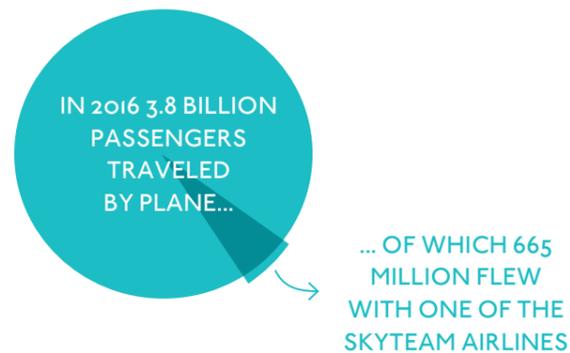


Figure 2 - Share in total number of air passengers (IATA, 2017)



Figure 1 - SkyTeam's member airlines

1.2. SKYPRIORITY

In order to offer customers a consistent service level across all member airlines, SkyPriority was brought into life. As a group of individual airlines offering this service would not have been possible, but by the use of the overarching organization in negotiation with all members and the involved airports, SkyPriority was introduced in 2012.

SkyPriority offers passengers eight in-airport services that can be utilised regardless of the cabin of service. These services make alliance-wide traveling faster and more convenient. The services can be seen in Figure 3. (KLM, 2016; SkyTeam Airline Alliance, n.d.-e)

The SkyPriority status is granted to all customers flying First or Business Class, and to customers within the highest tiers of the airlines' loyalty programs, so called Elite Plus customers. The status can't be purchased, but is automatically assigned to these groups of customers. In addition to these three groups of customers, some of the airlines assign the SkyPriority status to additional groups of customers, the so called 'Special Interest Groups'.

For the customer this 'extra status' means that he might be eligible for SkyPriority on one flight, but not on the other, while still being the same customer. These kinds of situations could cause confusion and possibly result in dissatisfaction with the customer.

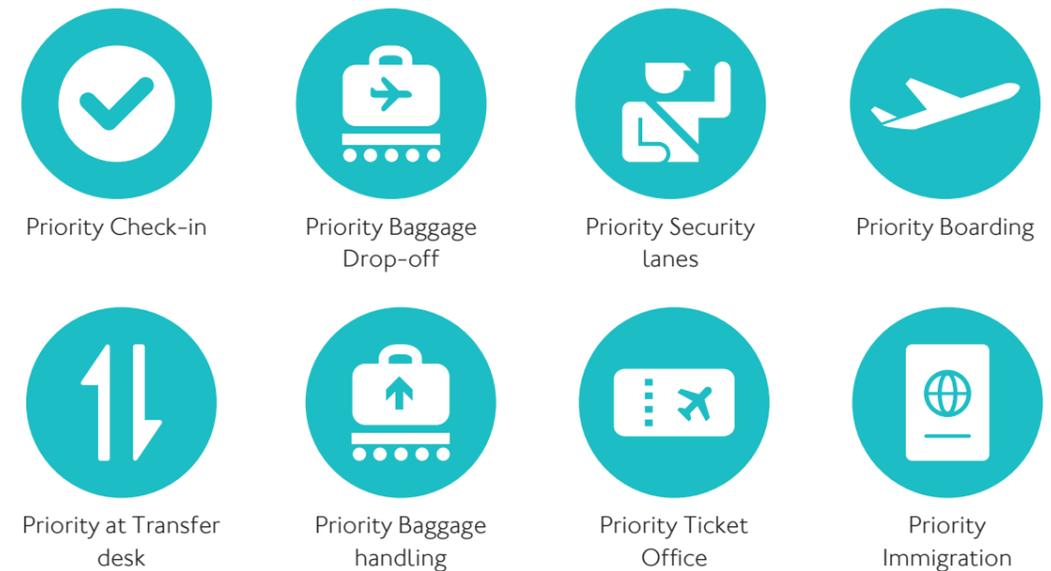


Figure 3 - SkyPriority benefits

THE STORY OF OSCAR COLLINS



This is the story about Oscar, a fictional person that often makes use of SkyTeam's services. His character is based on the findings from the customer research (see Chapter 5.3), and he will come back multiple times throughout this thesis to enable the reader to see things from a customer perspective.

Oscar is a 30 year old art consultant from the Netherlands. For his work he flies multiple times a month. On short-haul flights he usually flies economy class, but on long-haul flights he prefers to fly business class. Being able to lay down and sleep for a couple of hours during those flights allows him to directly go to a meeting after being landed. When flying he also likes to make use of the lounge, because it gives him the opportunity to sit in more relaxed environment and avoid the crowds before boarding.

If Oscar is able to choose his own flight, he likes to make use of SkyTeam's only Dutch airline: KLM. Not

only because the amount of flights and the KLM lounges, but most of all because he makes use of KLM's Frequent Flyer Program (FFP): Flying Blue. Because Oscar flies so often, he has retained a Flying Blue Platinum status, the highest status within this program. But in addition to KLM's own loyalty program benefits, this status also makes Oscar eligible for SkyTeam's SkyPriority status. This status significantly speeds up all Oscars journeys.

However, sometimes Oscar isn't able to fly with KLM. For example because they don't fly to a specific destination, at a specific time or because the flight is already fully booked. In such cases, Oscar always try to fly with another SkyTeam partner. By doing so, he is still able to make use of his SkyPriority status, to collect the miles on his KLM Flying Blue account and to make use of lounges all over the world.

1.3. THE INITIAL ASSIGNMENT

More and more people are flying. The industry increases at a rate of 5% per year and is predicted to keep on doing so for the next 10 years (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, n.d.). In order to offer their customers more destinations to travel to, an increasing number of airlines are cooperating with each other within alliances. Currently there are seven airline alliances worldwide, of which Star Alliance and OneWorld are the biggest competitors for SkyTeam.

Customers with a SkyPriority status make use of the services of the SkyTeam member airlines on a regular base. According to Chang & Hung (2013), these kinds of customers are fundamental for maintaining a stable market share and revenue stream, particularly in a growing market like the global airline industry. In general, these customers are less ticket price sensitive and more willing to pay for service provision than leisure travelers (Mason, 2001; Ringle, Sarstedt, & Zimmermann, 2011).

Full-service airlines like the SkyTeam member airlines nowadays face a tough challenge, since they are relying on business travelers for profitability. Despite the traditional views of business travelers placing

high value on typically “full-service” attributes such as frequency, flexibility, in-flight service and FFPs, an increasing number of business travelers have started to defect to low-cost carriers (LCC) (Huse & Evangelho, 2007). In addition, LCCs will continue to offer long haul flights and compete with the full-service carriers (McKinsey, 2013). An example is WOW air, an Icelandic low-cost carrier executing long-haul flights.

This growing competition results in the challenge for SkyTeam to **develop a proposition for SkyPriority customers that fits the desires of the wide variety of customers and is differentiating among other highly innovative airlines and alliances**. By doing so, SkyTeam could increase the customers’ benefit when making use of the network of SkyTeam, foster the loyalty of SkyPriority customers and attract new frequent flyers, and with this improve their position as one of the leading alliances.

In this project, possible directions for a new proposition are explored. This proposition can either be a new or product or service, or an improvement of an existing service, and is expected to be implemented in 2021.

1.4. THE PROCESS & REPORT STRUCTURE

The design process as followed consisted of four phases: 1) Exploration, 2) Analysis, 3) Ideation and 4) Optimization (see Figure 4).

This report is divided into two parts: the first one being ‘The state of the art’ and the second ‘The design proposition’. Each part covers two of the four process phases. The first part ends with a chapter in which all insights and conclusions are combined into a design brief with which the second phase, the development of a new proposition, is started. In the second part a short recap of the ideation process is given and the final design is presented. This part concludes with a chapter in which directions and recommendations for SkyTeam on how to further develop this proposition are given.

PART A - STATE OF THE ART

In the first, iterative phase of the project, extensive research is done on SkyTeam, SkyPriority and its environment. In order to better understand the complexity of the industry in which SkyTeam operates, a case study is performed on one of the member airlines. Also experiences and visions of SkyPriority customers are gathered and analyzed during this phase. An in-depth understanding is necessary for generating meaningful insights and needs. As mentioned, the part is concluded with a design brief, which will lay the foundation for the second phase.

Key activities during this phase are executing desk research, interviewing, observing, context mapping, customer journey mapping and facilitating workshops.

PART B - THE DESIGN PROPOSITION

In the second phase, possible directions are identified based on the insights and conclusions from part one. By the use of multiple creative sessions, iteration sessions and brainstorming, ideas are generated. The most fruitful ideas are then evaluated and further developed together with experts from SkyTeam, SkyPriority customers and design students. This input is used to finalise the concept and develop it into a service-concept.

Activities within this phase are ideating, prototyping, testing and evaluating. The specific objectives are a mock-up, user scenario, roadmap and an implementation plan.

INSIGHTS AND SUMMARIES

Throughout the report, the reader finds two type of boxes (see Figure 5). In these boxes, important insights and summaries that had an influence on the followed path are given. To give the reader a good overview, a short recap and way in which the insights are incorporated in the final design are given at the end of Part A.

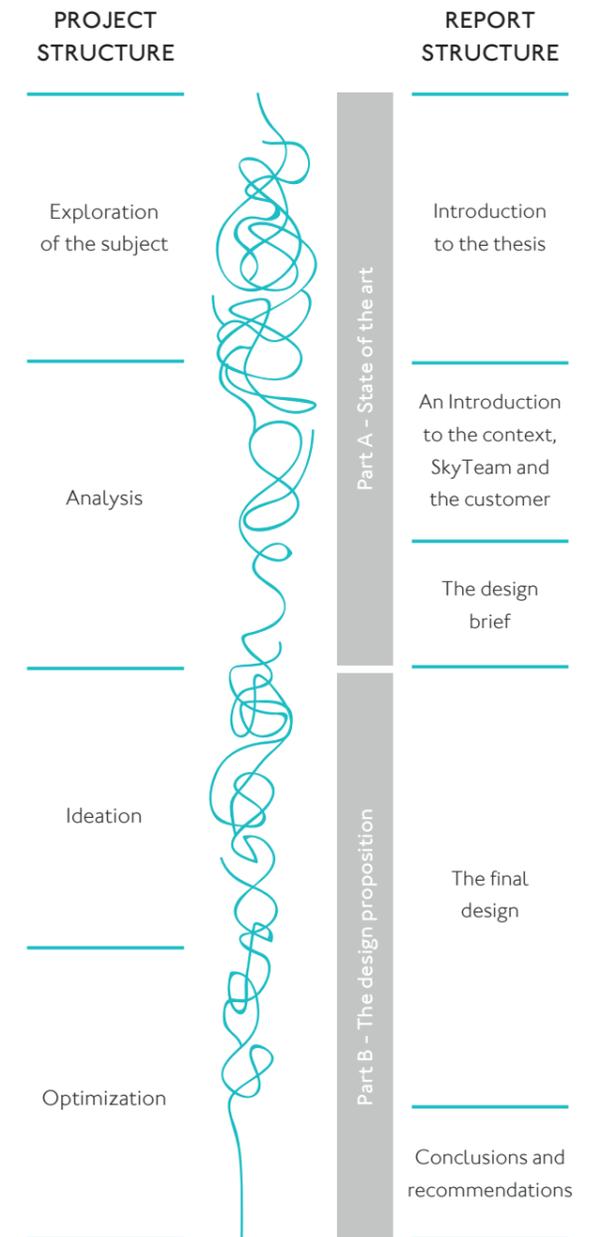


Figure 4 - The process



Figure 5 - Insights and summaries throughout the project



PART A.

STATE OF THE ART

The first part of this report consists of an external analysis of SkyPriority, SkyTeam and the context in which it operates. Also the customers, their desires and values are researched. By the use of these insights, deeper knowledge is created about the complexity of the industry, and it is explored how SkyTeam could improve its strong position in this market in the near future. The part concludes with an overview of the gathered insights and a design brief, with which the second part is started.

An overview of the most important activities within this phase, other than doing desk research and having meetings with experts from SkyTeam and the airlines, is given in Figure 6.

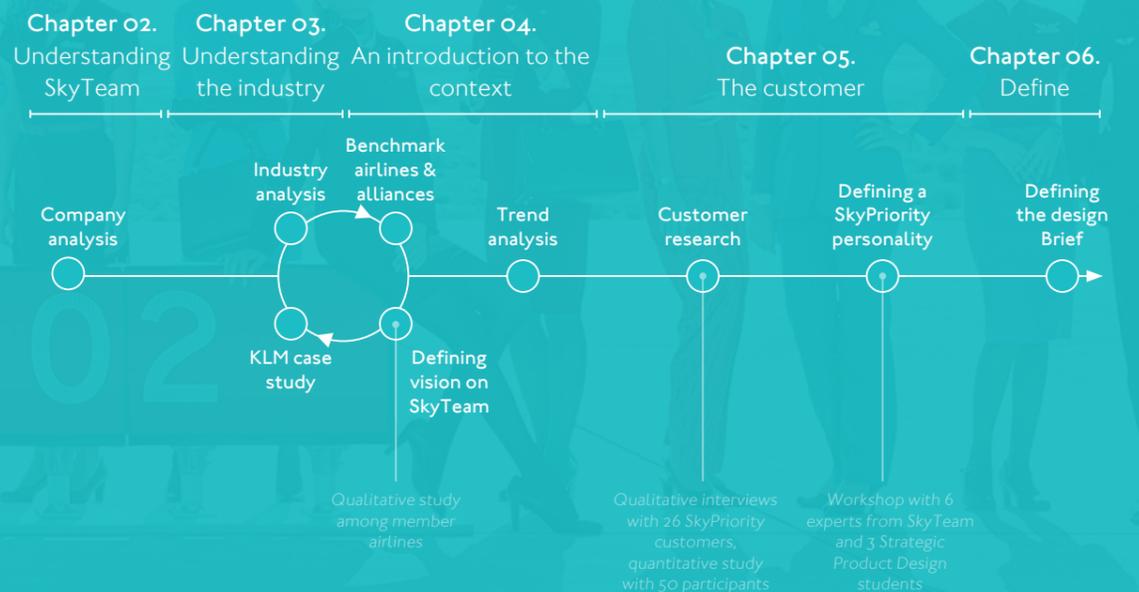


Figure 6 - An overview of iterative process and main activities in Part A of the project



CHAPTER

02

UNDERSTANDING SKYTEAM

An internal analysis was performed in order to gain more knowledge about SkyTeam. During this analysis among others the origin of the alliance, its mission and vision, organizational structure and product portfolio were analyzed as a direct source of inspiration. In this chapter, the main conclusions of these analyses are discussed.

2.1. SKYTEAM AND ITS MEMBER AIRLINES

SKYTEAM AIRLINE ALLIANCE MANAGEMENT

SkyTeam's headquarters, SkyTeam Airline Alliance Management (SAAM), is based at Schiphol. The company has around 50 employees, of which half is coming from one of the member airlines and is temporarily working for SkyTeam. By doing so, SkyTeam tries to represent all member airlines and nationalities of the customers as good as possible.

Roughly, the organization has five different departments, namely: Support & Services, Information Technology, Marketing & Commercial Synergies, Alliance Operations and Airport Services (see Figure 8). The before mentioned SkyPriority program was developed within the Marketing & Commercial Synergies department. This is also the department in which this project was initiated, and from which a

possible new proposition would be implemented. To create support for the final proposition within the department, the employees of this department are involved throughout the project.

Interaction with the member airlines occurs within all departments by the use of teams in which all airlines are represented. These teams come together several times a year in order to discuss alliance wide matter and make important decisions. For the Marketing & Commercial Synergies department these meetings take place once every month by the use of a conference call and once every four months at one of the home airports. During these meetings the SkyPriority Product Managers from all airlines are present. These conference calls and meetings are used to involve the airlines within the project and create support among the members.

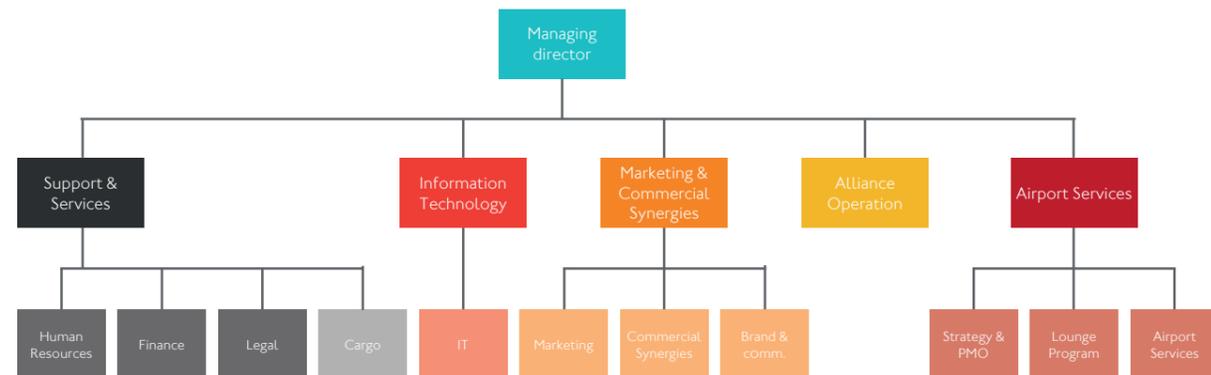


Figure 7 - Company structure SkyTeam

THE MEMBER AIRLINES

SkyTeam was founded by Aeroméxico, Air France, Delta Air Lines and Korean Air in June 2000. Since then, the alliance has steadily grown to the current size of 20 members (see Figure 8). The latest airline to join was Garuda Indonesia in 2014.

In order to become a member of the alliance, airlines

must meet different requirements. In total there are approximately 100 different requirements to join. However, 4 main requirements are considered most important:

1. The airline should meet the basic requirements regarding flight safety
2. The airline should expose the SkyTeam brand in several, predetermined ways (e.g.

wearing the logo of SkyTeam on their aircrafts, mentioning it on board)

3. The airline should have codeshare agreements with all (relevant) other members.
4. The airlines should adjust its FFP to the other programs.

In addition to the requirements to join, members within the alliance can't cooperate with other big airlines, only under certain conditions (e.g. Korean Air wanted to fly to Japan and therefore needed to cooperate with a Japanese airline, which was allowed since no other members of SkyTeam fly that route).

Decisions regarding alliance wide matters are always made in consultation with all members. However, not all 20 airlines have the same level of participation in these decision-making processes. The level of the airline is determined by the financial contribution to SkyTeam, which is in turn related to the turnover of the airline. As a result, the bigger airlines, such as Delta Air Lines and AirFrance, in general are located within the higher levels than airlines with a smaller turnover,

such as Czech Airlines.

In total, three different levels of participation were defined by SkyTeam (see Figure 8). Although there isn't a certain formula in making decisions, Level A airlines for example outweigh the Level B and C airlines and Level B airlines outweigh only Level C airlines. For this project this means that, although there is a need to involve all of the members, extra attention should be paid to involving the airlines within the highest level. With the support of these airlines, this project will have a higher chance of success.

INSIGHTS

Involving the twenty member airlines, and the level A airlines in particular, is of great importance during this project. Not only are they able to give valuable input during the process, but with the support of these airlines this project will also have a higher chance of success.



Figure 8 - Levels of the member airlines

VISION AND MISSION

The vision of the passenger-centric alliance is 'Caring more about you' (SkyTeam Airline Alliance, n.d.-a). From the establishment of SkyTeam in 2000 until 2009, the focus of the alliance was on creating a foundation. This foundation was created by establishing a network, a shared code, loyalty and basic benefits for both the members and the passengers. In 2010, this focus shifted towards 'Seamlessness & Efficiency',

by introducing priority and transfer services, creating commercial synergies and launching co-locations and lounges. By doing so, added value for the passenger was created. From 2016 on, SkyTeam shifted its focus to 'Customer Value Creation'. Its mission in order to do so is formulated as: 'To create customer value through innovation with technology, differentiate in service offering and help members expand through multilateral partnerships.'

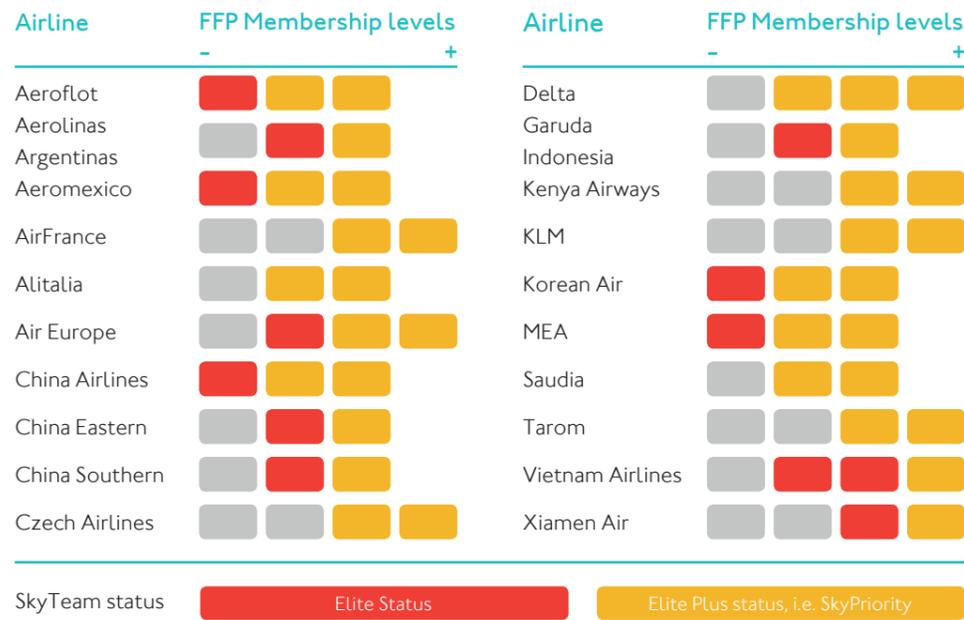


Figure 9 - Amount of tiers within airlines' FFPs, with tiers eligible for SkyTeam's Elite and Elite Plus (i.e. SkyPriority) status indicated (e.g. the Xiamen Air loyalty program has four tiers, of which the highest level receives an Elite Plus status, and thus SkyPriority, on top of the airline status)

	Elite status	Elite Plus status, First and Business class customers
Lounge access	✓	✓
Guaranteed reservations on sold-out flights		✓
SkyPriority recognition		✓
▶ Priority Check-in		✓
▶ Priority Baggage Drop-off		✓
▶ Priority Security Lanes		✓
▶ Priority Boarding		✓
▶ Priority at Transfer Desk		✓
▶ Priority Baggage Handling		✓
▶ Priority Ticket Office		✓
▶ Priority Immigration		✓
Priority Seating	✓	✓
Priority airport standby	✓	✓
Extra baggage allowance	✓	✓

Figure 10 - Additional benefits for SkyTeam's Elite and Elite Plus passengers

2.2. CURRENT PORTFOLIO

Since its establishment in 2000, SkyTeam developed several services in order to improve the customer experience (see Figure 11). These services developed by collaboration between all airlines. It should be noted that, although these services were developed in collaboration, currently no real collaboration is needed to offer the different services to the customer: the Lounges, SkyTeam App, and SkyPriority Audit App are all in hands op SkyTeam. (Cantarutti, 2016; SkyTeam Airline Alliance, 2016, 2017, n.d.-c)

FREQUENT FLYERS LOYALTY

SkyTeam offers passengers the possibility to earn miles when flying. The earned miles, which can also be collected afterwards by the use of the retroactive credit tool which was launched recently, can be used to book free flights on any SkyTeam member airline. In addition, passengers automatically save miles towards a SkyTeam Elite- and Elite Plus status by flying with all 20 member airlines (see Figure 8). Having such a status has several perks (see Figure 10).

It should be noted that the Elite and Elite Plus status come on top of the status of the airlines' loyalty program, which can be confusing for the customer.

LOUNGES

Next to the before-mentioned services, First class, Business class and Elite Plus customers enjoy complimentary access to more than 600 lounges around the globe. These lounges offer travelers the possibility to relax before and in-between flights and can be accessed within 24 hours of the scheduled departure time. On arrival the lounges can't be used. Moreover, lounge access rules are more strict in regard to domestic flights (e.g. within the USA, France and China)(SkyTeam Airline Alliance, n.d.-b).

In addition to lounges of the member airlines, SkyTeam offers its customers the possibility to spend time in SkyTeam branded lounges at six different airports worldwide. These lounges, of which the first one was opened in 2009, are located on the airports of London Heathrow, Istanbul, Sydney, Hong Kong, Dubai and Beijing, and all offer customers a different set of amenities (see Figure 12 up and until Figure 16). Elite Plus customers can in addition invite a guest

to join them in the lounge free of charge. (SkyTeam Corporate Communications, 2016a, 2016b)

SKYTEAM APP

In 2011 SkyTeam launched an application for their customers in order to improve the customer experience. This application was introduced in order to communicate the benefits of the alliance, and offers the possibility to look up flight schedules, check flight statuses, locate airports, lounges and SkyPriority Services and save airports and lounges for future reference.

Although the SkyPriority app it currently not really relevant when traveling directly from A to B, it could be useful for passengers flying with multiple SkyTeam airlines. Based on your location it shows the number of accessible lounges, where to find these lounges and other facilities at the airport at which you are located. One drawback of the app is that it doesn't give this information on a personal level (e.g. based on cabin service or status), but in general (e.g. where to find lounges in general instead of where to find a lounge to which the specific customer has access). This makes that the app currently has little added value compared to applications of airlines, airports and other third parties such as Lounge Buddy (an application that helps you find the lounges to which you have access). The challenge for SkyTeam is to turn the app into something that couldn't be offered by the individual airlines or airports, and that fits the role of the alliance during the journey.

SKYPRIORITY

The before mentioned SkyPriority was initiated by Delta Air Lines, which launched the service in 2010. After proving to improve the airport experience of Highly Valued Customers (HVCs), this customer-facing initiative was the first alliance wide service to be introduced in 2012. From then on, no new in-airport facilities were added to the portfolio. However, the introduction of the SkyPriority Finder, which is a function in the SkyTeam app, enables customers to discover which services are available at specific airports.



Figure 11 - Timeline introduction of facilities

Currently it is not known how many people exactly make use of SkyPriority. Next to the eligible group of passengers, some airlines also assign the status to other 'special interest groups'. Knowing more about the number and type of customers can help in improving the services.

It should be noted that although often assumed, lounge access is not a SkyPriority benefit: Business-, First class and Elite Plus passengers can always enter the SkyTeam lounges, but passengers flying with a SkyPriority status aren't necessarily allowed into all lounges. Exceptions are for example American lounges, which can only be entered by First and Business class passengers. Situation in which customers assume to have lounge access, but are not allowed into the lounge often occur (see the Case Study on page 21). Although the lounges are not part of the SkyPriority service, making the lounge access easier to understand for the customer could increase the satisfaction with regard to SkyPriority.

THE SKYPRIORITY CUSTOMER AUDIT APP

In order to encourage the voice of the customer, SkyTeam launched the 'SkyPriority Customer Audit App' in 2016. This app, which was awarded silver in the ESOMAR Research Effectiveness Awards, enables 10.000 by SkyTeam selected panel members to observe and assess the SkyPriority services, whenever and wherever they want. The application asks members to select the airport, location at the airport and operating airline (i.e. the airline that is carrying the customer), and subsequently to assess the services they used. Although the initiative is supported by all airlines, at this moment the information is collected and analysed by SkyTeam, and only the results are relayed to the member airlines so that any issues can be quickly identified and rectified. By doing so, SkyTeam empowers the customers, ensures benefits are consistently delivered at all touch-points by all member airlines and improves the customer experience.

This app is a valuable tool to get insights in the experience of the customer, and offers the possibility to assess and improve new possible propositions in an early stage. Gained insights can in turn be used as a powerful tool to convince the member airlines and other stakeholders.

SUMMARY

SkyTeam currently offers several products and services in order to improve the experience of the customer. However, being able to make use of all of them at the same time, could also create confusion with the customer. A business class customer for example has, next to his Flying Blue Platinum tier, an Elite Plus status, and due to that a SkyPriority status. Having three different statuses in one trip could make it difficult to understand which benefit belongs to which program. What makes it even more difficult is that the privileges from which customers can make use of can differ per journey.

INSIGHTS

Creating an understanding of the differences between the airline loyalty programs, SkyTeam tiers and SkyPriority, managing expectations or even improving the usability of these programs could help in showing people the added value of flying with SkyTeam, and by doing so result in more loyal customers.



Figure 12 - Oxygen bar, Istanbul



Figure 13 - Wine bar, London Heathrow



Figure 14 - Seating, Hong Kong



Figure 15 - Seating, Dubai



Figure 16 - Buffet, Sydney



CHAPTER 03

UNDERSTAND THE INDUSTRY

The industry in which SkyTeam operates is highly complex: although a lot of different players within this field are competitors, some of them are at the same time cooperating in different type of partnerships. In this chapter these type of partnerships are analyzed and discussed. In addition, a case study is done on one of the member airlines in order to fully understand the complexity of the industry and the implications of the partnerships on the customer.

3.1. TYPES OF PARTNERSHIPS

Nowadays, customers have an abundance of choices when booking flights. In order to offer customers a wider variety of possible flights and to improve their competitive advantage, airlines are increasingly entering into different kinds of partnership with each other. Without these partnerships, airlines can experience quite some practical limitation across borders (Fuldner, 2011).

All forms of possible collaboration between airlines were analysed. The complete analysis can be found in Appendix A. In Table 1 all type of partnerships, together with their advantages and disadvantages, are

summarised.

All type of partnerships have the goal to expand the airlines network, and by doing so improving the competitive position. However, higher forms of collaboration not only result in a bigger network and better customer experience, but also result in a higher intensity of cooperation and level of commitment and of the involved airlines (see Figure 17). Choosing a specific form of collaboration is therefore always finding a balance between the desired outcome, and the level of independency of the airlines involved.

Type of partnership	Advantages		Disadvantages	
	Airline	Customer	Airline	Customer
Interline agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Broadened offer of destinations (and therefore competitive ability) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Lower costs ▶ Automatic baggage transfer and through check-in 		
Codeshare agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Broadened offer of destinations and flight timings (and therefore competitive ability) ▶ Shared facilities and services at airports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Lower costs ▶ Automatic baggage transfer and through check-in ▶ Often: adjusted FFPs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Confusion about operating airline ▶ Difference in standards
Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Stronger competitive ability ▶ Economies of scale ▶ Coordinated schedules ▶ Brand exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adjusted FFPs and benefits ▶ Broadened offer of destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ High joining costs ▶ Loss of independency ▶ Time and effort of close co-operation between multiple companies 	
Joint venture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Stronger competitive ability ▶ Shared costs and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adjusted FFPs ▶ Broadened offer of destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Time and effort of close co-operation between multiple companies 	
Merge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Shared costs and resources 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Expiration of certain Freedom Rights 	

Table 1 - Type of partnership and their pros and cons

As can be seen, the highest form of collaboration without (partly) merging is working together in an alliance, such as SkyTeam. Joining an alliance can, next to reducing costs, improve the offer and exposure

of an airline. However, it should be mentioned that joining an alliance is only beneficial if it results in more customers, and consequential a higher revenue that outweighs the costs of joining.

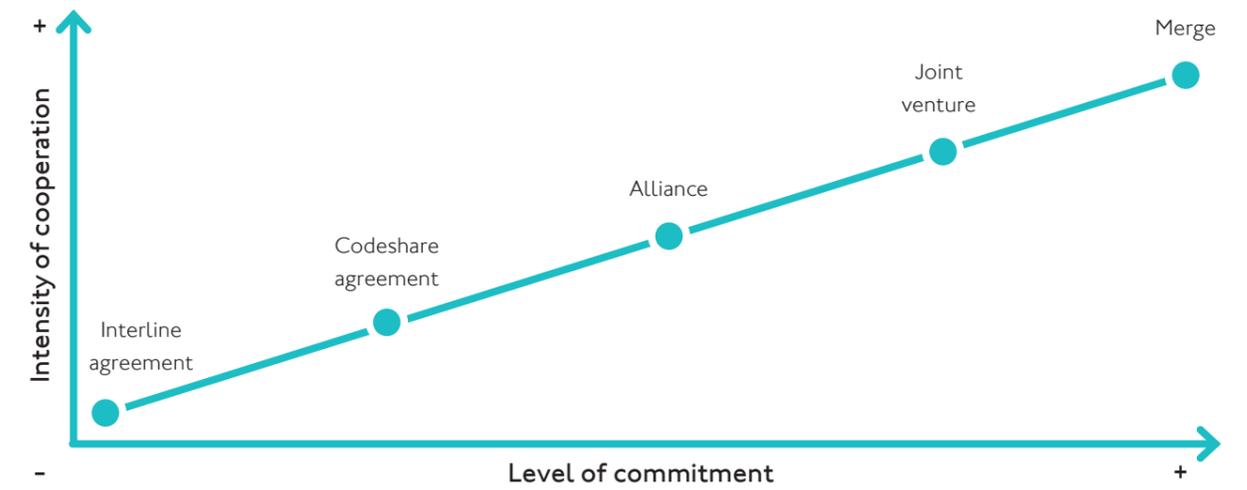


Figure 17 - Types of partnerships

INSIGHTS

The difficulty within this industry is that customers do not choose for an alliance to fly with, but for an airline, since alliances doesn't directly influence their trip. In order to make customers choose for a specific alliance, the benefits when flying with this alliance should therefore not only be optimized, but also more explicitly be communicated towards the customer. Not only the optimization, but also the communication of these benefits will therefore be of high importance during this project.

3.2. CASE STUDY

In order to create a better understanding of the complexity of the industry and the implications from the industry on the journey of the customer, a case study was done on member airline KLM (Figure 18). KLM was chosen since it is a good representative of airlines with many different partnerships. In addition, the amount of existing contacts within KLM make conducting this case study easier compared to other airlines.

The case study is based on desk research, complemented by interviews with experts within SkyTeam and KLM. Within this case study, the subsidiaries and codeshare agreements of other airlines than KLM were excluded. Besides, in order to prevent the overview from getting too complex, not all partners with which KLM has an interline agreement were included.

KLM'S PARTNERSHIPS

KLM has partnerships with a lot of different parties.

First of all, KLM has an interline agreement with almost all airlines worldwide. This means that customers can travel to a wide range of locations all over the world without the need to check-in and transfer their baggage repeatedly.

Besides these interline agreements, KLM has a large number of partners with which they share flights. With these codeshare partners KLM shares flights, or in the case of codeshare partner Thalys rides. This partnership means that for some trips, passengers will be transported by train instead of by aircraft. 18 of KLM's codeshare partners are also member of the SkyTeam alliance. Only with SkyTeam member Middle Eastern Airlines KLM doesn't have a codeshare agreement, since they do not have the same routes.

KLM also participates in several joint ventures. At this moment KLM for example shares revenues and costs on eight routes from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom to Greater China with China Southern Airlines. Other joint ventures are with Kenya Airways, Alitalia, Delta Air Lines and AirFrance.

A special type of partner is AirFrance, with which KLM has a close cooperation. Together they form the AirFrance KLM Group. Also AirFrance Cargo, KLM Cargo, Martinair Cargo and AFI KLM E&M (a merge between AirFrance Industry and KLM Engineering & Maintenance), KLM Cityhopper and Transavia.com are members of this group. However, this cooperation doesn't affect all partnerships of KLM: although AirFrance for example also has a partnership with Hop!, a subsidiary of the airline, Hop! doesn't have a partnership with KLM.

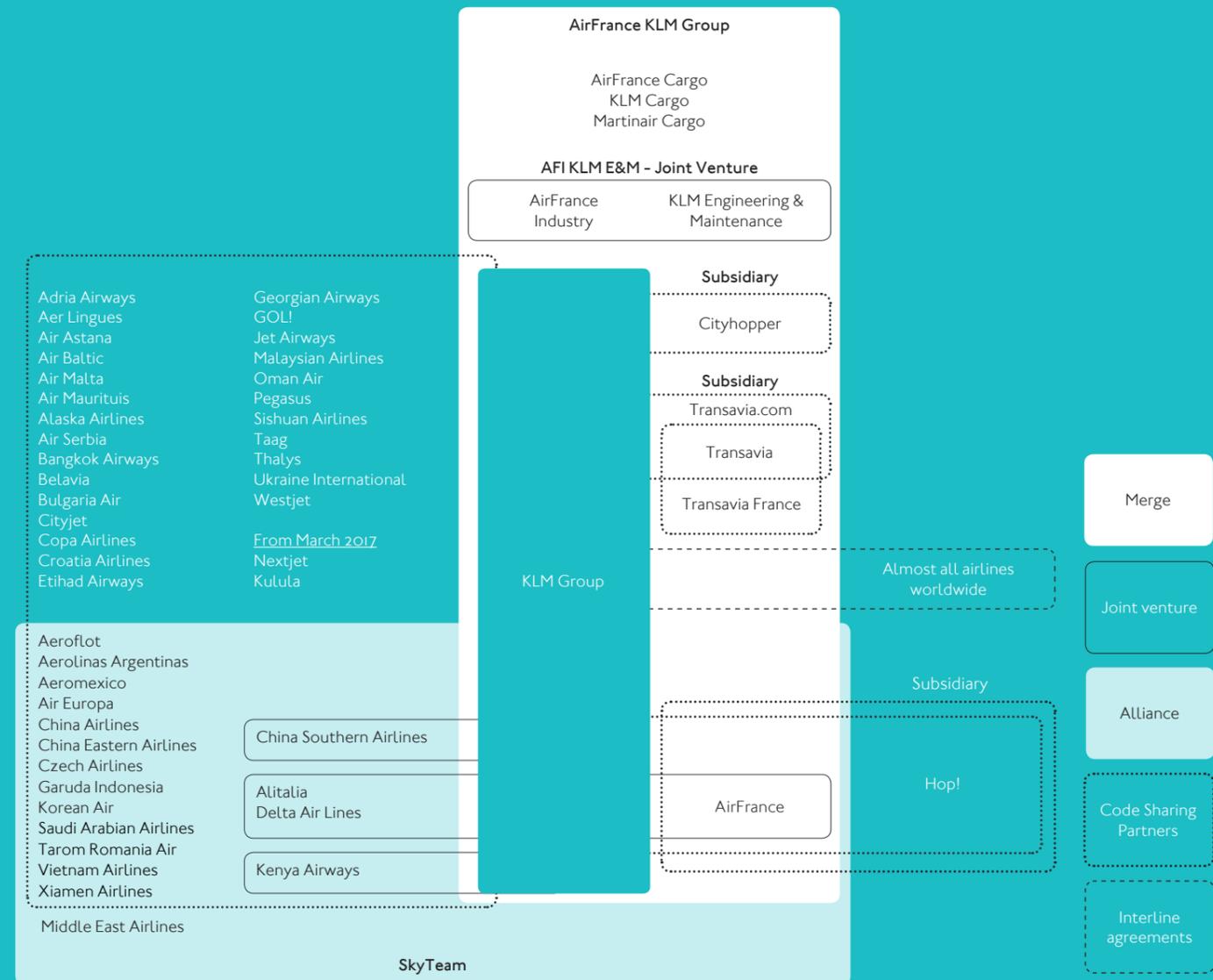
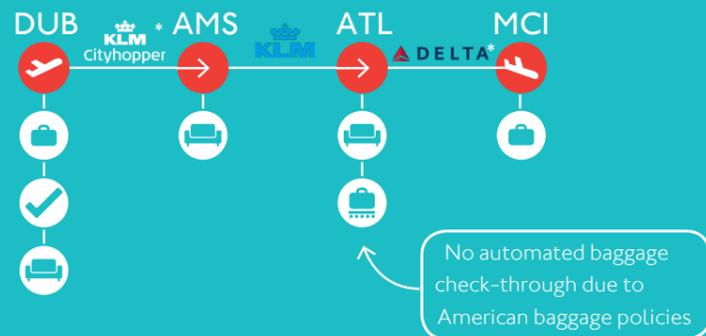


Figure 18 - Case study KLM

ACTIVITIES AND PERKS FOR OSCAR ALONG THE TRIP



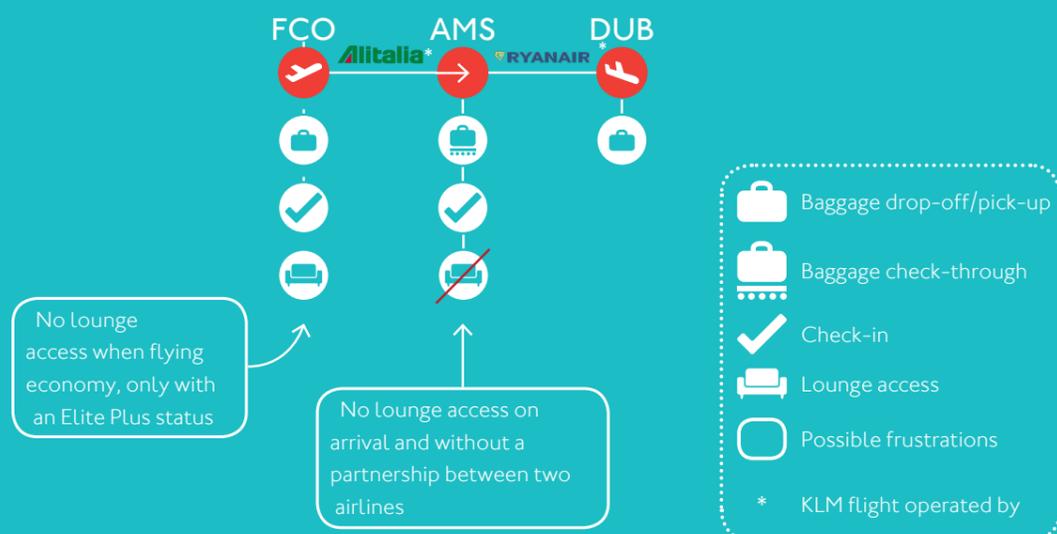
Business class flight from Dublin to Kansas



Business class flight from Kansas to Atlanta



Economy class flight from Rome to Dublin



IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CUSTOMER

But how do these partnerships affect the journey of the customer? What are limitations when flying with SkyTeam? Several scenarios were created to illustrate these implications (see Figure 19).

As mentioned before, flying with an alliance enables the customer to have smoother connections around the world. Imagine Oscar again, who this time wants to travel from Dublin (DUB) to Kansas (MCI) on a specific date. Without all the kind of partnerships he would have to buy three tickets, check in for all flights and transfer his baggage himself. Besides, he would not be able to use his own FFP for the three trips.

In this case, flying with SkyTeam makes Oscar's journey more convenient: it enables Oscar to book just one business class ticket at the KLM website for all three flights. His first flight is operated by KLM Cityhopper, the second by KLM, and the final flight by Delta. Because of KLM's codeshare agreement with KLM Cityhopper and the Joint Venture with Delta, he only needs to check in once, and his baggage is transferred for him, with the exception of the arrival in the USA, because of American baggage policies. Besides, Oscar is able to collect miles for all three flights, and because of his business class ticket and SkyTeam, he can make use of the SkyPriority services and airline lounges during the whole trip.

One exception is the situation in which he takes his flight back from Kansas to Atlanta (ATL). In this case his flight is a national flight, and although flying business class, Oscar isn't able to access the lounge. Only on international flights customers have lounge access.

But besides these perks and exceptions, there are several other consequences for Oscar's journey. Imagine Oscar traveling from Rome (FCO) to Dublin again. Because this time he didn't like the long transfer of the itinerary offered by KLM, he decided to book a KLM economy ticket to Amsterdam (AMS), and from there travel to Dublin with Ryanair.

Although he booked his first flight via the KLM website, the flight from Rome to Amsterdam is operated by Alitalia. Luckily he can still make use of the lounge in Rome because he has a SkyTeam's Elite Plus status, but without this status this wouldn't have been possible: economy passengers do not have access to the lounge. In addition, Oscar is still able to collect his miles for the first flight, although it is operated by Alitalia.

Once at Schiphol, Oscar wants to make use of the lounge again, but unfortunately he got refused because lounges can't be entered on arrival, not even by business class passengers. In addition, KLM doesn't have a partnership with Ryanair regarding lounges. Oscar realizes that booking two tickets for one trip

is less convenient: he needs to check-in again and transfer his baggage himself before being able to board his flight to Dublin.

DIFFICULTIES WITHIN THE TRIP

As can be seen from these scenarios, there are several special scenarios that can cause confusion, and as a result frustration, for the customer:

No lounge access on national flights

First of all, customers do not have access to lounges on national flights. Often this will not be noticed by the customer because a lot of flights are international, but especially in bigger countries like China or the USA this can cause confusion.

No lounge access on arrival

Customers only have lounge access before departure, after arrival they are not able to access them.

No automated baggage check-through

In some countries, customer have to pick-up and check-in their baggage again manually due to national policies, although having a connecting flight. China and the USA are examples of such countries. This again can cause confusion for customers.

INSIGHTS

Despite the many perks the alliance offers to its customers, there are still some obstacles that need to be overcome in order to make the customer's trip seamless, as desired by SkyTeam.

Especially the many exceptions as appeared from this case study can cause confusion for the customer. Although these exceptions are not directly related to SkyTeam or SkyPriority, it is likely that customers will relate them nonetheless.

Therefore, SkyTeam should focus on either changing the exceptions or managing the expectations with regard to the perks during the trip. By doing so, the customer experience of SkyPriority customers could be improved.

Figure 19 - Implications for the customer



CHAPTER 04

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONTEXT

Now that an understanding of SkyTeam and its industry is created, it is time to explore the market in which the alliance operates. Who are the competitors, what are they doing and what are trends within the aviation and other related industries on which SkyTeam could respond? Identifying these aspects helps in defining the direction for the new proposition and serves as a direct source of inspiration.

4.1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENT

To remain successful over the long term and exceed its competitors, SkyTeam should develop a proposition service with a high level of competitive advantage to complement its SkyPriority service.

In order to identify competitors within SkyTeam's future market and to get inspiration for future directions, possible competitors and developments were assessed and mapped out according to the 'Onion Competitors Model' of Hultink (2015)(see Figure 20). In this model, four levels of competition are taken into account:

- ▶ Product form competitors – Products and companies with the same features and price/quality ratio, in this case other alliances
- ▶ Product category competitors – Products and companies within the same category, in this case airlines which do not cooperate in an alliance
- ▶ Generic competitors – Products and companies that fulfill the same need, in this case divided into four categories
- ▶ Budget competitors – Products with a level of luxury and a price that is comparable to a business or first class ticket booked with one of SkyTeam member airlines

The alliances depicted in the Product Form Competition are seen as the biggest competitors for SkyTeam, since they fulfill the same customer needs. Currently, seven different alliances exist worldwide, namely Star Alliance (27 members), SkyTeam (20 members), OneWorld (14 members), Etihad Airways Partner (8 members), Vanilla Alliance (5 members), U-FLY Alliance (5 members) and Value Alliance (8 members). In terms of yearly passengers and the number of members, SkyTeam currently is the second largest alliance in the world, ahead of OneWorld and second to Star Alliance (OneWorld, 2016; Star Alliance, 2016b). Another important competitor is Etihad Airways Partners, considering its growth rate (SkyTeam, 2016). These main competitors are analysed more in-depth within the next section.

Within the Product Category Competition, SkyTeam

experiences competition from airlines that are not cooperating in an alliance such as Emirates, Hainan Airlines and Air Asia, which all have a place in the top 50 of 'World's best Airline 2016'. This prize is annually awarded by Skytrax to the best airlines according to the world's largest international airline passenger satisfaction survey. This survey covers full-service and low-cost airlines (SKYTRAX, 2016). Although airlines in general serve smaller markets than alliances, they have the benefit of being more agile than alliances and having a bigger direct influence of the customer. Within this competition, especially Emirates should be taken into account, considering its rapid growth both in terms of passenger numbers and number of innovation projects during the recent years (The Emirates Group, 2016).

In the Generic Competition, a distinction is made between competitors offering loyalty programs, transportation (services), competitors offering entertainment products and services, and competitors that have a high level of technological innovativeness. The companies, products and trends within these categories are not direct competitors of SkyTeam, but should be taken into account since they fulfill the same customer need or could provide inspiration for a future proposition. They are analysed in Chapter 4.2. More competitors were taken into account during this analysis, however, in the figure only the most important ones are shown.

Finally, products within the Budget Competition are mainly products that could be bought by the customer instead of flying Business- or First class. Since this category of competitors is so general, it is not taken into account within this project.

In the next section, competing products and relevant trends from the Generic Competition are analysed. Subsequently, SkyTeam is benchmarked against the three main competing alliances and the most important airline, in order to identify what distinguishes SkyTeam from its competitors, and how the new proposition could be positioned.

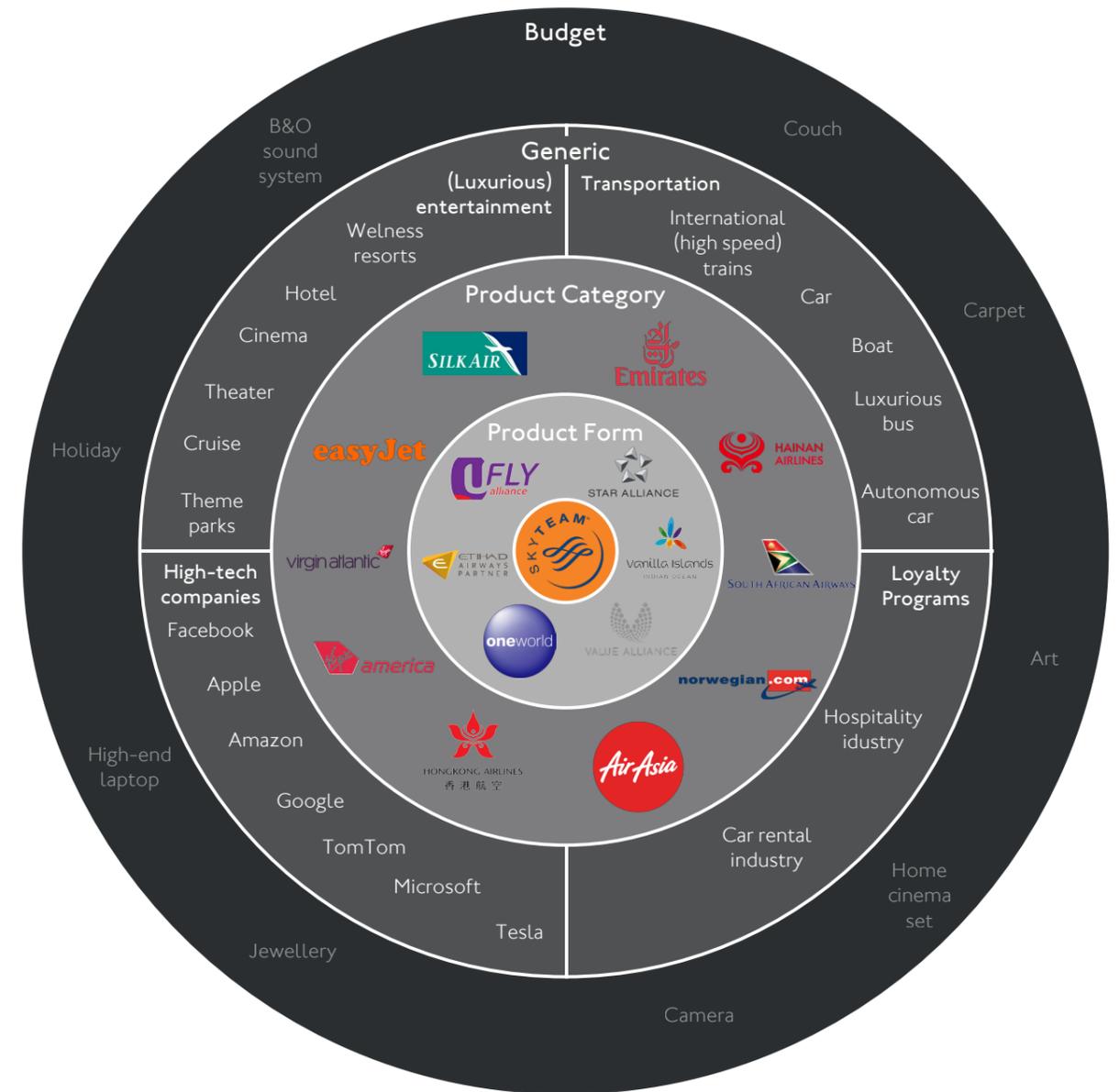


Figure 20 - Competitors of SkyTeam

4.2. TRENDS WITHIN THE FIELD

Based on the generic competitors as identified in the previous section, research is also done on the developments and trend within the environment of SkyTeam. As mentioned before, this analysis was divided into four categories: 1) other loyalty programs, 2) transportation, 3) luxury and entertainment and 4) high tech companies. Competitors within these categories should be considered inspirational sources more than direct opponents. The analysis of the products and services and upcoming relevant trends within these four categories can be found in Appendix B. In this chapter, the most important trends are discussed.

The found trends are analysed by the use of the method of Ansoff (1980), who developed a systematic approach for early identification and fast response to important trends and events that have an impact on the firm. Within this approach, the ‘urge to respond’ on a certain trend is plotted against the impact on the customer when a certain trend is implemented. This results in a matrix that can be seen in Figure 21.

In order to determine the urgency to respond on the trends found, both the timing of impact (which consists of a Google Trends analysis in combination with the number of existing applications) and the estimated time it will take SkyTeam to respond on the

different trends are taken into account. The response time is defined in consultation with Fabio Mendes, Brand & Advertisement manager of SkyTeam. Also the customer impact is determined in consultation with this department. The assessment can be found in Appendix B.

According to Ansoff (1980), the quadrant on the upper right side requires immediate response of the company. The quadrant in the upper middle should be monitored continuously. Together these two quadrants contain the most pressing trends and developments that should be taken into account by the company.

Within this project the trends from the upper right corner are used, namely: easier to use loyalty and seamless experience. These trends are discussed below. It should be mentioned that in this chapter, only a few examples of possibilities with these trends are mentioned in order to communicate the opportunities. In this next phase, more novel ideas based on these trends are generated.

EASIER TO USE LOYALTY

Multiple loyalty programs nowadays have complicated rules and policies: points which can't be redeemed during busy seasons, rewards that

expire after a certain date and value of points which is constantly degrading. According to Collinson Latitude (2014), 78% of travelers would like reward programs to be easier to understand. Programs should be adjusted to those desires in order to stay relevant and used by people. The before mentioned programs of the Hilton, Marriott, Best Western and Starwood are already replying on this trend by offering ‘never expiring points’ and the absence of blackout dates.

CURRENT SOLUTIONS

SkyTeam is already responding to this trend by offering their customer the possibility to collect miles from qualifying flights afterwards by the use of the retroactive credit tool. They are also trying to communicate the different privileges per airport to the customer by the use of the SkyTeam app. However, at this moment the app is not widely used by customers.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SKYTEAM

A lot more possibilities within this trend exist. An opportunity for SkyTeam with regard to this trend would for example be making loyalty program rules insightful for the customer, awarding miles that do not expire or offering customers the possibility to use miles even easier. SkyTeam could also think of different ways to inform customers about what services they can make use of on a more personal level, in order to prevent people from getting confused about their privileges.

SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE

Another identified theme is the one of the ‘seamless experience’. Applied to the journey of the customer this theme could result in one flow of steps, instead of all the individual phases such as the trip to the airport and security checks that the customer currently needs to go through. One of the areas in which this theme appears are theme-parks, in which visitors will increasingly have a more seamless experience than they do now. Separate entrances for every attraction and long waiting lines will disappear, and attractions will flow into one another. Once entered the park, visitors will have a flow of experiences that all relate to one another. (Mentalfloss.com, 2015) But also the physical and digital environment will start blending. Products, devices and interaction channels will become harmoniously synchronised into one, seamless experience (Forbes, 2016). Think of for example Uber, that already allows the user to automatically start playing his own Spotify playlist

when getting into his Uber-ride.

CURRENT SOLUTIONS

SkyTeam is already trying to respond to this trend, not only by the use of the eight SkyPriority services at the airport, but also by offering customers the possibility to look up the different privileges per airport via the app in order to prevent them from searching at the airport. Also the fact that when traveling with SkyTeam airlines all baggage will be through checked-in from origin to destination is an attempt to make the journey more seamless.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SKYTEAM

Also within this trend there are a lot of possibilities for SkyTeam. The alliance could for example suggest a certain pace with which passengers have to go through all stages at the airport in order to wait as little as possible. Instead of waiting in line for boarding, passengers could be picked-up by the crew in the lounge or receive a message when it is time to board. KLM already tried to make their customers’ journey more seamless by the introduction of the Happy Flow, in which facial recognition technology is used to identify passengers. By doing so, they removed the need for passengers to show their passports and boarding passes at several stages of the journey. Making the journey of the passengers more seamless would not only contribute to the goal of the alliance, but also improve the customer experience by creating more consistency. (Airline Trends, 2015a)

Urge to respond	Pressing	Ticketless traveling Being organic Drones	Genuine luxury Community-based Augmented & Virtual reality	Easier to use loyalty Seamless experience
	Significant	Distracting the customer	Smart environments Intelligent devices	Offline multi-functionality Experience beyond the flight Everything-on-demand Omni-channel experience
	Low	Audio user interface Virtual ticketing agent	Being green Improved entrance & exit experience	Fast Track Personalized benefits
		Low	Significant	Major
		Impact when implemented		

Figure 21 – Trend Matrix based on Ansoff (1980)

SUMMARY

Several trends on which to respond with the proposition are identified and discussed. Within this analysis, two trends appear to be most pressing, namely ‘easier to use loyalty’ and ‘seamless experience’. These trends are used as inspirational source during the ideation phase. In this phase the possibilities with these trends are elaborated more in-depth.

4.3. ALLIANCES AND AIRLINES

4.3.1. THE BRAND AS EXPERIENCED FROM A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

In order to get a better grip onto the current position of both SkyTeam and its competitors, the innovations of SkyTeam, Star Alliance, OneWorld, Etihad Airways Partners and Emirates were identified and mapped out (see Appendix A).

From the analysis it appeared that there isn't much difference in pace of innovation among the alliances. In the past, all have created a base in order to offer their passengers the possibility to travel with all member airlines, while making use of one FFP on all flights and collecting miles towards higher tiers and benefits. Nowadays, all alliances are (to a lesser or greater extend) focusing on making the experience of traveling more seamless. However, some differences within the focus of the airlines were discovered (see also Figure 22).

SkyTeam mainly focuses on the experience of the passenger with a business profile at the airport and on board, i.e. *offline*. Its most important and emphasized product is SkyPriority, which exists of eight airport services that make traveling faster and more convenient. Next to this, they offer their customers several branded lounges at airports around the world. Regarding SkyTeam's way of communication towards the customer, it can be stated that a personal approach is adopted. Within all advertisements, a passenger making use of SkyTeam or the SkyPriority services is depicted. This personal approach also appears from their tag line, "Caring more about you". Also Emirates and Etihad are focusing on this offline experience (although several applications and webpages, i.e. *digital* products, were developed by Etihad in particular), but both are even more focusing on the emotions of the customers than SkyTeam does. They do so by for example depicting real people (instead of the silhouettes and cartoons that SkyTeam depicts), and emphasizing the experience of these people. This 'personal approach' also comes back in the communication of these airlines. Etihad does so by the use of for example use of tag lines like: "The world is our home, you are our guest". In addition, both

airlines are more focusing on offering their customers a luxurious experience during the trip (i.e. *offline*) by the introduction of facilities like, for example, on-board lounges, showers and flat beds. Emirates emphasizes this luxurious experience by advertising with texts like: "Fly Emirates to Dubai and shop from traditional gold souks and hip boutiques to the greatest collection of the world's fashion at Dubai Mall".

By doing so, all three are focusing on the emotions of the customer, both in the product portfolio and communication. Their focus could therefore be described as 'offline' and 'emotional'.

In contrast to this, Star Alliance and OneWorld are mainly focusing on the functional benefits of their services within their advertisement. Rarely, passengers within the context of the services are depicted, and advertisements with texts like "Be a step ahead, be one" (OneWorld) emphasize this functional benefits. This functionality also comes back within the mainly digital product portfolio of the two alliances. OneWorld for example was the first alliance to introduce an alliance wide FFP and interline e-ticketing, which allows passengers to change from one flight on one airline to another flight on another airline without having to gather their bags or check-in again. In addition, within their limited amount of communication the alliance emphasizes the quality of the airlines and the alliance itself and focusing on the ease for the customer when making use of their services, both digitally and at the airport. On the other hand, Star Alliance introduced several e-services like the 'Auto doc check', which aims at simplifying the complex task of verifying travel documentation requirements for passengers online, and the Book and Fly application, that optimize the process before the actual flight. Their focus could therefore be described as 'digital' and 'functional'.

All insights from the analyses of SkyTeam and its competitors were combined into one graph (see Figure 22). From the analysis one could state that currently SkyTeam, Emirates and Etihad all three are, to a greater or lesser extend, offering services at the airport. In addition, their marketing strategy appeared to respond to the emotions and feelings of the customers, and by doing seem to be more 'human'.

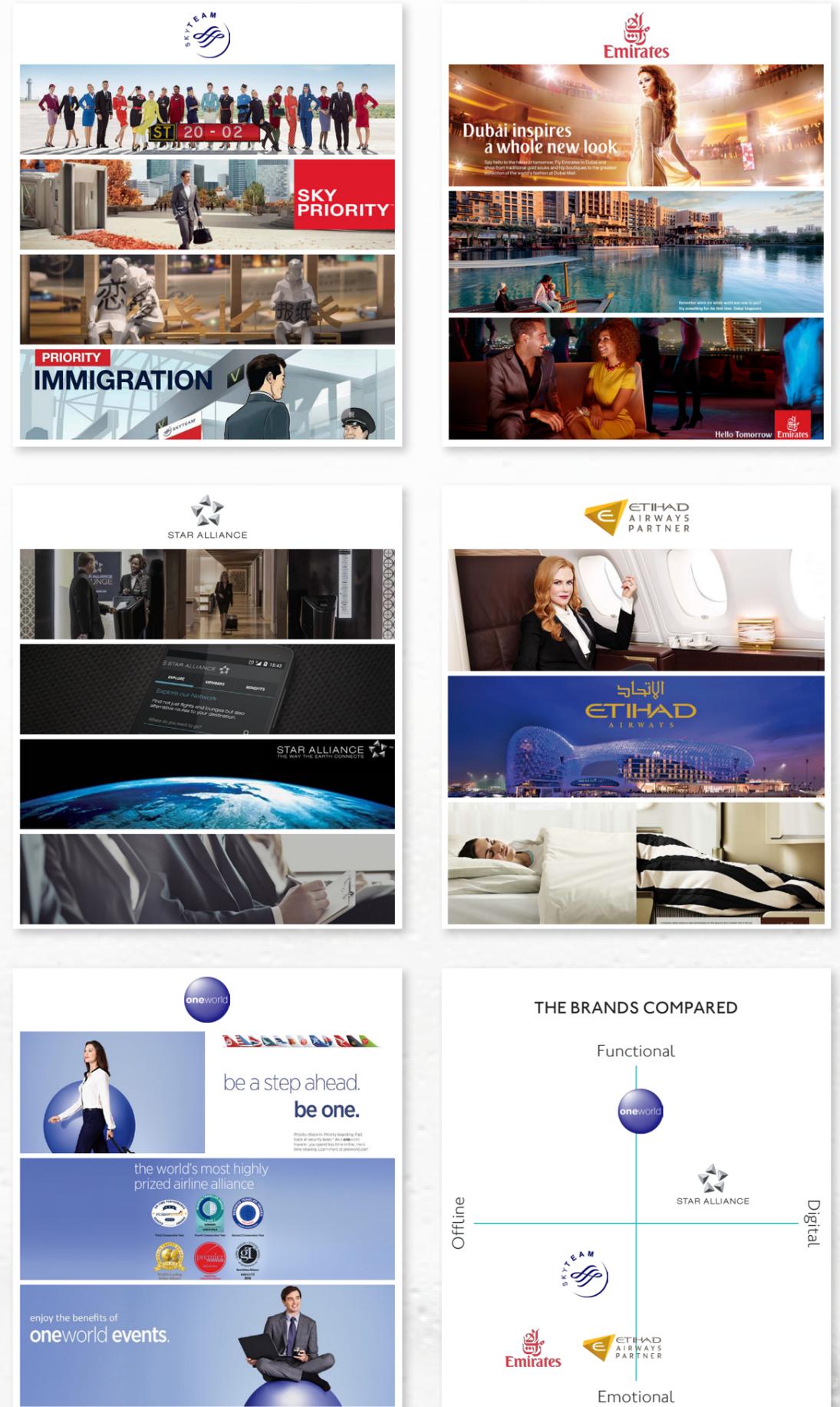


Figure 22 - Advertisements of the main competitors

OneWorld and Star Alliance on the other hand have a portfolio containing more functional products, services and ads, rather than emotional. In addition, these products and services are, apart from several lounges, mainly digital.

4.3.2. THE BRAND AS EXPERIENCED BY SKYTEAM'S MEMBER AIRLINES

In order to complement and verify this brand image and to define a future vision, all member airlines where asked to share their vision regarding SkyTeam nowadays and in the future. Their input was analysed and categorized and resulted in the output which can be seen in Figure 23. All input can be seen in Appendix C.

The analysis of their input resulted in the following brand vision:

"SkyTeam is a premium, customer-focused brand that is visible for customers and enables them to travel wherever they want. Due to the synergy between the different member airlines, SkyTeam is able to offer these customers several airport-based services."

Within this vision, 'premium' emphasizes the quality of the member airlines and the priority-services

that entitled customer can make use of. Customer-focused refers to the previously discussed 'emotional' products, services and communication of the brand. It should be noticed that although the airlines mentioned 'synergy' as one of the pillars, from the case study it appeared that customers not always experience the airlines as being synergistic, due to inconsistencies within the products and services they can make use of.

The members indicated that in the future they would like to see the brand to become more digital and innovative, instead of mainly being present at the airport. Therefore, the future brand vision could be defined as:

"SkyTeam is a premium, customer-focused brand that is visible for customers and enables them to travel wherever they want. Due digital services and synergy between the member airlines, SkyTeam is able to offer these customer an innovative experience."

Digital services, such as smartphone applications or online tools, could not only create more synergy between the customer experiences of the different member airlines, but also enable the airlines to actually create more synergy between them.

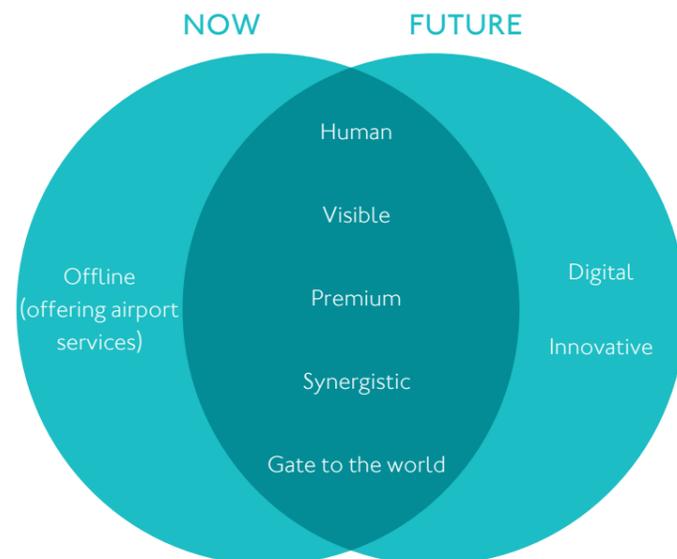


Figure 23 - SkyTeam brand according to the member airlines

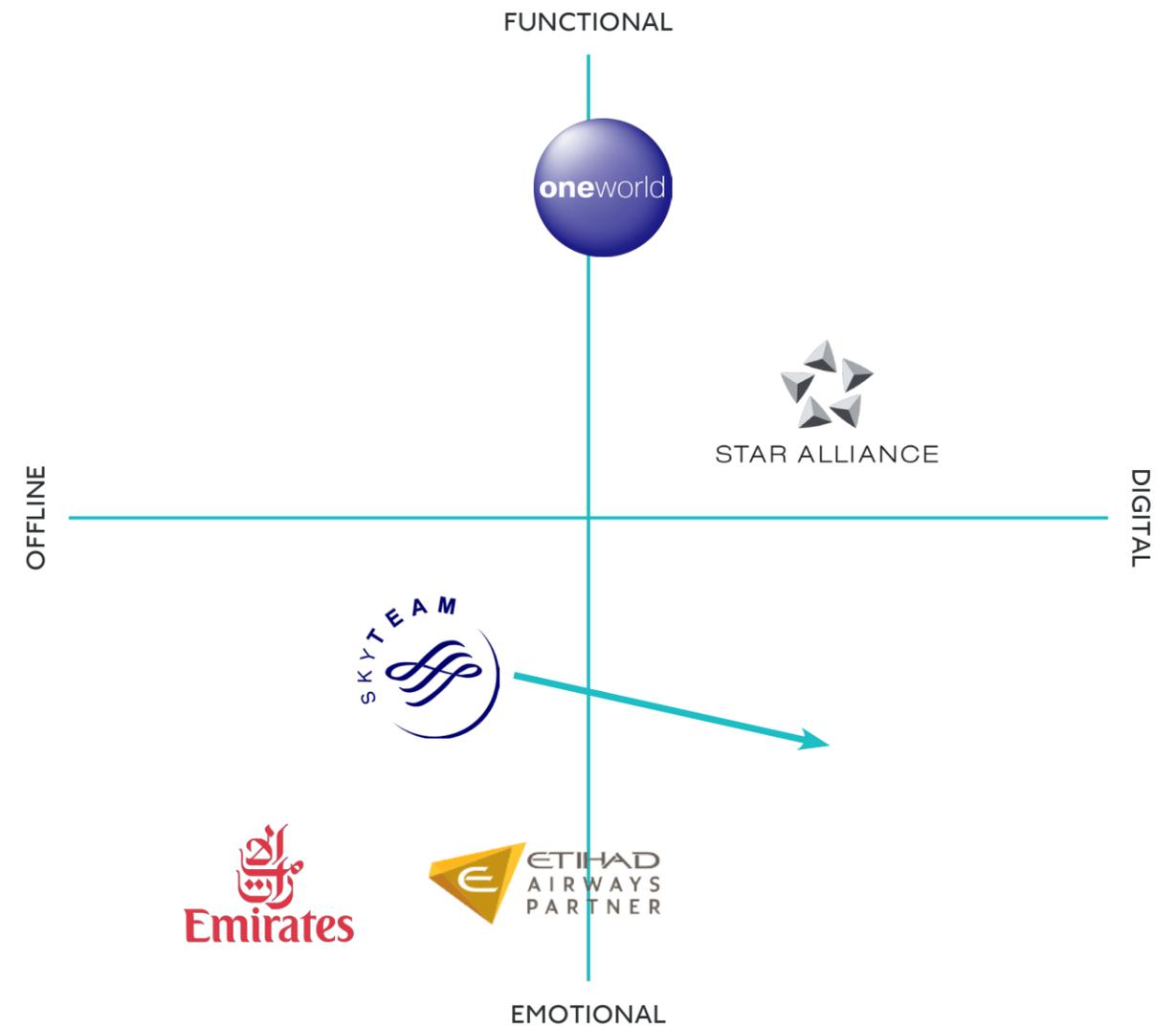


Figure 24 - Benchmark SkyTeam and its competitors

INSIGHTS

In the future it could be interesting for SkyTeam to move towards offering more digital services, while remaining their emotional approach. By moving into a currently not covered area, SkyTeam could create a unique selling point that would differentiate the company from others (see Figure 24). In addition, introducing these digital services could not only result in more consistency for the customer, but also create more synergy between the airlines.



CHAPTER 05

THE CUSTOMER

As the new proposition should fit the desires of the wide variety of customers of the SkyTeam members, it is interesting to find out how customers currently assess the SkyPriority service. Almquist, Senior, and Bloch (2016) from Bain & Company stated that customers always evaluate the perceived value of a product or services against its price. But what customers truly value can be difficult to pin down, since the amount and nature of value differs per customer. Getting to know the current and desired values of customers could enable SkyTeam to improve its performance in current markets or even break into new ones.

5.1. VALUE CREATION

In their study, "The Elements of Value", Almquist et al. (2016) identified 30 universal elements of value. They found that the right combinations of values delivered by certain products and services, result in greater consumer willingness to try a brand, stronger customer loyalty and sustained revenue growth. The created model traces its conceptual roots to the psychologist Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of needs". Maslow stated that human actions arise from an inner desire to fulfill needs ranging from the very basic (bottom of the pyramid) to the more complex ones (top of the pyramid). The model from Almquist et al. (2016) differs from this model by focusing on people as consumers, describing their behavior as it relates to products and services.

THE VALUES LEVELS

The values within the model can be divided into four categories: functional, emotional, life changing and social impact (see Figure 25). At the bottom of the pyramid the more functional physiological and safety needs are situated, values like self-actualization and self-transcendence are located at the top. Almquist et al. (2016) stated that at least some of the functional elements must be provided by a company in order to be able to deliver higher-order elements.

From a study with 10.000 U.S. consumers Almquist et al. (2016) found that companies that are offering four or more elements have loyal customers and a revenue growth four times greater than that of companies offering only one value, and that companies that score high on emotional elements have a higher Net Promoter Score (NPS) than companies solely offering functional elements. However, it should be mentioned that offering all 30 values seems to be almost impossible: Apple, one of the best performing companies studied, excels on 11 of the 30 values.

APPLICATIONS

The model of Almquist et al. (2016) can be used to refine products and services in order to deliver more elements, or to identify where customers perceive strengths and weaknesses compared to competitors within the industry. After creating an understanding of which elements are most important within the industry, it can be analysed how a company performs on those values relative to its competitors. If a company lacks in offering crucial elements, it should improve these elements before attempting to add new ones. However, the biggest potential of the elements lies within the development of new types of value to provide. The condition here is that the elements align with the company's brand.

SUMMARY

Within this project, it is interesting to assess how the SkyPriority services are currently being experienced by the customer and which values are considered important during the ideal trip, using the use of the 30 values of Almquist et al. (2016). By doing so, it could be identified which values would be interesting to improve or even add to the current portfolio of SkyTeam, in order to increase the customer loyalty, revenue growth and Net Promoter Score.



Social impact



Self-transcendence

Life changing



Provides hope



Self-actualization



Motivates me



Heirloom



Affiliation/belonging

Emotional



Reduces anxiety



Rewards me



Nostalgia



Design/Aesthetics



Badge value



Wellness



Therapeutic value



Fun/entertainment



Attractiveness



Provides access

Functional



Saves time



Simplifies



Makes money



Reduces risk



Organizes



Integrates



Connects



Reduces effort



Avoids hassle



Reduces costs



Quality



Variety



Sensory appeal



Informs

Figure 25 - 30 elements of value

5.2. SKYPRIORITY AS EXPERIENCED BY THE CUSTOMER

In order to dive into the passenger's perception and motives when traveling by plane and the SkyPriority services in particular, an user study was conducted. The study provides insight in the current and ideal journey of passengers of different airlines, and gives insights into the earlier described values people consider important when traveling (Almquist et al., 2016).

GOAL

The goal of this study was to get insights into the customer's perception of traveling by plane as well as the values they consider important when flying. Prior to conducting the study, the following research questions were formulated:

- ▶ What does the current journey of a passenger traveling with a SkyPriority status look like?
- ▶ How do people currently experience the SkyPriority services, and what are the values perceived?
- ▶ What values would characterize the ideal journey?

METHOD

The customer research is divided into three parts. The first part consists of interviews via the telephone or in real life with people that are making use of the SkyPriority services. These interviews varied in length from 30 to 60 minutes and were mainly used to get a better understanding of the current process and experience when making use of the SkyPriority services.

The second part consists of interviews with passengers

with a SkyPriority status in the SkyTeam Lounge of London Heathrow. These interviews were conducted by the use of a timeline, presented together with a set of stickers to spark creativity, as used within Context Mapping (Koupric & Sleeswijk Visser, 2009). Besides some basic information, the interviewees were asked to visualize their journey when traveling by plane. In addition, they were asked to select the values that are applicable to their journey when traveling with a priority status. These values were presented to them in the form of randomly ordered cards, each containing a keyword, small description and pictograph (see Figure 26). No maximum or minimum amount of cards was asked in order to not lead the interviewees in any way. Finally, the interviewees were asked what their ideal journey would look like, and which values would be applicable to this trip. These interviews varied in length between 10 and 25 minutes, due to restrictions regarding the length of the interviews in the lounge. The final set of participants was only asked to select the values that are currently applicable to their journey when traveling with a priority status by the use of an online questionnaire. Besides they were asked to select the values that would be applicable during their ideal journey. This was done by the use of the same keywords, descriptions and pictographs as used on the earlier described cards. The values were presented in a random order. The questionnaire took between 5 and 10 minutes to complete.

ADJUSTMENTS AT THE AIRPORT

After the first few interviews at the airport, it was decided not to use the random stimuli stickers



Figure 26 - Value cards as used within the lounge

INSIGHTS

From the recruitment process it appeared that customers often travel with their national airline due to geographical reasons (e.g. Vietnamese people most often travel with Vietnam airlines). As a result, most customers mainly travel with certain airlines within the alliance, so the image of SkyTeam and SkyPriority mainly depends of the performance of these airlines. In order to ensure a consistent image of them, it is of great importance to make sure all airlines carry out the same message.

which were supposed to be presented together with the timelines. This was done in order to prevent the interviews from getting too long, as requested by the lounge manager.

In addition, the order of first picking values and then filling in the timeline was changed after it was noticed that this order influenced the way people filled in the timeline. It turned out that the interviewees tended to only use the words which they had already seen on the cards instead of their own words. The eventually used order therefore was first filling in

the timeline, and after this presenting the values.

INTERVIEWEES

In total, 26 passengers with different nationalities and from different airlines were qualitatively interviewed within a 26 days period of time. 18 of them were interviewed inside the lounge. 24 of these participants had an actual SkyPriority status. In addition, 24 participants completed the online questionnaire within 2 days. It was tried to involve customers of as many airlines as possible in order to represent all

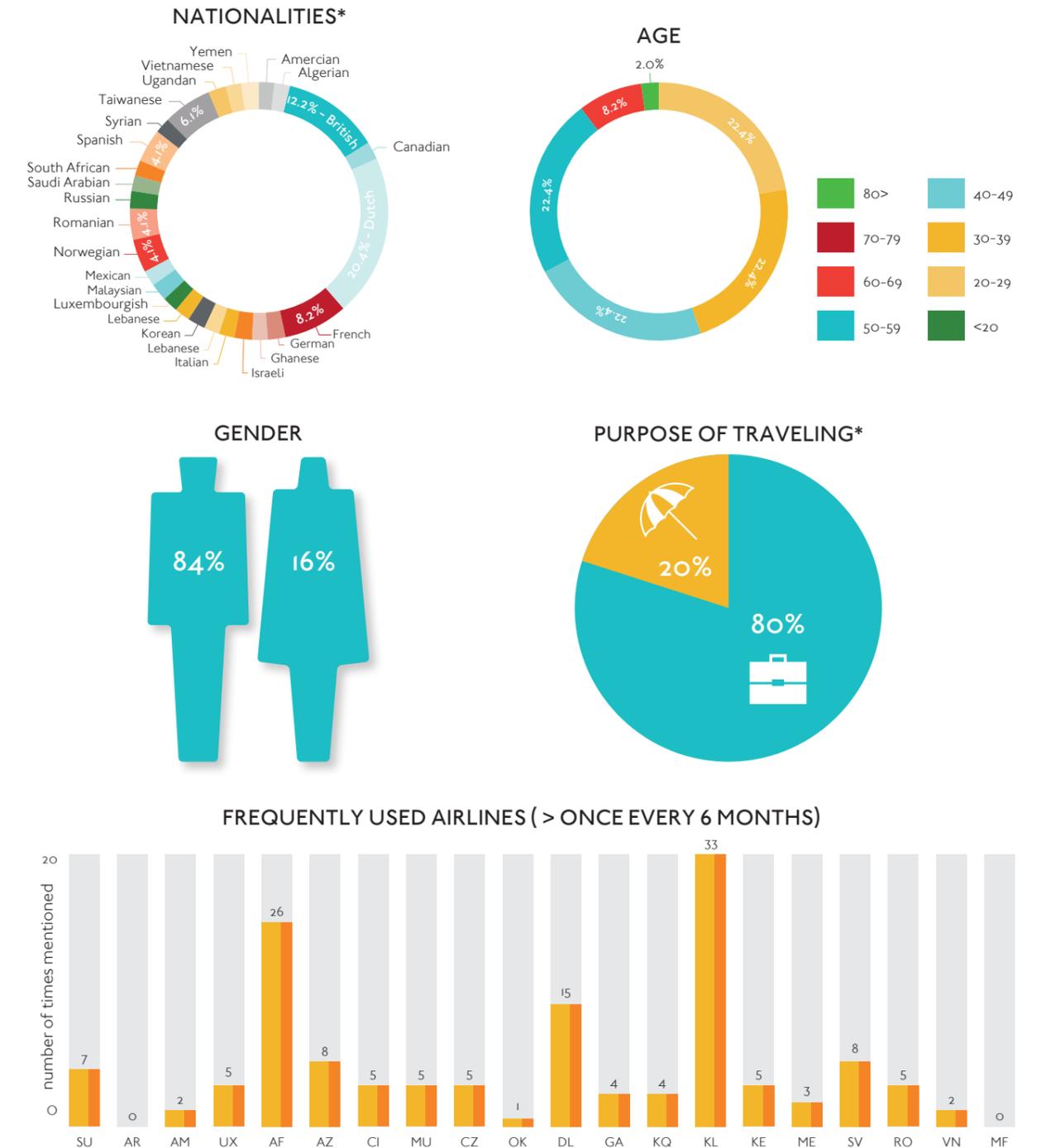


Figure 27 - Characteristics participants - * 2% unless mentioned otherwise

CURRENTLY EXPERIENCED VALUES DUE TO SKYPRIORITY



AVOIDS HASSLE



35/48

"It prevents me from purposely wandering around at the airport"

SAVES TIME



35/48

"I just want to go home as soon as possible"

"The time I do not spend waiting, I can spend on continuing my work"

QUALITY



28/48

"The services improves the quality of the trip I actually don't want to make: I just want to be with my children"

REWARDS ME



23/48

"It enables me to be recognized as a loyal customer"

WELLNESS



21/48

"It gives me the comfortable feeling of not missing my flight"

DESIRED VALUES DURING AN IDEAL TRIP



AVOIDS HASSLE



29/48

"I would like my trip to become one flow of steps"

"I hate carrying my baggage all the way, the trains and taxi's: I would love to have a direct flight from home to my final destination"

SAVES TIME



26/48

"I would really like the baggage drop-off and security process to become faster"

Figure 28 - Current and desired values

stakeholders and nationalities. 8 of the qualitative interviewees (those who were interviewed outside of the airport environment) were gathered through the social network of the author, the others in the SkyTeam Lounge at London Heathrow. The 24 participants of the online questionnaire were recruited through the database of the SkyPriority audit app and were selected based on their FFP, in order to cover all member airlines as good as possible. The characteristics of the interviewees can be seen in Figure 27.

RESULTS

22 of the 26 interviews were recorded and transcribed (see Appendix D). This was done in the language in which they were recorded (Dutch or English). The insights from the remaining four interviews that could not be recorded were written down directly after the interviews took place.

Subsequently, the first eight transcripts were used to create initial codes. One of these transcripts was also coded by a fellow Master's student Strategic Product Design who already had experience with coding. The resulting two coded transcripts were then compared and evaluated on being coded comparably, in order to minimize the chance on missed or wrongly interpreted data. After the eight interview, a saturation of codes was reached. The resulting transcripts were used for the second iteration round. All 658 codes were categorized into families by the use of Atlas.ti. Hereafter, the resulting families were once again categorized into superfamilies and eventually into nine unique themes. These themes are discussed below.

In addition, the gained insights were used to map out the current passenger journey when making use of the SkyPriority benefits.

The current and desired values derived from the interviews and questionnaires (48 in total, due to 2

non-SkyPriority interviewees) were collected and analysed by the use of an excel sheet (see Appendix D).

Below, the currently experienced and desired values, emerged themes and findings from the customer journey mapping are described.

CURRENT & DESIRED VALUES

In order to identify the most important values, all values mentioned by at least 40% of the participants were taken into account (see Figure 28). Since all chosen values were discussed with the interviewees afterwards, insights from less mentioned values will come back within the themes.

From the analysis it appeared that currently passengers experience mainly five values when traveling with a SkyPriority status, namely:

- ▶ Avoid hassle (35/48) - It makes the journey more convenient;
- ▶ Saves time (35/48) - It makes the journey more efficient;
- ▶ Quality (28/48) - It improves the quality of the trip;
- ▶ Rewards me (23/48) - It feels like a reward;
- ▶ Wellness (21/48) - It makes me feel relaxed.

The interviewees in general stated that the SkyPriority status prevents them from having to stand in line and waiting. It should be mentioned that it not necessarily saves them time during the journey itself, but that it gives them control over their time at the airport. In addition, it improves the quality of their trip, rewards them for frequently traveling with the same airline(s) and make them feel more relaxed. Feeling more relaxed appeared to be more related to 'ease of mind' than to the body.

A small distinction can be made between interviewees



Figure 29 - Emerged themes, sorted by the number of interviewees that mentioned them

traveling for leisure and for business. The value rewards me turned out to be experienced more by the interviewees traveling for business than for interviewees traveling for leisure, while wellness was valued more by leisure passengers than business passengers.

Within the ideal journey it appeared that no new values were mentioned, but that passengers would like to experience the values avoid hassle (29/48) and saves time (26/48) to a greater extent. In general, the interviewees stated that they would like the journey to become faster and one flow instead of separate steps.

Here again a small difference exists between the two groups: interviewees traveling for leisure turned out to be in less need for the journey to become faster than interviewees traveling for business.

As can be seen, overlap exists between the experienced and ideal values. According to Almquist et al. (2016), companies should improve their currently offered elements before attempting to add new ones, if they appear to be lacking behind in offering crucial elements. Since the two most important values (avoids hassle and saves time) are currently not yet experienced by 100% of the participants, this would mean that these are the values to be incorporated in the proposition.

However, developing a new proposition solely based on the values speed and avoid hassle would not result in a proposition that truly distinguishes SkyTeam from its competitors: all airlines and alliances will eventually try to make the journey faster and easier. It should also be mentioned that the values that customers currently experience due to SkyPriority are mainly functional. SkyTeam could try to turn this functionality into something more emotional in order to create more loyalty, which would fit their brand image as described in Chapter 4. This could be done by introducing the SkyPriority personality. By humanizing SkyPriority, the brand could play a more central role in the customer's life (Aaker, 1997; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988). SkyPriority could become the person that customers rely on during their trips and that functions as the glue between the different phases in their trip. In addition, Swaminathan et al. (2008) found that by humanizing the brand, brand personality provides opportunities for building strong customer brand relationships. By doing so, SkyPriority could distinguish itself from other services.

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The fact that you have to arrive earlier at the airport while you already have your boarding pass, that takes time. That could definitely be different. That could be arranged the night before, my case is packed anyway.

EMERGED THEMES

In total, nine broad themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews (see Figure 29). Four of these themes were considered most important, either because they were mentioned by all of the participants, or because of the direct influence of SkyTeam on this topics. These themes are discussed below. These remaining themes can be found in Appendix D.

Varying level of stress during the trip

The most important theme emerged from the analysis is 'varying level of stress during the trip'. 142 codes from the 672 codes were related to this topic and the theme was discussed by all of the interviewees.

The level of stress appears to be especially high on the way to the airport. This part of the journey was mentioned by ten of the interviewees and can be stressful due to unpredictability of e.g. traffic. As mentioned by one of the participants: "I think the more stressful part is getting to the airport, you are making sure you are there on time, all that stuff".

According to 15 of the interviewees this stress level is reduced right after arrival at the airport. In addition, it was mentioned by 14 interviewees that they are constantly looking for a balance between saving time by arriving later at the airport and reducing stress by arriving earlier. Another moment at which 10 of the passenger stated to feel relieved, is after arriving at the gate. One of the participants, employee at a global financial services corporation, mentioned to feel relieved after the announcement of boarding at the gate, because it gives her the feeling that she made the flight.

A final frequently discussed topic was checking in online to reduce stress and speed up the process. This topic was mentioned by 17 of the interviewees.

From this theme it can be concluded that stress often occurs in situations where there is no one to take care of the customer. Stress appeared to be low in situations where there is a contact person, e.g. after arriving at the airport and the gate, but high in situations where people have the feeling of not being seen or heard. These are the moments where SkyPriority could deliver

added value. Contact points differ per airline, airport and phase, but a possibility for SkyPriority could be to be the consistent factor during the trip. Traveling with SkyPriority should be like arriving in a hotel of your favourite hotel chain: although you don't know exactly what the hotel looks like and where your room is, there's always one person that you recognize by its uniform and behavior that makes sure you arrive at your hotel room.

Need for the journey to become faster

A second theme that emerged is the 'need for the journey to become faster'. In total, 134 codes with regard to this theme were identified. In addition, the theme was mentioned by all of the interviewees individually. It was suggested that people want to spend as little time as possible on traveling. Although nine of the interviewees mentioned that flying has become a practiced and therefore quite efficient process, 17 of the respondents mentioned that they are in need of even more efficiency. As one interviewee said: "Waiting is a waste of time". Another reported to buy business class tickets in order to save time compared to other classes. Furthermore, 16 interviewees mentioned that they experience discomfort when waiting or standing in line. This discomfort isn't solely physical, but also mental, since people aren't able to control their own time. When asked what the ideal journey would look like, one of them said: "That the process of checking in wouldn't require that much time anymore and that, which you already see, suitcases are picked up from home before the trip". In total 18 respondents stated that traveling with baggage significantly decelerates the journey.

One interviewee mentioned to dislike to process after arrival in particular, since this often takes a lot of time. Finally, two of the participants stated that they disliked being away from home. As one reported: "What I don't like is missing home: missing my children, my family".

Although already known, it should be stressed that customers actually don't want to be at the airport: it's a place where they do not have control over their own time. Speeding up the inevitable process is already something SkyPriority does, but the feeling of having control of time could be expanded even more by letting the customer know what he can do, and maximizing the time in which he is able to decide how to spend his time. Creating the circumstances to do so, could be something SkyTeam could do.

Confusion with regard to loyalty program benefits and SkyPriority

Another theme appeared is the 'confusion with regard to loyalty program benefits and SkyPriority'. 38 codes on this topic were collected from 12 interviewees. Ten

of them appeared to be confused about having lounge access when flying with a SkyPriority status. One participant for example said: "Even when I don't fly business class: the lounge of course [is my favourite SkyPriority benefit]". In addition, seven appeared to be confused about the differences between the airline loyalty programs and SkyTeam. As one of the interviewees stated: "We used to have SkyTeam Gold [...]. This time I come in here with my Priority Boarding Pass". Also creating more awareness of lounges and the facilities within these lounges could improve the customer experience: according to nine interviewees the lounge improves the perceived quality of the trip, but four of the interviewees were unaware of the SkyTeam lounges and their facilities.

The challenge here for SkyTeam is in creating an understanding of the differences between the perks of SkyTeam and the airlines loyalty programs. SkyTeam should try to manage the expectations, in order to prevent people from being disappointed at certain points during their journey. An industry in which this already happens is the hospitality industry (see Appendix B), in which some for example offer points that never expire and others promise their customers to have no black-out dates. This transparency takes away possible frustration and, by doing so, increases the customer appreciation. Creating such a transparency could also work in favour of SkyTeam and SkyPriority.

Need for a personal approach

59 codes were identified on the theme 'need for a personal approach'. 12 respondents mentioned to have a need for a personal approach. This personal approach can be either at the airport, on board or during the booking process, for example by adapting the offer to local particularities. Seven interviewees revealed to have a need to be recognized on board. Five others also mentioned being annoyed by the little difference in treatment between economy and business class. One of them stated: "Personally I think that business class within Europe isn't distinctive enough, considering the high price you pay". Finally, three of the interviewees mentioned the inhuman feeling of having to wait in line. As one of the respondents put it: "It feels like a punishment".

Although SkyPriority customers are considered to be High Valued Customers, they do not always feel like being highly valued. It was mentioned that part of feeling valued is being recognized as customer, but

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Most of the time it's not about golden taps and luxury, people just want to be seen and heard.

Unfortunately this is not always the case. Part of the problem is that, although customers have a SkyPriority status along the way, they often make use of just one loyalty program. This means that customers will for example only be welcomed by name on this specific airline, and not during the rest of their journey. Since SkyPriority is present throughout the whole journey, making this recognition and personalization more consistent would be one of the possibilities for

SkyTeam to create added value for the customer. Such a personal approach could also be digital: look at for example Google, that welcomes you by name and gives you personalized suggestions based on your appointments, location and preferences. This immediately gives the user the feeling of 'being recognized'.

5.3. PERSONAS AND THEIR JOURNEY

In order to be able to empathize with the abstract insights resulting from the customer research, two personas were created. Personas are fictional profiles representing a particular group of people (archetypes), based on insights resulting from the customer research. These personas communicate the behavior, current experience, goals and frustrations of the customers. In addition, they are used as a tool during the ideation process in order to be able to empathize with the passenger.

The two created personas, Oscar, who is already introduced at the beginning of this report, and Kim, were based on the two types of travelers that make use of the SkyPriority services: business passengers and leisure passengers.

5.3.1. BUSINESS PASSENGER

The business passenger in general wants to be as fast as possible. He dislikes spending much time at the airport and wants to spend his time as efficient as possible. Therefore, he always tries to find a balance between arriving as late as possible at the airport, and reducing stress. Being able to make use of the priority services and knowing what priority privileges are available is for this reason of great importance to him. Since he is traveling for work so frequently, he dislikes the feeling of being 'one of the many'. However, although he is often traveling with the same airlines, he still isn't always recognized throughout the journey. Finally, he greatly values to be in control of his own trip: since he is often 'on the road', he finds it important to be able to manage his flight whenever and how he wants.

The personification of this kind of passenger, Oscar, can be found in Figure 31.

5.3.2. LEISURE PASSENGER

The leisure passenger flying with a SkyPriority status often retained his SkyPriority status because he is often flying for business. This means that this passenger will often belong to the other 'group' of passengers as well. However, the main difference between passengers traveling for business and passengers traveling for leisure, is that passengers belonging to the latter group experience less urge to be as efficient as possible, but he attaches more value to having a relaxed feeling. This feeling is related to the experienced hassle during the trip and having the right information along the way.

The personification of this kind of passengers, Kim, can be found in Figure 32.

5.3.3. THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

By the use of the insights from the study, the journey as experienced by the two types of SkyPriority customer was created (see Figure 30). Besides the different stages the passenger passes through during his trip, also typical thoughts and quotes, the level of stress and visibility of SkyTeam are indicated on this journey. This journey serves not only to create an understanding of the customer and the journey, but also as a tool that is used during the ideation process.

The first thing that comes to mind when looking at the journey is the amount of steps within the process that have to be passed by the passenger before arriving at the final destination. This is in line with earlier findings that passengers would like to experience less hassle during the trip (see current and desired values, page 41). Multiple of the interviewees stated that they would like the journey to become one flow of steps.

Another remark can be made with regard to the

level of stress during the journey. Also this theme is mentioned before. As can be seen, the level of stress reaches its highest point on the way to the airport and during the security process, boarding and transferring. From the journey and the other insights it could be concluded that this feeling of stress mainly occurs in situations of uncertainty (on the way to the airport) and lack of control or information (security process and during transfers).

A final remark could be made with regard to the visibility of SkyPriority during the trip. As can be seen, currently SkyPriority is mainly visible during the security process, during the boarding process and during transfers. On board and after arrival SkyPriority is present as well, although to a lesser extend, and during the booking process and on the way to and

from the airport the visibility of the brand is currently low to non-existent. A higher visibility could result in the feeling of a more consistent service, and as a result less confusion and a higher appreciation of the service.

It could be interesting for SkyTeam to offer more consistency throughout the journey, something that is more difficult for airlines. It could step forward during those phases where the customer currently experiences to be 'alone' and not taken care of, such as during the security process, at transfers and after arrival, and reduce the feeling of uncertainty and lack of control. By doing so, it could function as the connector between the different phases, airlines and flights, and work towards the desired seamless experience.

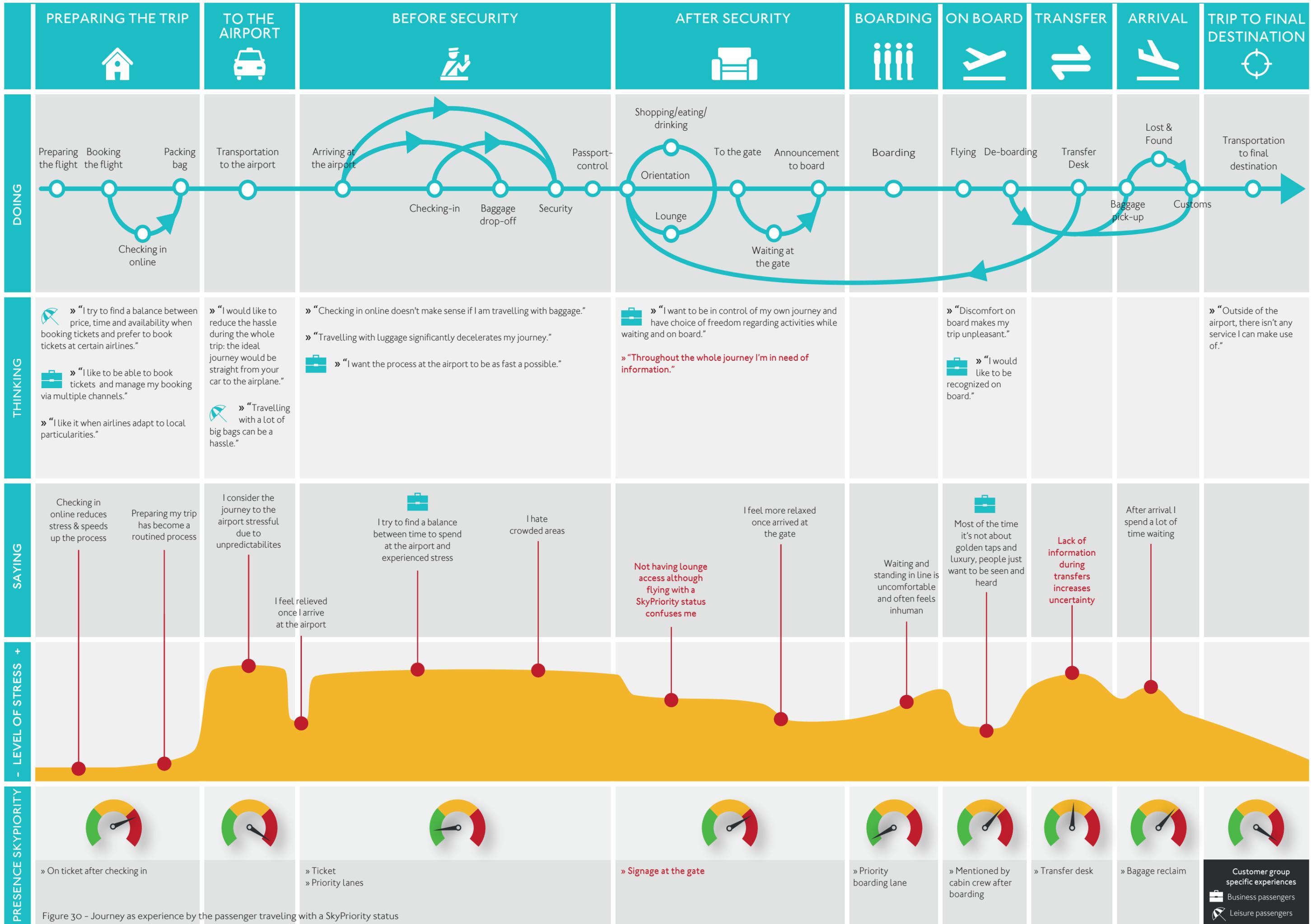


Figure 30 - Journey as experience by the passenger traveling with a SkyPriority status

Customer group specific experiences
 » Business passengers
 » Leisure passengers

OSCAR COLLINS

Age 30
 Occupation Art consultant
 Location London, UK
 Status Single
 Characteristics Ambitious, Energetic, Curious
 Purpose of flying Business
 FFP Flying Blue
 Tier Platinum



"My ideal journey would even be faster and convenient. I would rather skip it, but it's just something I have to do."

BIOGRAPHY

Oscar is a art consultant who's constantly flying around the globe to meet business partners. He always checks in online and travels with hand baggage if possible in order to reduce his time at the airport. While waiting at the airport he goes to the lounge to relax, sleep or sometimes eat something; he rarely works during his trip since he often works with confidential documents. He finds it very important to be able to arrange his whole journey himself via his phone or tablet. As loyal customer he wants to be recognized during the trip.

PERSONALITY



SKYPRIORITY...



GOALS

- To reduce the time he has to spend at the airport
- To be able to use his mobile phone for managing his trip
- To be recognized along the trip

FRUSTRATIONS

- Having to arrive earlier at the airport when traveling with baggage, although already checked-in
- Not receiving the service he deserves

Figure 31 - Business traveler Oscar Collins

KIM LY

Age 46
 Occupation Global Travel Manager
 Location Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam
 Status Married, 2 children
 Characteristics Honest, Loyal, Structured
 Purpose of flying Leisure & business
 FFP Golden Lotus Plus
 Tier Platinum



"My ideal journey would be less complex: ideally it would be one straight line from home to my final destination."

BIOGRAPHY

Kim is a Global Travel Manager that lives in Vietnam. Besides traveling for business, she often travels with her husband and kids to visit family abroad. As in her work, Kim likes to prepare her own trip in detail: at home she already checks which airport-privileges she can make use of. In order to reduce the level of stress and the risk of missing her flight, she always checks in online and arrives at the airport well in advance. She considers the trip to the airport to be most stressful, due to the lack of control. Kim likes to stay well-informed throughout her trip.

PERSONALITY



SKYPRIORITY...



GOALS

- To make her trip as easy and relaxed as possible
- To have a 'holiday feeling' from the moment she leaves home
- Receiving real-time information during the trip

FRUSTRATIONS

- Spending a lot of time waiting
- Lack of information during the trip
- Hassle when traveling with kids and baggage

Figure 32 - Leisure traveler Kim Ly

SUMMARY

The customer research resulted in multiple insights (see Figure 33).

First of all, it appeared that currently customers experience SkyPriority as reducing the hassle within their journey and making the journey faster. However, these two values were also found as ideal values. Also from the qualitative interviews it appeared that SkyPriority customers are in need for the journey to become faster.

From this it could be concluded that currently the values avoiding hassle and saving time are not yet optimally offered by SkyPriority. As mentioned

before (see Chapter 5.1), companies should improve their currently offered elements before attempting to add new ones, if they appear to be lacking behind in offering crucial elements (Almquist et al., 2016).

Other insights were that customers experience a varying stress level during the trip, and that there is a lot of confusion with regard to loyalty program benefits and SkyPriority. Apparently, it is not easy for the customer to make a distinction between all the privileges. This could be due to the fact that these privileges differ per airport and airline, and as a result per trip.



Figure 33 - Recap of the main results from the customer research

INSIGHTS

Developing a new proposition solely based on the values speed and avoid hassle would not result in a proposition that truly distinguishes SkyTeam from its competitors: in the end all airlines and alliances will try to make their customers journey faster and easier. In addition, according to Almquist et al. (2016), these two values are both considered functional. However, turning the service into something more emotional instead of solely functional, could result in more customer loyalty, as found in Chapter 5.1.

Introducing a personality around SkyPriority could therefore be an opportunity for SkyTeam. This personality could help in aligning the expectations with the actual experience (see Chapter 2.2, 3.2 and 5.2), and as a result take away stress (see Chapter 5.2). By doing so, SkyPriority could become the consistent factor during all trips. It could not only distinguish SkyPriority from other services, but also create a more emotional bond between the customer and the service. In addition, introducing such a personality would fit the human character of SkyTeam (see Chapter 4.3).

5.4. SKYPRIORITY PERSONALITY

In Chapter “4.3. Alliances and airlines” it was determined that SkyTeam has a more human and customer-centric focus than its competitors, and that the alliance should try to maintain this focus in the future. One way to emphasize this focus and to distinguish the service from others, would be by creating a personality around SkyPriority, as mentioned in Chapter 5.3. As mentioned, creating a personality around SkyPriority could help in aligning the expectations with the experiences, and as a result taking away stress. In addition, introducing such a personality could enable the service to play a more central role in the customer’s life (Aaker, 1997; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988), and by doing so create a stronger loyalty from the customer towards the SkyTeam airlines (Swaminathan et al., 2008).

In order to define this personality of SkyPriority, a workshop was organized. During this workshop two elements of this personality were defined, namely the interaction qualities (or in this case: characteristics) and interaction vision, which in this case is the type of person that fits this characteristics. This interaction vision defines how the person should be experienced by the customer. Together, they define a character around SkyPriority that is intended to be experienced by the customer. Besides, they serve as both a starting point and evaluation tool during the design process.

Six SkyTeam employees and three students from the Masters Strategic Product Design (see Figure 34) participated in the workshop. The SkyTeam employees had a background in different airlines and are working within the *Marketing & Commercial synergies* or *Airport Services* department. The students were

asked to get a bit more familiar with the services on beforehand by the use of some texts and movies. The complete set-up of the workshop can be seen in Appendix E.

4.2.1. INTERACTION QUALITIES

During the workshop it was determined what qualities SkyPriority currently possesses, and what qualities it should possess during the ideal journey, as if it was a person. Defining these qualities is the first step in creating a personality around SkyPriority. The resulting selection of qualities, including adjustments based on the discussion during the workshop and earlier gained insights, can be seen in Figure 35.

Currently, SkyPriority could be described as a sophisticated man you would like to know. Once you know him, he is easy to approach, will always take care of you and knows what’s best for you. Besides, he is clear and confident, dedicated to what he does and not afraid to use his power.

However, from the session it appeared that currently SkyPriority is too re-active: SkyPriority should be a person that always thinks two steps ahead instead of only having a lot of knowledge. Besides, it should not necessarily be a man, it could be either a woman or a man. It should be a person that is empathic: someone that adjusts his character and behavior to the situation and preferences of the customer. This person not uses his or her own power, but empowers the customer. A final addition to the character is that SkyPriority should be a person that is able to give you a relaxed feeling.

4.2.2. INTERACTION VISION

The interaction qualities describe how SkyPriority should be experienced. In order to make this ‘how

to be experienced’ more tangible, an analogy for SkyPriority as a person was created.

For SkyPriority as it currently is, the group came up with a door man of an exclusive club: a person that is good to know and approachable if you know him. Besides, he is clear, confident, dedicated to his job and above all has knowledge of all the club’s happenings. This person will not act if not really necessary and doesn’t make a difference in treatment.

In an ideal situation SkyPriority should be more like an executive assistant. An example of such a person could be Donna from the series *Suits* (see Figure 36): Donna is extremely perceptive and always adapts to the person or situation in front of her. She thinks two steps ahead, takes care of the things you don’t want to think about and provides you with all the information needed to give you the feeling of being in control.

4.2.3. TRANSLATION TO THE EXPERIENCE

In order to communicate and explain the intended personality, the interaction quality and vision were translated to an ideal situation, which was called the ‘Vision on SkyPriority’. This vision, which can be seen in Figure 37, shows how SkyPriority would contribute to the journey in the ideal world.

INSIGHTS

Although not the main goal of the workshop, the workshop resulted in some interesting additional insights.

The main insight from the workshop is that currently there is no consistent image of SkyPriority. Although the task was to compose one set of characteristics, the group (and the SkyTeam employees in particular) wasn’t able to easily come to an agreement. In some cases there even were contradicting ideas of what SkyPriority should be (e.g. present or distant, masculine or feminine). From this it could be concluded that if there isn’t one clear image of SkyPriority internally, it almost is impossible to communicate SkyPriority in a consistent way to the outside world via the different member airlines.

Another insight from the workshop is that it appeared hard to give one consistent description about the eligibility for SkyPriority and the privileges, due to all the exceptional situations and special interest groups. This appeared from the situation in which the employees tried to explain the different exceptions to the students. Although students do not belong to the target group of SkyTeam, explaining appeared to be difficult. From this it could be concluded that it could be difficult for customers to understand their eligibility and the exceptions without any help.

SUMMARY

It was defined that SkyPriority in the future should be experienced as being on a trip with an executive assistant. In order to facilitate this change, the emphasis during this project is put on making customers experience SkyPriority as a status that is empowering, pro-active, empathic and relaxing.

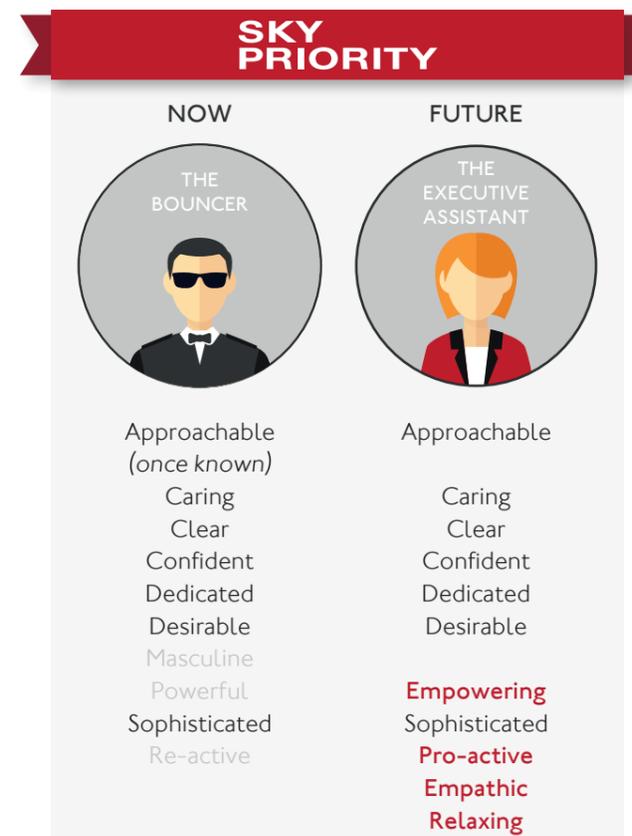


Figure 35 - Qualities of SkyPriority resulting from the workshop



Figure 34 - Personality workshop with SkyTeam employees



5.5. VISION ON SKYPRIORITY THE IDEAL STORY OF OSCAR COLLINS

In the ideal world (see Figure 37), Oscar Collins would be traveling with Sky, the personification of SkyPriority. Sky is his executive assistant that always keeps his preferences in mind and that is there for him if he needs her.

Imagine Oscar traveling from Shanghai to Beijing. Oscar booked a flight with China Eastern, but unfortunately his flight got canceled in the last minute due to bad weather. Luckily he has Sky. Without even asking, Sky checked out the available alternatives and shows him a flight with SkyTeam's China Southern the next day that she could rebook him to, and booked a hotel room to spend the night.

The next day Oscar arrives at the airport exactly on time. Although he isn't familiar with this airline and the airport he's flying from, he exactly knows what to expect because Sky told him everything he needs. She provided him with opportunities to fill his time at the airport, and guides him to the lounge in which he wants to wait. She tells him when he needs to start walking towards the gate, but also when he can stay in the lounge a bit longer because his flight is delayed.

Sky is someone that all Oscars' friends would love to travel with, because it makes traveling so much more relaxed, regardless of the airline he flies or the country he visits.



Figure 36 - Personification of SkyPriority in the ideal situation (Source: USANetwork.com, n.d.)

Figure 37 - Vision of SkyPriority



CHAPTER 06

DEFINE

In this chapter, all valuable insights gained during the internal analysis, external analysis and customer research are collected to give the reader a good overview. Hereafter, the insights are combined with the initial design challenge to define a design brief. This design brief will serve as a starting point for the ideation phase of the project.

6.1. COLLECTING THE INSIGHTS

Before phrasing the design brief, a summary of all gained insights of the multiple analyses is given. The resulting table, that can be seen on the right, includes the key insights and how each of them is included in the development of the proposition.

In the column 'Processed as' it is indicated how the different insights are processed into the final design. Some of the insights will directly be incorporated in the design brief. Others will influence the outcomes of the project in a less direct way by being used as design directions, that help in shaping the creative sessions and brainstorm, or as inspirational source.

	CHAPTER	PAGE	INSIGHT	PROCESSED AS
CHAPTER 02 Understanding SkyTeam	2.1. SkyTeam and its member airlines	11	▶ Need to involve all of the member airlines throughout the project	▶ Continuous challenge throughout project
	2.2. Current portfolio	14	▶ Need to manage customer expectations / improve usability of the loyalty programs and statuses	▶ Design direction
CHAPTER 03 Understanding the industry	3.1. Types of partnerships	19	▶ Need for communication of the added value of traveling with SkyTeam airlines towards the customer	▶ Design direction
	3.2. Case study	21	▶ Need to manage expectations with regard to the privileges in order to improve customer experience	▶ Design direction
CHAPTER 04 An introduction to the context	4.2. Trends within the field	29	▶ Trend of making loyalty programs easier to use	▶ Inspirational source
			▶ Trend of making experiences more seamless	▶ Inspirational source
	4.3. Alliances and airlines	31	▶ Possibilities of offering digital services	▶ Design direction
CHAPTER 05 The customer	5.2. Customer research	39	▶ Importance of all airlines to carry out the same message with regard to SkyPriority	▶ Design brief
			▶ Need for the journey to become faster	▶ Design brief
			▶ Need to reduce stress throughout the journey	▶ Design brief
	5.4. SkyPriority personality	51	▶ Need to reduce confusion with regards to privileges	▶ Design direction
			▶ Need for consistency across the airlines	▶ Design brief
			▶ Need for the service to be experienced as 'traveling with your executive assistant'	▶ Design brief
			▶ Creating a proposition that is empowering, pro-active, relaxing and empathic	▶ Design brief

Table 2 - Overview of the key insights

6.2. DESIGN BRIEF

*“Develop a proposition that improves the **transparency** and creates **consistency** of SkyPriority across the journey, and that contributes to the feeling of traveling with an **executive assistant by being empowering, pro-active, empathic and relaxing**. This proposition should contribute to the ultimate goal of making the journey **faster, more convenient and less stressful**.”*

The design brief is formulated and can be found on the left page. This design brief originates from the design challenge, completed with the most important insights from the executed analyses. Below, it is shown from which chapter the different aspects are derived.

4.2 - Trend analysis, page 29

CONSISTENCY

+

2.2 - Current portfolio, page 14

3.2 - Case Study, page 21

5.4 - SkyPriority Personality, page 51

5.2 - Customer Research, page 39

TRANSPARENCY

+

5.2 - Customer Research, page 39

ACROSS THE
JOURNEY

+

4.3 - Airlines and alliances, page 31

5.4 - SkyPriority Personality, page 51

EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT BY BEING
EMPOWERING, PRO-
ACTIVE, EMPATHIC
AND RELAXING

+

5.2 - Customer Research, page 39

FASTER, MORE
CONVENIENT AND
LESS STRESSFUL



PART B.

THE DESIGN PROPOSITION

The previous part concluded with a design brief. With this design brief the second part, the design phase, is started.

During this phase of the project different creative sessions, brainstorming and iteration sessions are organized to create a variety of ideas. The most fruitful ideas are developed into concept-directions that fit the design brief. After choosing a final direction, one concept is detailed by the use of iteration sessions, meetings with the member airlines, user testing, feedback sessions and evaluations. An overview of the most important activities within this phase, other than having meetings with experts from SkyTeam and the airlines, is given in Figure 38.

In this part of the thesis, the final design proposition for SkyPriority is introduced. This part concludes with a roadmap, an evaluation, recommendations for SkyTeam and a conclusion.

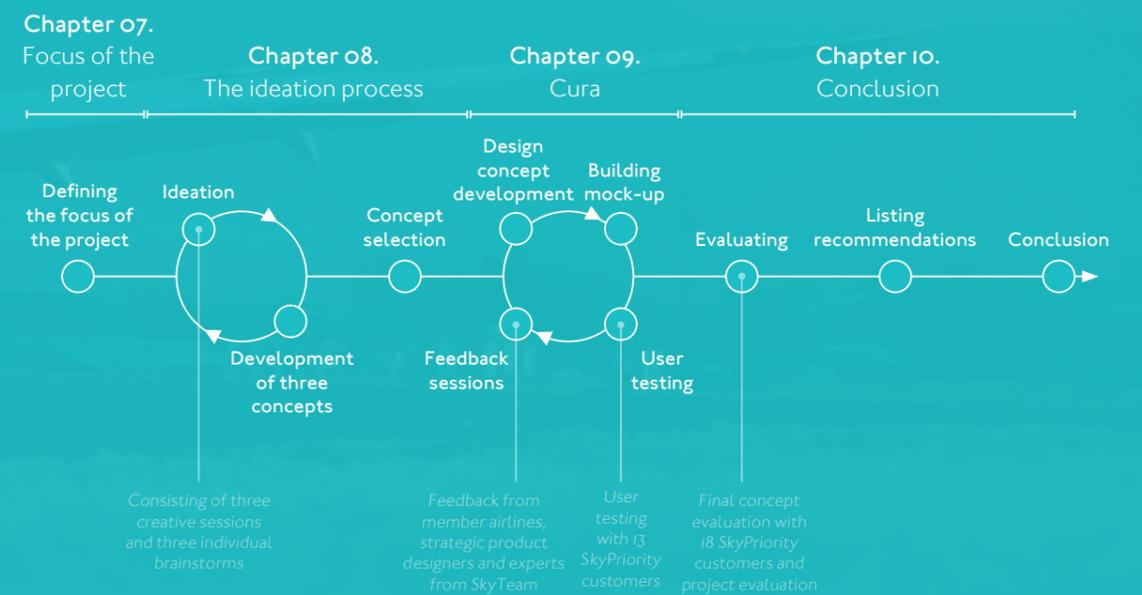


Figure 38 – An overview of iterative process and main activities in Part B of the project



CHAPTER

07

FOCUS OF THE PROJECT

The design brief as presented at the end of the previous part consists of a lot of elements. In this chapter, a roadmap of how to gradually respond to the design brief is introduced. In addition, the focus of the project within the roadmap is determined.

7.1. ROADMAP

Together with SkyTeam and the supervisory team of the Delft University of Technology, an approach for this phase of the project is determined. It was decided to divide the project into two phases. The decisions made are summarized in Figure 39.

PHASE ONE - CONNECTING THE DOTS

In the first phase, the focus is put on making the priority experience of the passenger more consistent, regardless of the airline or airport. By doing so, the services that already exist will be experienced as one seamless experience instead of eight separate services. In addition, the focus is put on creating more transparency for the customer with regard to the different privileges per journey, in order to manage the expectations of the trip. By aligning the customer expectations with the actual experience, customer loyalty towards the airlines and the alliance will be

improved (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Boulding et al., 1993). In addition, the new SkyPriority personality is introduced in this phase. In this phase, the changed characteristics (empathic, pro-active, empowering and relaxing) are emphasized. All of this will contribute to the main goal of reducing the stress that is experienced by the customer during the trip.

PHASE TWO - EXPANDING THE PORTFOLIO

After creating a more consistent and transparent experience for the customer, new services will be developed in the second phase. These services will be added to the current SkyPriority portfolio, that at this moment includes services like Priority check-in, Priority security and Priority baggage handling, and will contribute to making the process easier, faster and more convenient (see Chapter 1.2.).

7.2. FOCUS OF THE PROJECT

Due to time constraints, a scope for the project is determined in consultation with SkyTeam and the supervisory team. It is decided that the focus of the project is put on the first phase, "Connecting the dots". Although the main goal of this phase is creating consistency and transparency across the journey, introducing the personality and reducing the experienced stress, the solution could still contribute

to the goal of making the journey faster and more convenient. It will support and improve the existing services, and by doing so reduce the experienced hassle and increase the speed when traveling.

In addition to this proposition, some recommendations and some first ideas regarding the expansion of the current portfolio are given in this thesis.

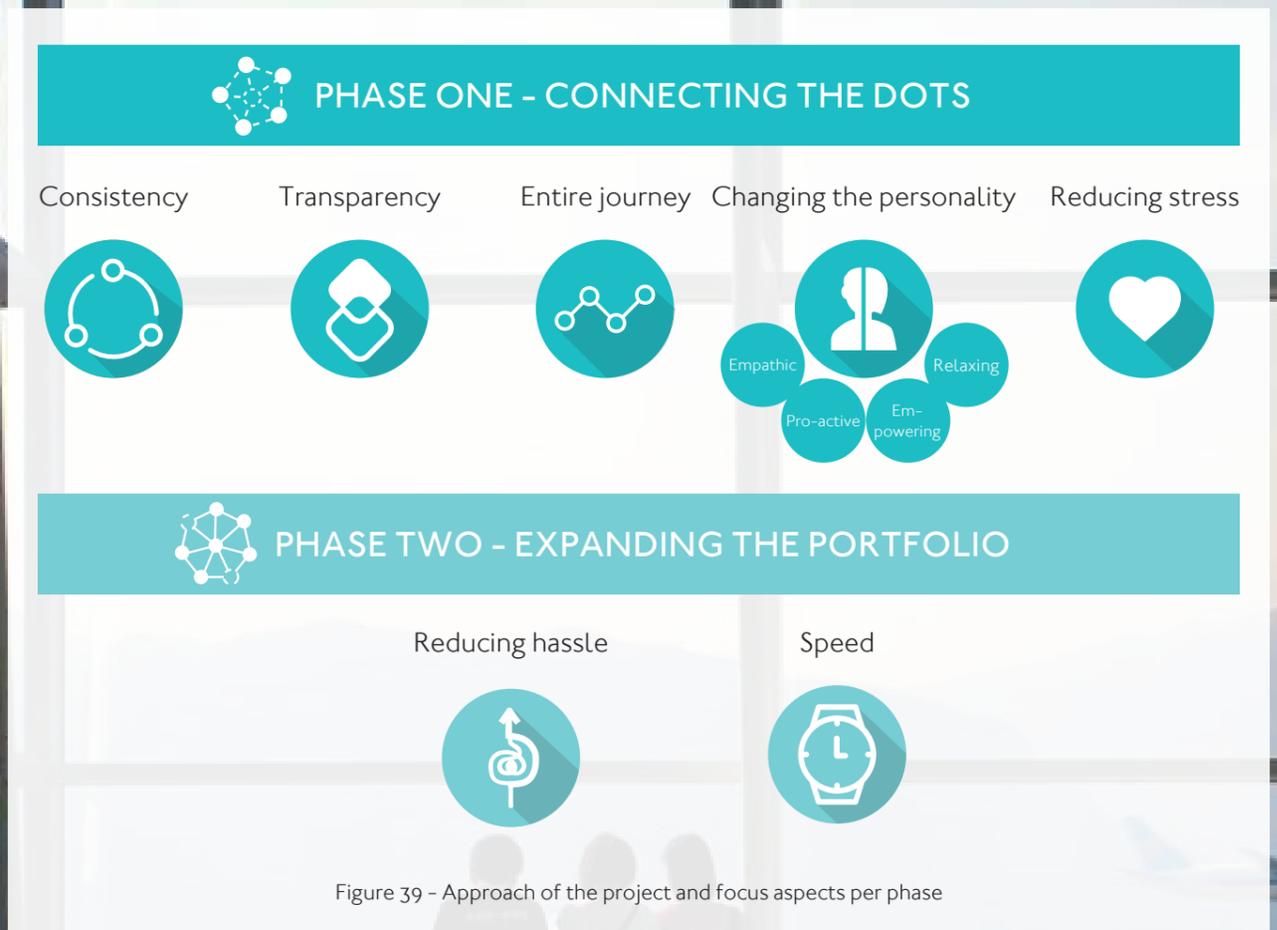


Figure 39 - Approach of the project and focus aspects per phase



CHAPTER 08

THE IDEATION PROCESS

With the focus of the project determined, the ideation process is started. In this chapter, an overview of this ideation process and the resulting concepts is given. The chapter concludes with the selection of a final concept.

8.1. THE IDEATION PROCESS

In order to define possible concept directions, several brainstorming, creative sessions and iteration sessions were organized (see Figure 40). Within these sessions, multiple *how to's* and other brainstorming techniques, based on the earlier gained insights (see page 58), are used to come up with a wide variety of ideas. In order to get feedback on the different ideas in an early stage, meetings with SkyTeam employees took place several times during the ideation process.

The ideas are considered from the perspective of the customer, the alliance, the airlines and technological possibilities. By doing so, not only the desirability, but also the (technological) feasibility is taken into account, which is in line with the general approach of design thinking (Brown, 2008). A selection of ideas is made based on several criteria, that resulted from the earlier presented overview of insights:

- ▶ Manages customer expectations towards privileges
- ▶ Communicates the added value of traveling with SkyTeam airlines

- ▶ Responds to the members wish of offering digital services to the customer
- ▶ Creates consistency with regard to SkyPriority among the airlines
- ▶ Reduces the stress and hassle experienced by the customer
- ▶ Is technologically feasible

All possible concepts are assessed on these criteria by the use of meetings with experts from the Marketing & Commercial Synergies department of SkyTeam, students from the Faculties of Industrial Design Engineering and, for the technological feasibility of the concepts, Electrical Engineering Mathematics and Computer Science.

The methods used, a selection of the results from the ideation process and the final selection of ideas can be seen in Figure 41. This selection of ideas is worked out in to four more detailed concepts, including a scenario. These concepts and scenarios can be found in Appendix F. The final concepts are discussed within the next chapter.



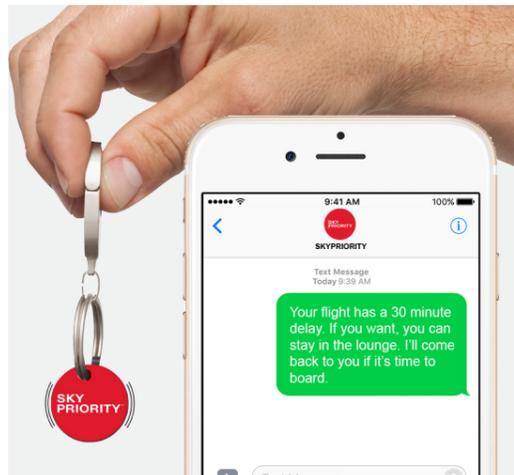
			448 IDEAS LIKE...	DIRECTIONS	FINAL CONCEPTS		
<p>INDIVIDUAL BRAINSTORM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing down existing ideas and elaborating on them ▶ How to... ▶ Offer transparency ▶ Make the trip more pleasant? ▶ Give people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ control over their own time? ▶ Make people feel in control? ▶ Make things easy? ▶ Intuitively influence people ▶ Guide people? ▶ Adapt to the user? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Empty seat finder - App that shows you the crowded places at the airport ▶ Something that picks you up from your current location ▶ One-click wifi ▶ Something that keeps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ you up-to-date ▶ On demand info on your smartphone ▶ Service/product to order coffee while waiting ▶ No baggage drop-off ▶ Green flow (timeslot for queuing) ▶ Being able to read your 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ favorite newspaper while waiting ▶ Lounge access upon request ▶ Something that plans your trip to the airport for you ▶ Suggestions based on past behavior 	<p>SKYPRIORITY LOYALTY CARD</p> 	
<p>CREATIVE SESSION 1</p> <p>2.5 hours 7 participants 2 SPD, 3 Dfi and 2 IPD students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Existing solutions that give the feeling of being accompanied? ▶ Behavior ideal travel buddy to make journey feel like a holiday? ▶ How to's (making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ people aware of what they can't do, relaxed, feeling of being in charge, manage expectations etc.) ▶ Creating concepts by the use of concept-sheets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The travel cup - App that shows you the possibilities, guides you and takes care of you ▶ Priority app - Lets you know your privileges directly after booking and shows you your possibilities per airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ by the use of awesome infographics ▶ Product/service that divides crowds in smaller groups and gives them a sense of specialness ▶ A bag with multiple stars on it that informs you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ about your possibilities and when something special happens by lighting up ▶ SkyPriority bracelet - Smartwatch or bracelet that is linked to your profile and reminds you of appointments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Importance of not having more extra things to carry on during the trip ▶ Link between digital and offline experience 	<p>SKYPRIORITY TAG</p> 
<p>INDIVIDUAL BRAINSTORM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Combining ideas into concept ideas by the use of storyboards ▶ What benefits can ST deliver that can't be delivered by the airlines? ▶ How to link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ online & offline ▶ Research into location based technologies (beacons, GPS, WiFi, NFC, RFID) ▶ Guide people around by the use of LBS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Remote control - available during whole trip and enables you to order coffee/download stuff while waiting ▶ Remote/early baggage drop-off - Drop off points in cities etc/24h in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Alliance-wide rewards in case of discomfort ▶ Boarding buzzer - Reminds you when you should go boarding ▶ Placefinder - Shows where to wait, based on crowdedness, status and cabin service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A digital wall, activated if passing by, shows personalized information ▶ A virtual transfer desk ▶ Video tutorials ▶ Kiosk - Embodiment of SP, that welcomes you after arrival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Product or service to be developed should offer extra benefits over existing apps ▶ Difficulty of changing things on board due to little amount of time 	<p>CHATBOT</p> 
<p>CREATIVE SESSION 2</p> <p>1.5 hours 3 participants 3 SPD students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How to... ▶ Make your time at the airport more enjoyable? ▶ Make people feel special? ▶ Guide people? ▶ Give a personal touch to the trip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Inform people by the use of RFID/NFC? ▶ Give a personal touch to the trip by the use of NFC/RFID? ▶ Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A chatbot in your own language to help you throughout your trip, making use of the languages of the different SkyTeam carriers ▶ Personal notes in case of emergency to avoid the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ feeling of being 'one of the many' ▶ Tracking device for passengers combined with a back-end system for the cabin crew to keep track of what a person has been through, in order to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ offer personalized service ▶ A bracelet that not only reminds you of important events by the use of vibrations, but also allows you to pay in shops at the airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Risk of competing with airlines' apps by the introduction of a new app ▶ Possibilities of a chatbot through a third party channel (done by e.g. Uber and KLM) 	<p>INTEGRATED PERSONAL ASSISTANT</p> 
<p>CREATIVE SESSION 3</p> <p>2.5 hours 2 participants 1 IPD, 1 SPD students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Open brainstorm based on feedback of SkyTeam, previous ideas and technologies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Loyalty card reader (a product with a e-ink screen that gives you up-to-date information of putting your loyalty card in it) ▶ Intelligent personal assistant that makes your schedule work, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ plans your time and guides you ▶ Chip in token to keep track of your location combined with a pillar that displays personal flight information if passing by ▶ Disk that start vibrating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ if a new message is available for you, and that displays text that tells you what ▶ Clip that you can attach to your hand-baggage that can draw your attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Need for tangible touchpoints 	
<p>INDIVIDUAL BRAINSTORM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Combining ideas into concept ideas by the use of storyboards 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Application for smartwatch and smartphone that navigates through the airport, keeps track of time and your schedule ▶ Clip-on SkyPriority tag for your bag with a light to get your attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ and provides you with the right information by the use of NFC ▶ SkyPriority chatbot that provides you with the right information (regardless of the airline), and makes use of a third-party channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ SkyPriority passport cover, key tag or ring with RFID/NFC chip to make you recognized at the airport ▶ Open API for in the apps of the airlines to prevent people from having 'another app' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Possibilities of an open API to solve the problem of having an app to download 	

8.2. THE CONCEPTS



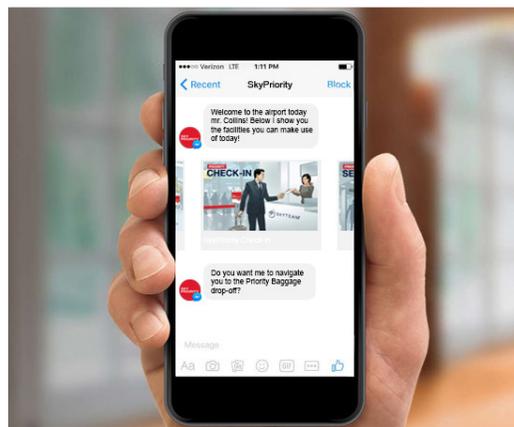
1. SKYPRIORITY LOYALTY CARD

The SkyPriority Loyalty Card is a card that is integrated in the existing airlines' loyalty cards. It contains a RFID chip that recognizes customers before handing over their passport or boarding pass at several Priority touchpoints at the airport, among which the priority check-in, security lanes and lounge. This early recognition creates a feeling of being recognized as frequent traveler. In addition to being recognized, this card enables people to see which privileges they can make use of during their trip, get personalized information and help in case of e.g. delays or canceled flights. This is done by the use of a 'SkyPriority Wall' at the airport. This wall recognizes the customer by the chip in his loyalty card, and automatically shows the right information on a screen.



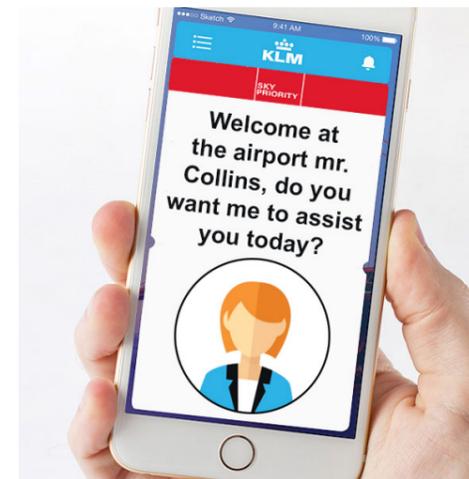
2. SKYPRIORITY TAG

The SkyPriority Tag is an item like a key tag or passport cover that makes that customers are recognized at several Priority touchpoints at the airport. This is done by using an integrated RFID chip. In addition, this item is able to provide customers with real-time information: by vibrating it attracts the customer's attention, and by the use of an integrated NFC chip the information can directly be loaded on a phone, tablet or smartwatch. By doing so, the customer doesn't need to actively check the signs at the airport in order to keep up to date, and he will experience less stress. It should be mentioned that although in this example the chips are integrated in a tag, in the future they could also be integrated in for example jewelry or even the body. This would eliminate the need for an external tag.



3. SKYPRIORITY CHATBOT

The SkyPriority chatbot is a computer program with which the customer can communicate via speech or text in a human-like way. Since it makes use of a third-party channel, like Facebook or Slack, it doesn't require the installation of a new app. By telling it your flight number, the chatbot is able to assist you throughout the trip: it tells you the privileges you can make use of, guides you through the airport, keeps you up-to-date in case of delays and assists you if you have a canceled flight.



4. INTEGRATED PERSONAL ASSISTANT

This personal assistant comes in the form of an app, that can be integrated in the app of the airlines using an open API. An open API is a publicly available *application programming interface* that provides developers with the opportunity to integrate that interface within their own software application or web service. An example of an open API is Uber, that allows people to directly book a taxi when looking up a route via Google Maps. By turning the personal assistant into an open API, there is no need to install an extra app, and the apps of the airlines become more relevant throughout the whole journey of the customer. It welcomes you once you arrive at the airport, guides you through the airport, and takes care of your schedule by e.g. telling you when to walk towards the gate or wait a bit longer because of a delay.

8.3. CONCEPT SELECTION

All discussed concepts fulfill the design brief and interaction vision to some extent. In order to make a decision for one concept that best captures the desired experience, all concepts are evaluated. First of all, the advantages and disadvantages of each of the concepts are identified. Subsequently, it is assessed to what extent the different concepts contribute to the focus points as described in the previous section, namely consistency during the trip, transparency, reduction of stress and the intended character (pro-active, empowering, empathic and relaxed).

It should be mentioned that the presented concepts are not necessarily four different concepts: during the next phase of the project, in which iterations are made and the chosen concept is detailed, different elements of the concepts are combined into one final concept. Elements of the chosen concept that require further improvements or aspects that are found interesting, are optimized during the next phase.

EVALUATION

Taking the comments of SkyTeam and the supervisory team into account, the four concepts are evaluated. The final evaluation is shown in Figure 42. The potential fit with the design brief and the desired experience are decisive in the concept selection.

SELECTION

The main benefit of the first two concepts (the SkyPriority Loyalty Card and the SkyPriority Tag), is that the users will be recognized at the airport. Not only digitally, but also in person, which creates a link between the online and offline world. Both make use of a tangible item or object at the airport in order to provide the customer with the right information.

Such an object could prevent the service from being intangible, and not being linked to the other Priority services at the airport. Another plus is that both are passively present. Being not too present within the journey is important in order to prevent the service from possibly becoming experienced as annoying. Finally, the two concepts make use of a physical object that customer can show to others, in order to be recognized as frequent flyer even more.

A downside of the first two concepts is that they are not really pro-active: the user actively needs to go to the SkyPriority wall or download the message on his phone to get more information. Other downsides are that loyalty cards are already disappearing, and that tangible products need to be distributed. Finally, both concepts require an implementation of beacons and recognition systems at the airport. SkyTeam could choose to implement those over time, but this would reduce the consistency of the product.

As can be seen from the evaluation, concept three and four (respectively the SkyPriority Chatbot and the Integrated Personal Assistant) have the most potential of the four. What both concepts have in common, is that they are present throughout the journey, provide the customer with relevant flight-information and offer transparency with regard to privileges. By doing so, both concepts can make the customer feel more relaxed. In addition, both concepts turn SkyPriority into something that is integrated into the airlines own portfolio, instead of being an extra service offered on top of their portfolios. Offering the service via a third party or the airlines' apps, prevents the service from being experienced as a competitor of the airlines' apps. However, what makes the personal assistant preferable over the SkyPriority Chatbot, is that the

Chatbot needs to be activated by the customer himself. Chatbots aren't able to actively track the location of the user, which makes e.g. an automatic "Welcome at the airport"-message or update based on the location of the customer impossible. In addition, chatbots don't offer the possibility to add extra functionalities to the service without being redirected to another application or website, which makes customers leave the initial app and make the experience less seamless. Offering the assistant through own channels, in this case the airlines' apps, would allow SkyTeam to deliver all desired

functionalities, without being restricted by an external party. Besides, if the airlines' apps let the customer opt-in with location tracking and push-notifications, the personal assistant can actively track the location of the customer and pro-actively send messages.

Taking into account all advantages and disadvantages results in a final choice for concept 4, the integrated personal assistant. However, the advantages of the other concepts are taken into account during the optimization and detailing of the concept.

	1. SKYPRIORITY LOYALTY CARD	2. SKYPRIORITY TAG	3. SKYPRIORITY CHATBOT	4. INTEGRATED PERSONAL ASSISTANT
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Integrated into existing loyalty card: no extra card needed ▶ Tangible item: allows people to show their SkyPriority status ▶ Enables people to be personally recognized at the airport ▶ Passively present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Tangible item: allows people to their SkyPriority status ▶ Enables people to be personally recognized at the airport ▶ Passively present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Connects the different parts of the journey ▶ Makes use of existing channels (e.g. Facebook or Slack) ▶ Increased feeling of talking to a real person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Connects the different parts of the passenger journey, regardless of the airline ▶ Enables airline to be present during whole trip via own app ▶ Increases relevancy of airlines' apps ▶ Creates consistency between airlines' apps
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Currently no NFC/RFID chip integrated in loyalty cards ▶ Loyalty cards are disappearing ▶ Implementation of hardware (e.g. beacons) at the airport needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Extra thing to carry ▶ New production process needed ▶ Distribution of item among passengers ▶ Implementation of hardware at the airport needed (recognition & beacons) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ User needs to start a conversation in order to activate (Less pro-active) ▶ Internet connection needed ▶ Communication app (e.g. Facebook) installation required ▶ No access to current location, unless actively shared by user 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Willingness of airlines to integrate open API in apps ▶ Development of app
Consistency airlines/airports	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
Transparency	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
Present entire journey	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
Reducing stress	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
INTENDED PERSONALITY				
Empowering	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
Pro-active	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
Empathic	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
Relaxing	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●

Figure 42 - Evaluation of the concepts

8.4. QUICK WINS

Next to ideas for the first phase, also a couple of ideas for possible concepts for the second phase arose during the analysis of the customer research, creative sessions and brainstorm. These 'quick wins' are introduced below.

From the analysis and creative sessions and workshops it appeared that especially in the process of baggage drop-off, still a lot of time can be won. From the customer research (see Chapter 5) it appeared that the amount of time that is currently needed for dropping the baggage is not only due to the queues for the baggage drop-off. It appeared that the fact that customers are able to check-in online, but still have to be present at the airport a couple of hours in advance to be able to check-in their baggage causes a lot of frustration. Based on these insight, two ideas were generated.

SKYPRIORITY REMOTE BAGGAGE DROP-OFF
The first idea is to create a baggage drop-off point within city centers or other points where a lot of SkyPriority passengers pass by. At these points, baggage can be checked-in from a certain amount of hours in advance, which allows the customer to spend another day in meetings or in the city center, without having to be present at the airport several hours in advance.

Although this idea isn't completely new, it could be a useful addition to the current SkyPriority portfolio. An example of a company that already offers such a service is Abu Dhabi International Airport, that has several remote baggage drop-offs in hotel lobbies. In the case of SkyTeam, the first drop-off points could be introduced on places near airports where the highest number SkyPriority customers with checked baggage depart, and the number of points could be expanded over time.

SKYPRIORITY EARLY BAGGAGE DROP-OFF
The second idea is enabling SkyPriority customer to check their baggage in earlier than others. By doing so, these customers can reduce the amount of time they have to spend at the airport later that day, and spend that time more efficient or pleasant.

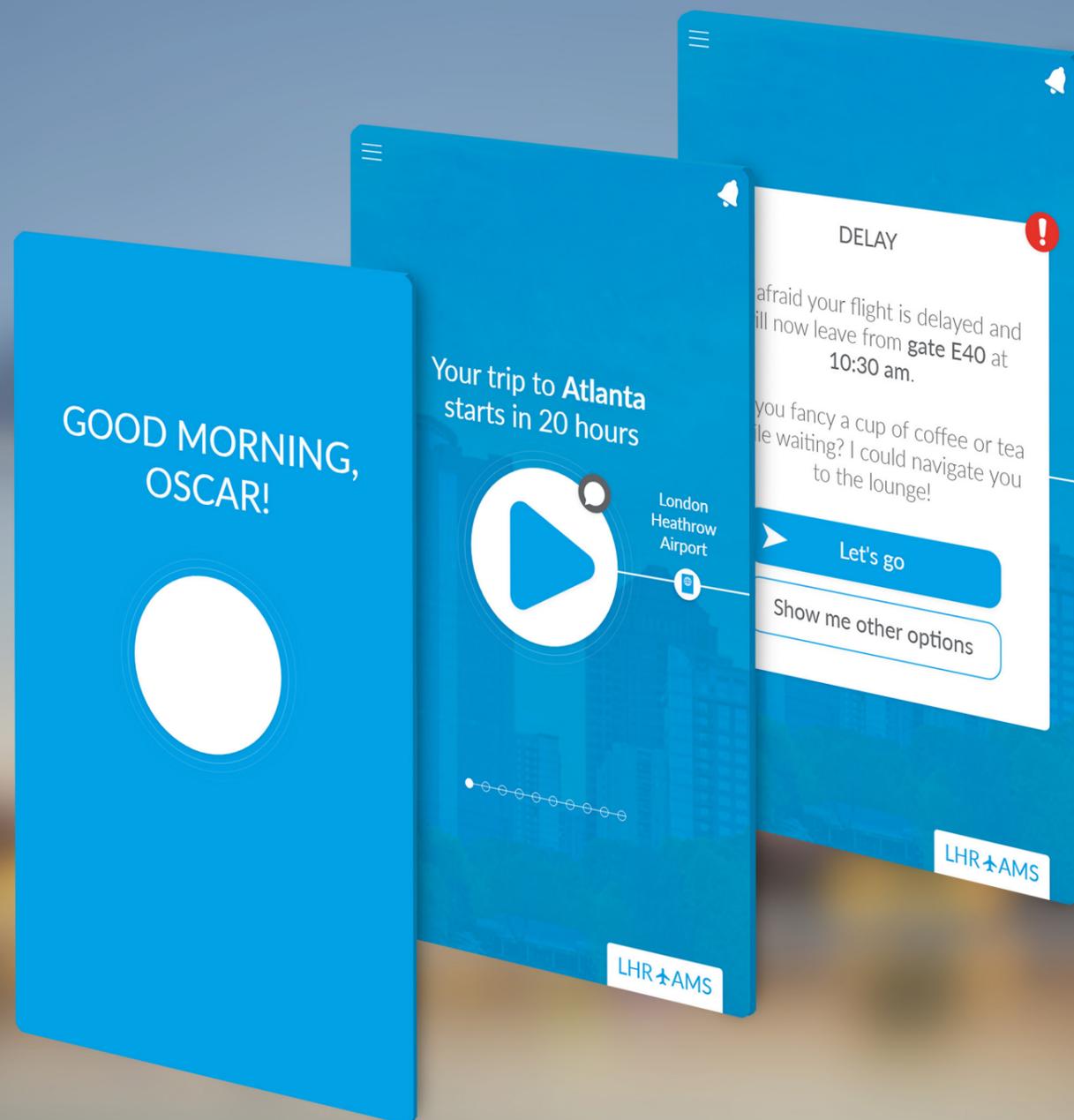
Again, this idea isn't completely new: Swiss International Air Lines already offers its customers to drop-off their baggage from 23 hours before their flight. However, it could be a useful addition to the current SkyPriority portfolio. Also this service could be implemented in stages, starting with the airports with the most SkyPriority passengers traveling with checked-in baggage.

INSIGHTS

Based on the insights resulting from the meetings with SkyTeam, the supervisory team and the evaluation of the concepts, a list with things to consider during the next phase is compiled:

- ▶ Try to find a balance between being pro-active, and being too present
- ▶ Try to create a link between the real-world and the digital world
- ▶ Try to find a way to make people feel being recognized at the airport

CHAPTER 09



CURA

In the last part of this project, the final iterations on the concept for an integrated personal assistant are created. During this phase, the initial concept is presented and evaluated with all 20 members airlines to receive feedback in an early stage of the development process. The further development of the concept was divided into three closely related elements: the design, defining the functionalities and, in order to fully convey the intended personality, determining the wording. To gain inspiration and define the parameters of these elements, a study is done on other applications and products that show a certain personality (see Appendix G). Also the earlier defined personality is taken into account in defining these parameters. The resulting parameters are not only used during the development and optimization of the concept, but also to evaluate the final concept on having the desired personality. To make fast iterations with a user-centered mindset, feedback loops are used throughout the whole development phase to test all elements. Gained insights and feedback are directly used to improve the concept and prototypes, or as recommendations for further improvements. In appendix G, this iterative process and the main insights are explained in more detail. Figure 43 shows this part of the process, as shown at the beginning of Part B, in more detail. In this chapter, the final design of the integrated personal assistant called 'Cura' is presented.

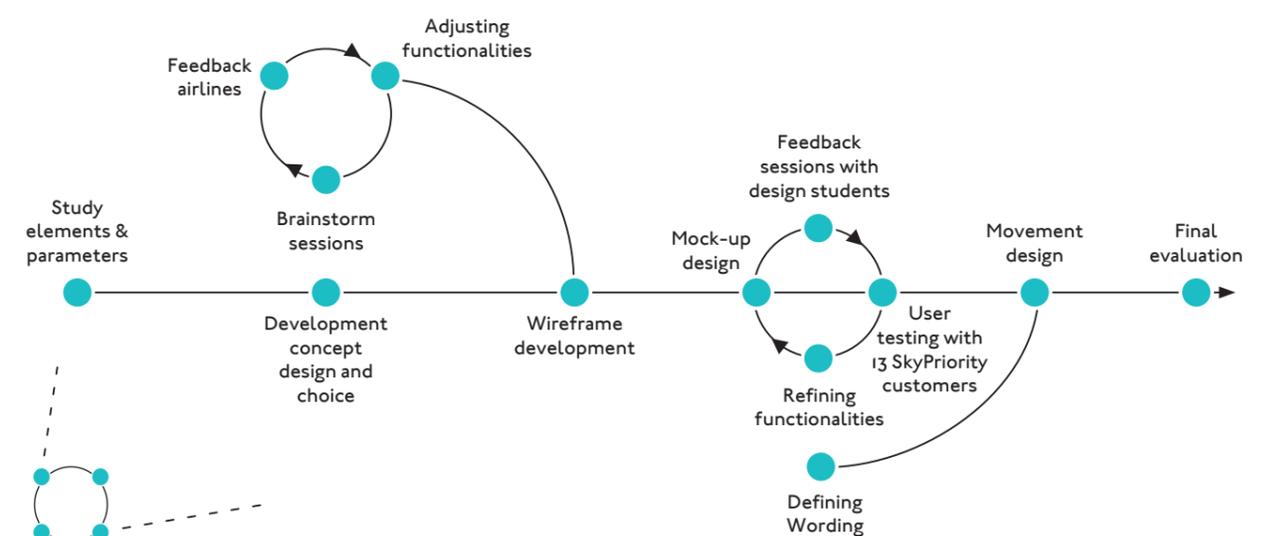


Figure 43 - Process of developing the proposition in detail

9.1. FEEDBACK FROM THE MEMBER AIRLINES

In order to get feedback on the concept in an early stage, the concept presented to the member airlines during the Customer Experience and SkyPriority Meeting (CE-SP Meeting) in Shanghai in July 2017 (see Figure 44). During these type of meetings, representatives from all 20 member airlines evaluate the progress made with regard to alliance-wide customer experience matters and SkyPriority and discuss new initiatives, as was earlier explained in Chapter 2.1.

After the presentation, all member airlines were asked to share their input, either by mail or in person, with the aid of four questions:

- ▶ What would the customer app of your wildest dreams look like?
- ▶ Which functionalities should your “Executive Assistant” offer?
- ▶ What challenges should be overcome within the concept as presented?
- ▶ What are you already doing in relation to this proposition:
 - » What kind of functionalities do you already offer within your app?
 - » Are you able to send push-notifications to the user?
 - » Do you have access the location to the user?

MAIN INSIGHTS

All feedback was collected, analyzed and used in detailing the concept. The main insights are discussed below.

In general, the airlines were really enthusiastic about the concept. In addition, some of them saw potential in a target group broader than just SkyPriority.

According to the airlines the ideal customer app



“I think this proposition would be really nice not only for SkyPriority customers, but for SkyTeam customers in general, since there is still so much confusion with regard to the privileges.”

– SkyPriority Manager KLM

appeared to be intuitive, fast, innovative and friendly. As CI and AM mentioned, the app should help passengers in enjoying every moment of the trip.

Regarding the functionalities it could be concluded that the app should not only deliver basic information about SkyTeam, the carriers and the airports, but also more personalized flight information. The airlines also saw potential in offering customers upgrades through the app. Furthermore, AF mentioned that they would like to be able to integrate airline specific functionalities, such as baggage and unaccompanied minor tracking. VN and SV mentioned the possibility of integrating the SkyPriority Audit Program in the application. Finally, CI, AZ and VN stated to see the possibilities of offering customers promotions from for example shops at the airport in order to improve the customer experience.

Challenges were mainly seen in connectivity timing at the airport, which is necessary to send information about connecting flights (KQ, AM). Furthermore, AF mentioned the interface between the different tools as challenging, and SV shared their concerns with regard to user training.

All feedback is taken into account while developing the concept into a final design proposition. A complete overview of all feedback can be seen in Appendix G.1.

9.2. THE DESIGN SOLUTION

Cura is a digital personal assistant that aims to create consistency between journeys with multiple airlines and reduce the experienced stress and hassle when traveling. She comes in the form of a functionality that is integrated in the airlines' own mobile application. Cura automatically collects upcoming flight-information from the e-mail inbox of the user and provides him with the right information at the right time. This information will be updated throughout the complete journey. The assistant also manages the expectations of the customer by showing the privileges he can use during the trip, taking into account the cabin service, FFP status and the airports he is visiting. By doing so

it aligns the customer's expectations of the trip with the actual experience (see Chapter 5.4). Besides, the app can be used regardless of the airline the customer is flying with, as long as it is a SkyTeam airline. This makes that the customer doesn't have to download an extra app, but can keep using the app of his most frequently used airline. This not only increases the relevance of the apps of the 20 airlines in case of traveling with multiple airlines, but also makes the different journeys of the customer more consistent. In this chapter, an overview and detailed interaction scenario is given, starting with the customer being at home the day before the flight.

The final mock-up of Cura can be opened by the use of the QR code in Figure 45. To read the QR code the installation of a QR code reader, that can be download from the Apple or Google Play store for free, is required. By using this mock-up, the reader sees the world through the eyes of Oscar Collins, who is traveling business class from London to Atlanta on the 4th of September 2017. Unfortunately he has a lot of setbacks during his trip: his KLM-flight to Amsterdam is delayed, and once in Amsterdam he is rebooked to the next day due to a canceled flight.

The mock-up is created to give the reader an idea of how the app works. The given suggestions are adjusted to the preferences and past behavior of Oscar: when using the app for the first time, he indicated that his favourite way of spending time at the airport is going somewhere to eat or do some work. By clicking on “log-in”, the reader is directed directly to the main screen. By clicking sign-up, the app leads him to the guided tour and personalized questions.

In addition, the app detected that Oscar always goes to a restaurant or café in the morning. Since Oscar arrives at London Heathrow in the morning, the app will suggest Oscar to have breakfast at a certain restaurant when he arrives. Once at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, Cura suggests to do some work in the lounge, since he often does that. When his flight suddenly got canceled, she looks for fun activities nearby the airport to spend time, and suggests him to go to the Rijksmuseum. Cura also noticed that Oscar quite often flew business class in the past, and therefore does him an offer to upgrade to business class last minute, which he decides to take.

It should be mentioned that the real app will enable the user to swipe through the timeline, but due to the software with which the mock-up was created, currently clicking is required. Furthermore, all messages per stage are shown directly after each other, since receiving messages separately, based on location and time, is not possible with the mock-up.



Figure 45 - QR code to test Cura



Figure 44 - Presentation during the CE-SP Meeting in Shanghai

9.3. CURA IN AN OVERVIEW

White label design: color palette changes according to the corporate colors of the airline.

Flight details are automatically collected from the mailbox of the customer and displayed in the main screen of the app. Flights can also be added manually.

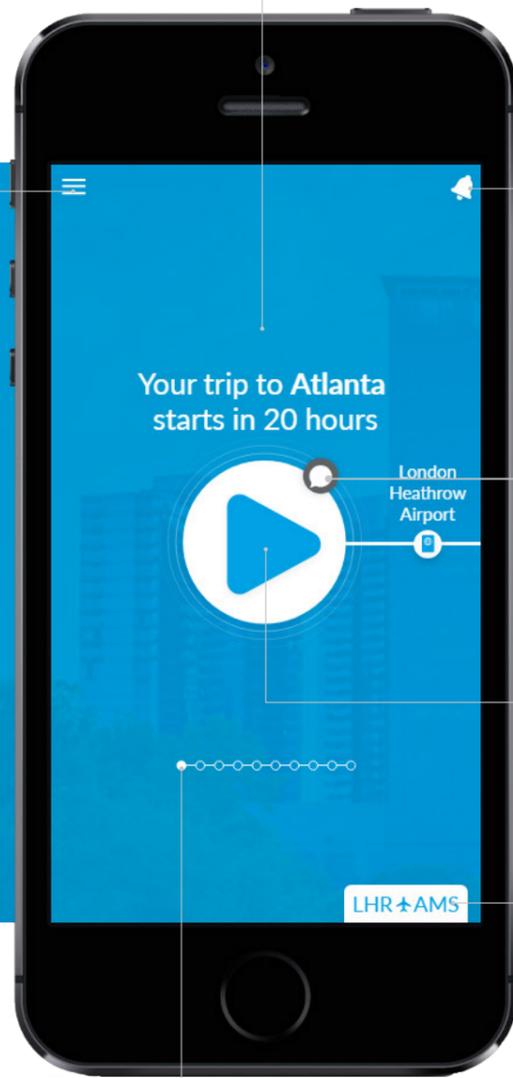
By default, the current phase within the customer's journey is shown, but seeing upcoming and previous stages is possible by swiping left and right.

The background image changes according to the final destination of the customer.

Quick access to an overview of previously given important notifications.

CURA
 Since the app should be experienced as an assistant that takes care of you at all times, it was named after the divine figure 'Cura', whose name means "Care" in Latin. This name is chosen because it fits the relaxing and care taking character of the assistant.

Menu to manually add and edit trips, book upgrades, get in contact with the right person in case of emergency, easily connect to available WiFi networks, access downloadable magazines, get a guided tour through the app and, if the customer is a SkyPriority Audit Panel Member, do an audit.



Navigation bar for an indication of the progress of the user's current journey.

'Nice to know' messages give information that make the customer's journey more pleasant. 'Important' messages are accompanied by an exclamation mark-icon and a push notification.



Access to the most important information per stage of the journey, e.g. in-flight details during the flight and privileges at arrival at the airport.

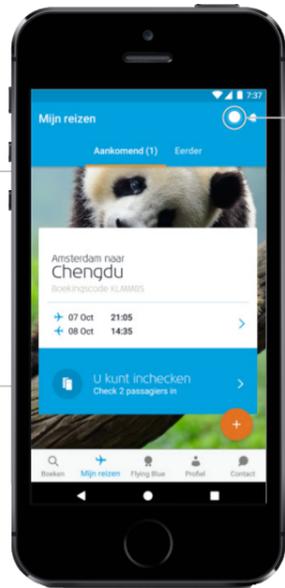
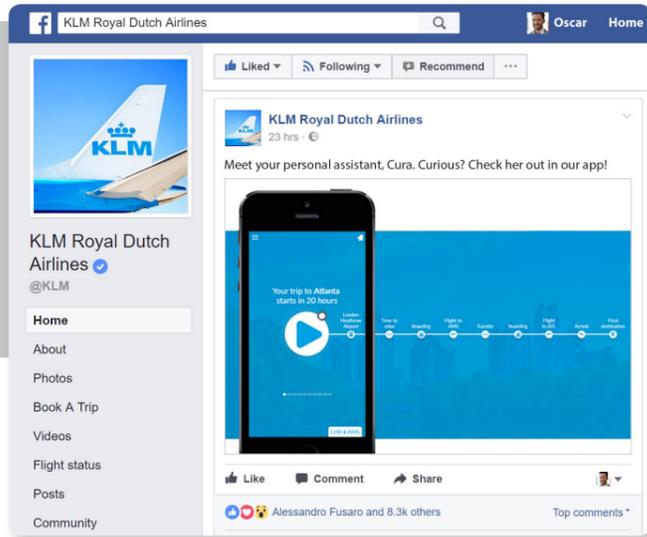
Access to the most important flight information and boarding pass from all screens in one swipe.

9.4. OSCAR COLLINS TRAVELING WITH CURA

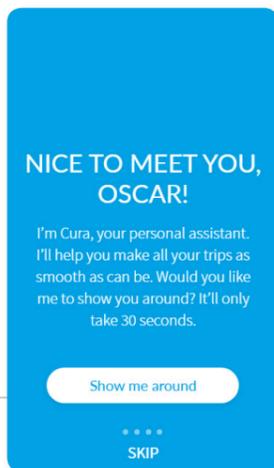


FIRST TIME USAGE

Next to adding Cura to the existing airlines' applications, she will be promoted within SkyTeam lounges and via the social media channels of the airlines. By doing so, awareness for Cura will be created.



◀ Oscar finds Cura in the upper right corner of the homescreen of the KLM app, the app he already frequently uses.



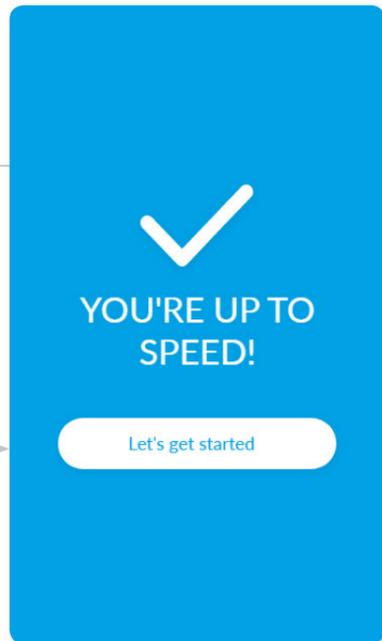
◀ In a quick guided tour, Cura shows Oscar everything he needs to know about the app.

▶ Afterwards, she asks him if he wants to tell her a bit more about himself, so she can assist him even better.

I'd love to get to know you a little better so I can assist you more effectively. Would you like to tell me a bit more about yourself? It'll only take 30 seconds.

- Of course
- No, thanks

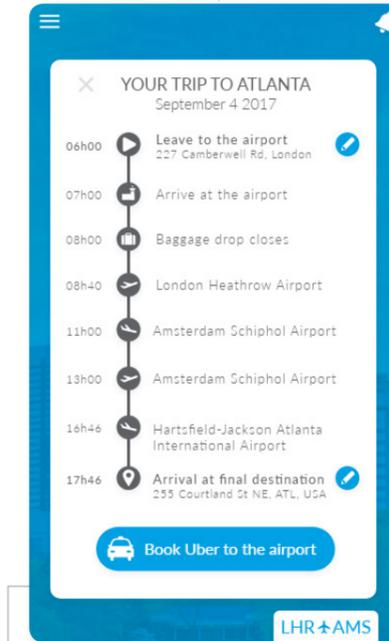
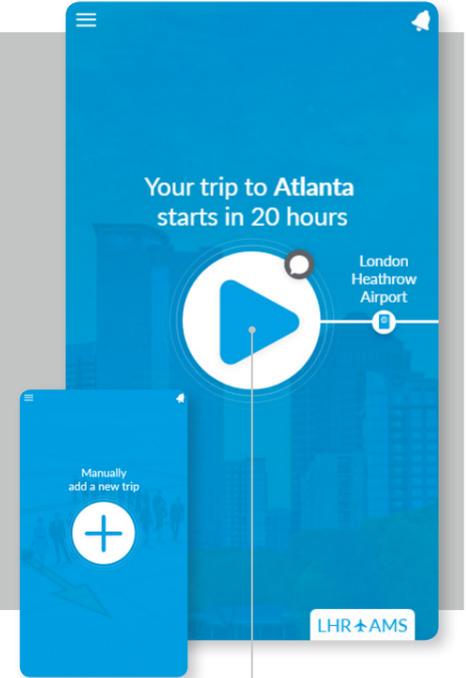
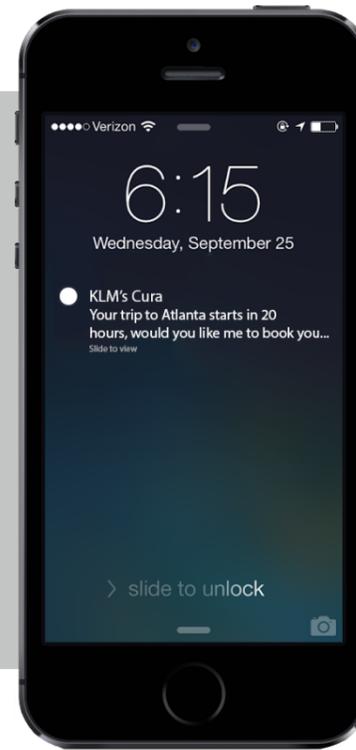
▼ After going through the guided tour and answering 4 questions, which can both be skipped and opened later on, Oscar is up to speed and ready to be assisted by Cura.



GOING ON A TRIP

▶ 20 hours before his flight from London Heathrow to Atlanta via Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, Oscar receives a push-message that reminds him of his upcoming trip. If he didn't check-in yet, the message would also contain a reminder to do so. When Oscar opens the app, he sees an overview of his upcoming trip and is able to check his boarding pass.

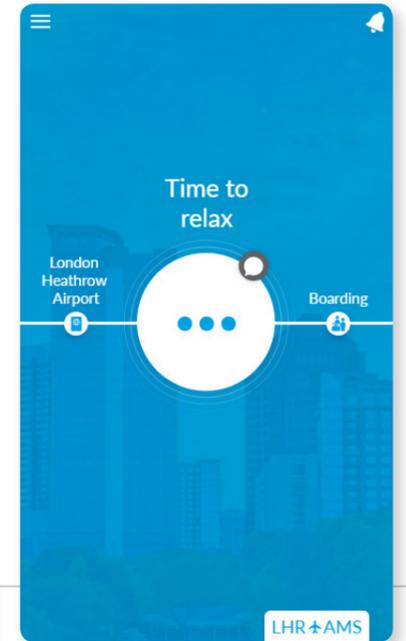
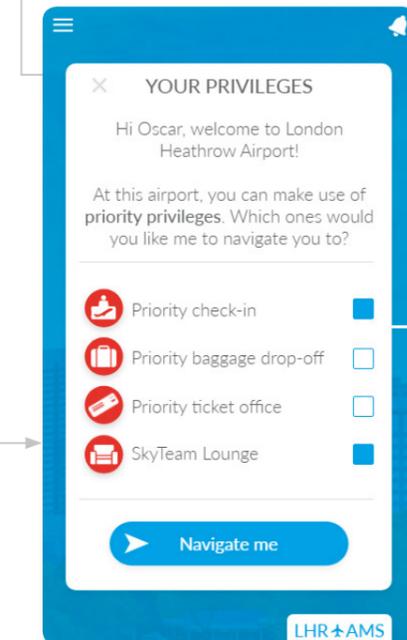
If he would not have booked a flight yet and opened Cura, he would see a screen that just welcomes him and enables him to manually add a new flight.



▲ In his flight overview Oscar selects his current location as departure address and enters the address of his hotel after arrival. Cura calculates the time at which he has to leave home, taking into account his preferred way of traveling to the airport and traffic. Cura also enables him to book an Uber that will pick him up on time.

PRIVILEGES

▼ Once at the airport, Cura shows Oscar the SkyPriority privileges he can make use of that day, and asks him if he wants to be navigated from land- to air-side, so that he has to spend as little time as possible on the process.



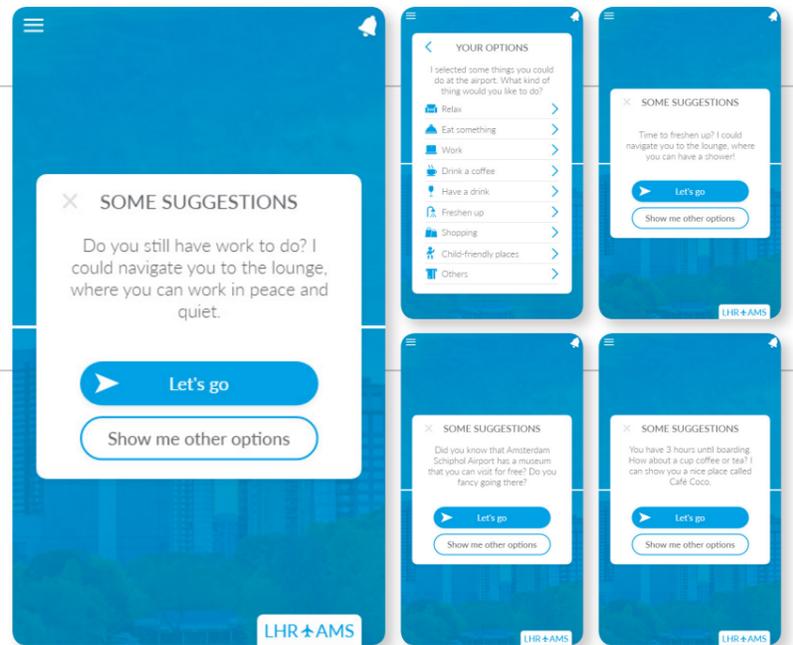
▲ After going through all necessities, the main screen automatically moves to the next stage of the journey, based on Oscar's location. This time Cura doesn't pro-actively send Oscar a push message, but shows him that she has information that is 'nice to know', by the use of the icon with the text cloud.

OVERVIEW

MESSAGES

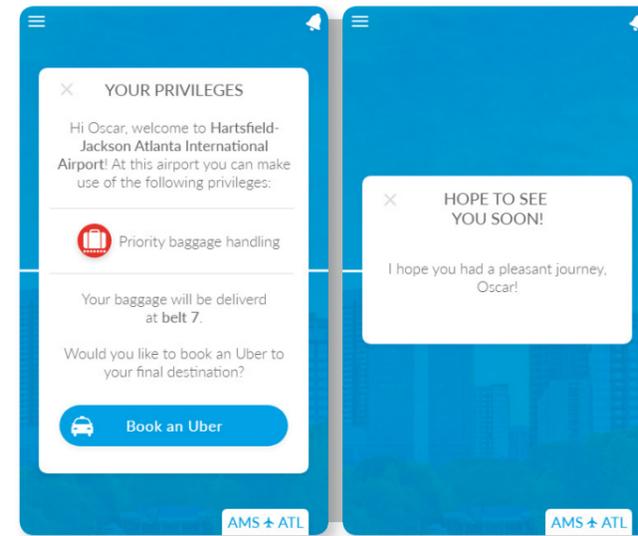
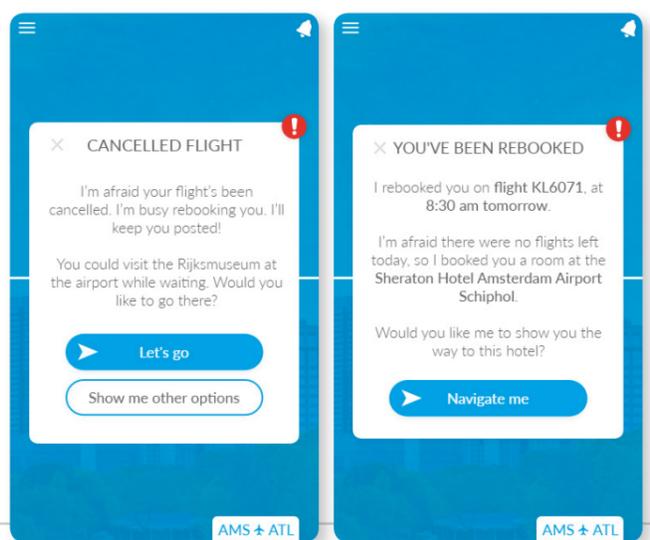
SUGGESTIONS

▶ When Oscar opens up the message, Cura gives a suggestion on how to spend his time. This suggestion is based on the answers on the first-timer questions, combined with his past behavior, facilities at the airport and the time of the day.



NOTIFICATIONS

◀ In case of delays, canceled flights or rebookings, Oscar receives a push notification to make him aware of the situation, and if there are updates, he receives another message. By doing so, Cura gives Oscar the feeling of being in control of his own time and journey, and having access to all information he needs. In case something is really wrong, Oscar can always see who to contact through the 'Need help?'-button in the menu.

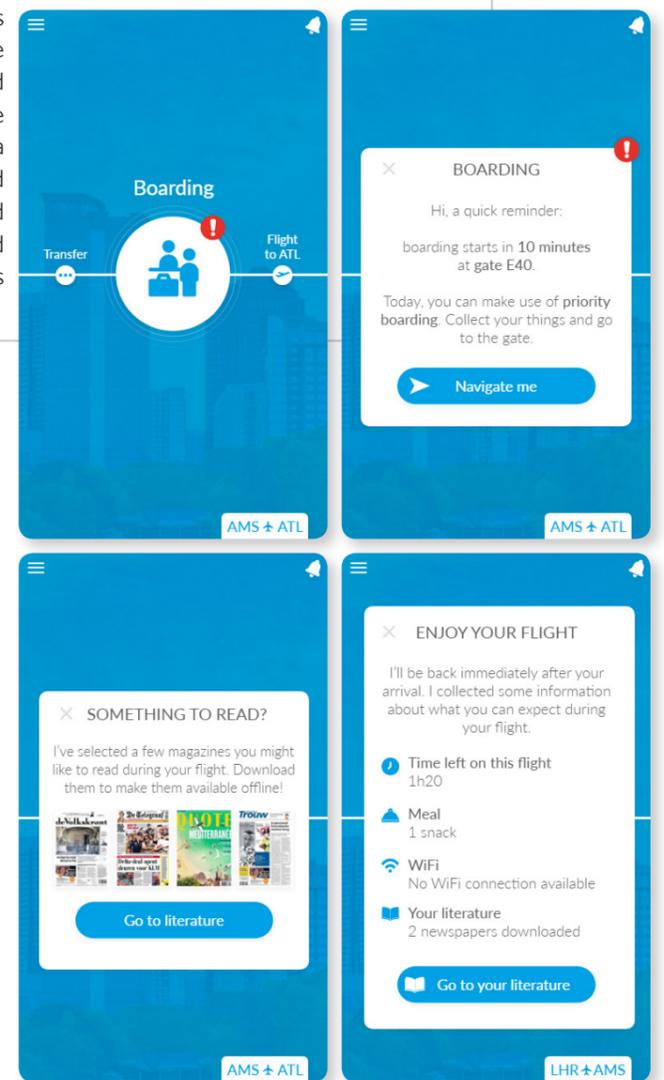


▶ Upon arrival in Atlanta, Oscar receives a push-message that welcomes him at the airport, tells him which privileges he can make use of at the airport and, in case he has visited the baggage drop-off at London Heathrow, the belt at which his baggage will be delivered. In addition, Oscar has the possibility to quickly order an Uber to his final destination without having to look up the address of the hotel again, since he entered the address before leaving home. Uber was chosen since this service doesn't require the user to make an extra phone call or leave the app, and because the fit with Cura's goal of making the journey as hassle free as possible. Once home (or if no final destination is added: when leaving the airport), Oscar receives a good bye message.

UPON ARRIVAL

BOARDING

▶ When it's almost time for boarding, Oscar receives a push-notification that reminds him to go to the gate, taking into account his current location and departure gate. Cura also tells him he can make use of Priority Boarding that day. In this stage Cura provides him with information about the flight and the opportunity to download something to read while being offline too. Downloading magazines and newspapers is also possible via the menu 24 hours before the flight.



UPGRADES

▲ Based on his past bookings, Cura can also pro-actively offer Oscar upgrades he might possibly like.

9.5. THE DETAILS

This section of the report elaborates on the concept details of Cura. For the technological detailing of the concept, the expertise of the Information Technology Department of SkyTeam (see Chapter 2.1) is used. The details will help in communicating the concept internally and to the member airlines.

CONVEYING THE PERSONALITY

Like previously noted, a study was done on other applications and products that show a certain personality to gain inspiration on how to make the assistant feel like being alive. In this study, three elements were found to be important in the development of this personal assistant: functionalities, design and wording. All elements in turn consist of multiple parameters. For this project, these parameters were complemented with the characteristics of the personality as defined earlier, in Chapter 5 of the thesis. In total, 19 parameters to focus on were determined (see Appendix G). The three elements and most important parameters are discussed below.

DESIGN

The final design is the result of several brainstorming sessions, mock-up building, testing with both SkyPriority customers and students and iteration rounds (see Appendix G).

As mentioned earlier, it is chosen to turn Cura into a 'white label' functionality. This means that the color palette of the app will change depending on the app in which it is integrated. By doing so, every airline has their 'own' Cura (see Figure 47). Next to this white label, seven parameters are taken into account for the design of Cura (see Appendix G).

Two of these parameters are considered of high importance, since they also emerged during the feedback sessions with the airlines (see Chapter 9.1.) These two parameters are *intuitively* and *speed*. By designing the main screen of the application as a timeline through which customers can swipe back and forth, gestures that are considered to be well-known, controlling the app is made intuitive. Opening and closing the boarding pass can be done by swiping up and down. For users that are less familiar with these

gestures or are less willing to discover functionalities themselves, a 30-second guided tour through the app is suggested when opening the app for the first time. Speed was incorporated by enabling the user to access all important information, such as the boarding pass and new and old messages, within one click or swipe at all stages.

This one-click access also contributes to one of the other parameters, which is *relaxing*. This parameter is important considering the high amount of stress that customers appeared to experience at the airport. A relaxed feeling is created by only displaying the most important information and by keeping the app as clean as possible.

Another parameter was *creating a clear touchpoint*. This was done by giving Cura a face: a white circle that can be seen throughout the whole app. To give the user the feeling of interacting with a person and to make this face less static, movement is added. These movements can be seen in several situations. First of all, the customer is always welcomed by a pulsing circle when opening up the app. This pulsation, that is inspired by a heartbeat, creates the feeling of interacting with something that is alive. This pulsation is also shown for all new messages. In addition the most important messages will be accompanied by a push-notification. Another moment in which movement is of importance, is while progressing to the next stage (e.g. after arriving the airport). While moving to the next stage the white circle that represents Cura becomes smaller and moves accordingly, after which it becomes bigger again. By doing so, moving through the stages becomes a flow instead of an abrupt transition.



Figure 46 - QR code to access moving materials

Although not possible to show within the mock-up, several animations are created in order to show these movements. These animations can be seen by scanning the QR code in Figure 46.

FUNCTIONALITIES

To determine the final set of functionalities, four parameters are taken into account, namely *pro-active*, *empathic*, *relaxing* and *empowering*. The final set of functionalities is the result of several rounds of brainstorming, alternated with feedback from the member airlines and SkyPriority customers (see Appendix G).

Being *pro-active* is incorporated by providing the customer with the information he or she needs, without having to ask for it. For example by sending push-notifications in the case of disruptions (that within this concept include cancellations, delays, rebookings and missed flights), but also by showing all privileges and facilities the customer can make use of right after arrival at the airport. Another *pro-active* feature that isn't discussed yet, is that Cura enables the customer to be recognized at the SkyTeam lounge. When the customer is within a 20 meter range of the lounge, Cura automatically sends a notification to the lounge staff of the approaching customer (see Figure 48). This enables them to welcome the customer by name, increases the feeling of being recognized as a frequent traveler, and creates a link between the real-world and the digital world (see Chapter 8.4). This *pro-active* behavior also makes Cura *empowering* and *relaxed*: she will provide the customer with all possibilities and information needed to make him feel like being in control of his own time.

Another important parameter to make Cura experienced as being a personal assistant is being *empathic*. This empathy is not only processed in the app by always calling the user by his name and informing him in case of unusual situations, but also by making the suggestions while waiting more personal. When opening up the app for the first time, the user is asked to answer four questions to bring Cura up to speed as soon as possible. These questions are related to check-in and checked-

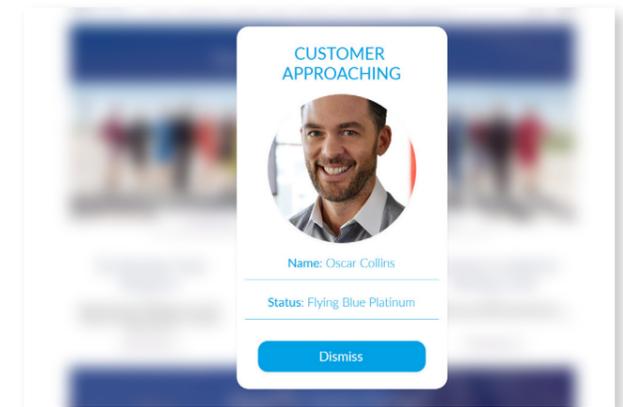
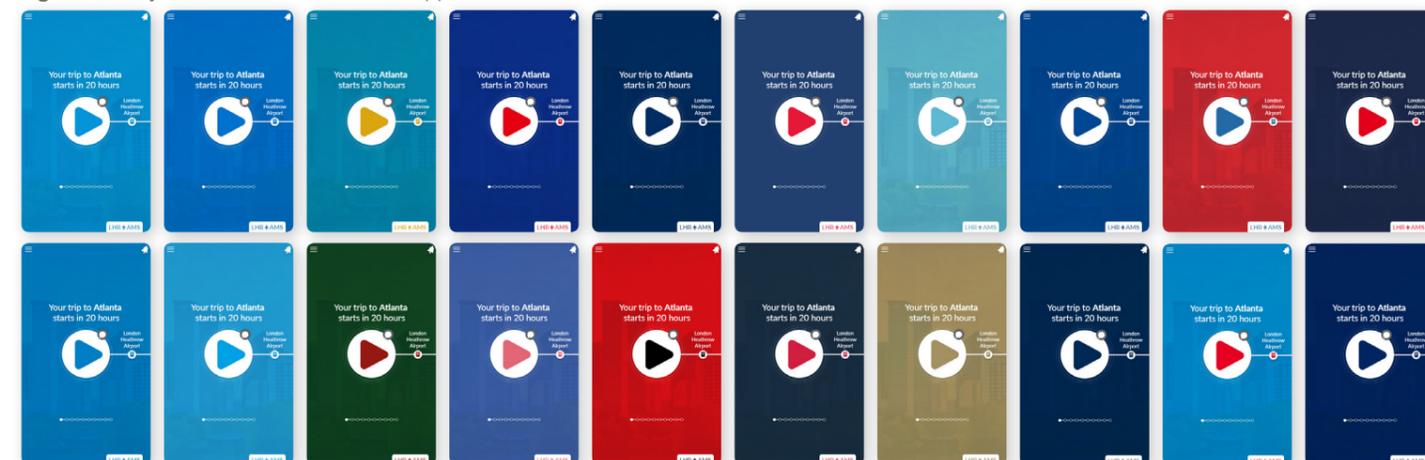


Figure 48 - Warning for lounge staff in case of an approaching customer

baggage behavior, preferred way to travel to the airport, favorite way of spending time waiting and preferred type of lecture. The user can always skip these questions and, if preferred, answer them later on via the menu. Based on the answers and a flowchart, that takes into account past behavior and time of the day, the type of suggestion is determined. Also the familiarity at a certain airport is taken into account. If the user visits a certain airport for the third time in one month time, Cura for example asks: "It looks like you know this airport quite well. Would you like me to alert you in special circumstances only?". By doing so the app is able to adapt its behavior to the user as good as possible. The complete suggestion flowchart can be found in Appendix H.

As appeared from the scenario, Cura currently offers its users several functionalities, which include: reminders and updates, airport navigation, suggestions, an overview of privileges, flight details and access to magazines. As mentioned, this set of functionalities is determined by the use of the insights from customer research, multiple brainstorming sessions, input from the airlines and user testing with SkyPriority customers. However, in the future this set of functionalities could be expanded with both general (e.g. other forms of transportation to-and from the airport, car rental services, hotel bookings, etc.) and airline specific services (e.g. KLM's Unaccompanied Minor Service or baggage tracking), in order to make Cura as relevant as possible throughout the whole journey.

Figure 47 - Layout for Cura in all airlines' apps



By developing the service as a piece of code that can be integrated in the code of the airlines' applications, instead of as an open API as mentioned in Chapter 8.2, it would be possible to adjust the application to the individual preferences of the airlines.

WORDING

Also the text within the app has a big influence on the experienced character of Cura. Therefore, wording was considered an important factor within the final design. Also parameters on which to focus with regard to the wording of the messages are determined by the use of the benchmark (see Appendix G) and defined personality (see Chapter 5.4). These parameters are: *empowering, caring, quirky, pro-active, empathic, dedicated, confident and approachable*. With these parameters in mind, the messages within the application are phrased, and later on rephrased and fine-tuned together with two copywriters. Both of whom had a lot of experience in reflecting personalities in messages and conveying the right messages for brands. The results of these iterations can be seen in the mock-up (see page 80) and in the overview of the iterations in Appendix G.

PARTNERSHIPS

As appears from the scenario, several partnerships and collaborations are required for the well-functioning of the application.

Most important is a partnership with Google Maps, to facilitate indoor navigation at airports and to give customers an estimated prediction of the travel time to the airport, taking into account the traffic. Google predicts these travel times based on historical data of a comparable time and day of the week.

Although SkyTeam already has access to data with respect to privileges at all airports via SkyLink (SkyTeam's internal platform to communicate with airlines), it doesn't have access to data concerning other airport facilities such as shops, restaurants and lounges. Another important partnership would therefore be with FLIO. FLIO is an airport application for customers that collects information with regard to facilities on over 3000 airports around the world. Most importantly, getting into a partnership with FLIO would help SkyTeam in listing airport facilities, which would enable Cura to give the most accurate suggestions at all airports. Besides, this partnership would improve the consistency of Cura's services

throughout the journey, since FLIO helps customers to both quickly and safely log on to the airports official Wi-Fi connection. A WiFi connection or roaming is required in order to be able to give the customer real-time information about his flight status. Finally, FLIO could provide Cura with deals on food, beverage and duty free shopping to offer to her users and, if needed, enable them to book additional lounge access at more than 100 lounges worldwide. Although listing facilities and arranging deals with shops and lounges are things that could be done by SkyTeam as well, it would be easier and more efficient to get into a partnership with a third party such as FLIO. By doing so, SkyTeam could keep focusing on its core business: connecting the member airlines.

Finally, a partnership with a publisher or newspaper would be required in order to offer customers newspapers and magazines to download for offline usage. At this moment KLM already provides its customers with this opportunity, for which they have direct partnerships with magazines and with third parties. To determine the exact parties with which to collaborate, it is advisable to do more user research.

All current and future partnerships and their individual priority are also discussed in Chapter 9.6.

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING USERS

In order to create curiosity for Cura, both the airlines and SkyTeam could make use of existing channels such as their websites, newsletters and social media. Besides, Cura could be introduced on for example digital boarding passes, which are currently often not completely printed. An example of what such an advertisement could look like is shown in Figure 49. SkyTeam could also create awareness for Cura by starting a campaign. Such a campaign could for example be a contest in which customers are asked to share a photo of their favorite 'Cura-moment', with which they can win a real personal assistant for a day. By taking away stress, generating new content, keep surprising users with unexpected suggestions and reminding people of Cura's existence by sending push-notifications, Cura could retain her users and become an essential element of every trip.

REQUIREMENTS

In order to deliver customers the most accurate information possible, all airlines should have a mobile application in which Cura could be integrated. At this

moment only Tarom doesn't offer their customer a mobile platform, although their website is mobile friendly. In order to be able to integrate Cura, this airline should develop an application. Cura could in this case be a good and easy way for the airline to create some first content for their customers.

Next to this basic requirement, there are several other requirements that are important for the well-functioning of Cura:

- ▶ **All airline apps should require their users to opt-in (i.e. give permission) to receive push notifications and give access to their e-mail-application, location and WiFi networks.**

Although this seems to be difficult, a lot of other popular applications, such as Tripit, already require these opt-ins. Especially access to real-time geographical information of the user is important for the well-functioning of Cura. Cura will by default show the current stage in the customer's journey, that is determined by GPS and WiFi signals at the airport. WiFi is used to ensure a more precise location, even when the customer is situated inside. In order to access this information, all applications need permission from the users. At this moment, 14 of the 20 airlines already have access to this information. The other six (see Appendix G.1) would need to update the rights of their application to enable Cura to give the most accurate information at the right time.

The amount of push-notification will be minimized to reduce the risk of annoyance. A notification will only be sent in case of:

- ▶ Having a flight the next day
- ▶ Arriving at a new airport
- ▶ Boarding
- ▶ Arriving at your final destination
- ▶ *If needed:* Disruptions

- ▶ **Customers should in all cases be connected**

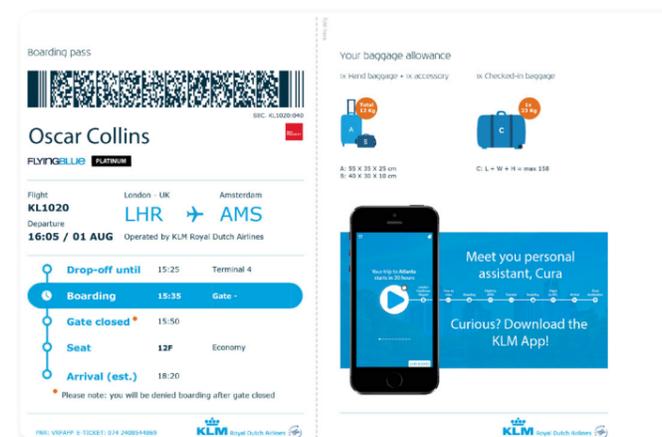


Figure 49 - Example of a boarding pass

to the internet and have turned-on their WiFi signal and GPS for an optimal service.

As mentioned before, enabling GPS and WiFi signals is essential in order to deliver the customer the most accurate information. The decision to do so lies with the user, but if the user appears not to be connected, Cura will send a reminder to do so after arrival at the airport. In these reminders Cura will also pro-actively suggest to connect to the airports official Wi-Fi network (see Figure 50). Without being connected to one of the two, Cura will still work to a certain extent, although not all functions can be executed.

- ▶ **Mandatory sharing of flight information for airlines to OAG.**

Although this is already a basic requirement when joining SkyTeam, sharing flight data is very important for this application to function. All SkyTeam airlines have to send their flight information to OAG, from which SkyTeam retrieves this information and loads it into SkyLink, so other airlines can access it. Without this, Cura will not be able to send notifications in case of disruptions.

- ▶ **Mandatory mutual sharing of rebooking data between airlines.**

A very clear decision should also be made with regard to the airline that is responsible for delivering the information to the customer. In general, this is the Most Significant Carrier (MSC). In the past, the MSC was the airline that the customer traveled the longest distance with, but nowadays this more often is the marketing carrier (i.e. the airline that sells seats under its own code on a flight that is operated by another airline). In order for Cura to deliver all information needed, operating- and marketing carriers should exchange data with regard to rebookings at all times.



Figure 50 - Request to connect with WiFi

9.6. MINIMAL VIABLE PRODUCT

Together with two experts from the Information Technology Department of SkyTeam, the concept was discussed and evaluated in order to identify the biggest challenges in implementing the application. As mentioned before, information with regard to flight statuses, SkyPriority privileges and lounges is already available via SkyLink. Therefore, providing the customer with this information isn't considered very difficult, and the basics of this application are IT-wise considered feasible.

The biggest challenge within the concept would be providing the customer with the right information in real-time in case of rebookings. A mandatory mutual sharing of rebooking data between airlines was already mentioned in the previous chapter. However, although exchanging this information appears to be simple, this currently is quite complex and often doesn't happen.

A solution for this could be to initially create clusters of airlines to exchange information mutually, and gradually expand these clusters until all airlines are covered. By doing so, systems could gradually be aligned, which would make exchanging information easier. An example of a first cluster could be with AirFrance, KLM and Kenya Airways, who already share the same reservation system.

It was decided to break the proposition down into a minimum viable product (MVP), which represents the absolute basic version of the service that still fulfils the biggest needs of the customer. This MVP should be implemented in a first phase. Desired and future features would improve this version, and could be implemented in later phases. An overview of the phases is given in Figure 51.

	PHASE ONE - MINIMAL VIABLE PRODUCT	PHASE TWO - DESIRED FEATURES	PHASE THREE - FUTURE FEATURES
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Integrating Cura in all applications ▶ Opt-in location, WiFi and e-mail required in all apps ▶ Possibility to create a personal profile for every customer ▶ Possibility to manually add flights ▶ Link with SkyLink ▶ Questionnaire for first time users ▶ Development of a basic suggestion flowchart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Making software intelligent (learning from past behavior) ▶ Integrating ability to automatically send a warning to the lounge upon approach ▶ Installation of application in the lounge for early recognition of customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recognition at other SkyPriority touchpoints ▶ Integration of airline specific functionalities within Cura ▶ Integrating possibility to add hotel- and car rentals to travel scheme ▶ Integrating advice of multiple ways of traveling to and from the airport
Collaborations & 3rd parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partnership with Google Maps for indoor navigation and door-to-door advice ▶ Partnership with FLIO for suggestions, lounge access and an overview of facilities per airport ▶ Link with Audit App ▶ Link to Uber 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partnership with publishers and newspapers ▶ Link with airline systems to provide customer with in-flight details ▶ Integrating Audit App 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Car rental service ▶ Hotel search engine (e.g. Booking.com or AirBnB) ▶ Partnership public transportation search engine (e.g. Google Maps Transit)

Figure 51 - Minimal viable product and desired products

9.7. ROADMAP

A roadmap of how to realize the first two phases of the concept, as discussed in Chapter 9.6., is shown in Figure 52. Assuming that the development of Cura would start in Q4 2017, the MVP of the concept could go live halfway Q1 2019. The more elaborated version of Cura could go live at the end of Q4 2019, and the recognition system in the SkyTeam lounges halfway Q3 2020.

Within the first stage of the development of Cura, user-tests should be executed to further evaluate and refine the proposition with SkyPriority customers. This could best be done in multiple lounges around the world, in order to involve a variety of cultures within the test group. At this stage, also a go/no-go decision should be made by the member airlines, after which collaborations can be entered into and the programming of the code can start. A pilot with SkyPriority customers to test the proposition will then be conducted, of which the insights will be processed in the redesign if needed. This possible redesign will then once more be tested, after which the application can be implemented. To speed up the process of implementing, Cura could first be integrated in SkyTeam app, and later on in the airlines' applications. Integrating Cura in the SkyTeam app could also be used as a tool in convincing the airlines to implement the assistant in their own apps. In this stage the programming team could also start with the development of the application for smartwatches and tablets, to make the service suitable for all type of customers. A quarter after implementing Cura in the SkyTeam app, an evaluation of the application with all SkyPriority Product Managers will take place.

The second phase will start with user testing in order to determine the type of suggestions and the desired level of personalization. A balance should be found between being un-personal and being too personal. After this, Cura's software will be updated in order to enable her to become more intelligent. This update will be tested and refined with SkyPriority customers, and then be launched. Also the in-lounge recognition app will be developed, piloted and implemented in this phase.

As mentioned before, the Audit program and airline specific functionalities could possibly be added to Cura in the future. By doing so, the content of Cura becomes as complete as possible and airlines could customize Cura to their own individual preferences. However, adding these functionalities is not taken into account in the roadmap.

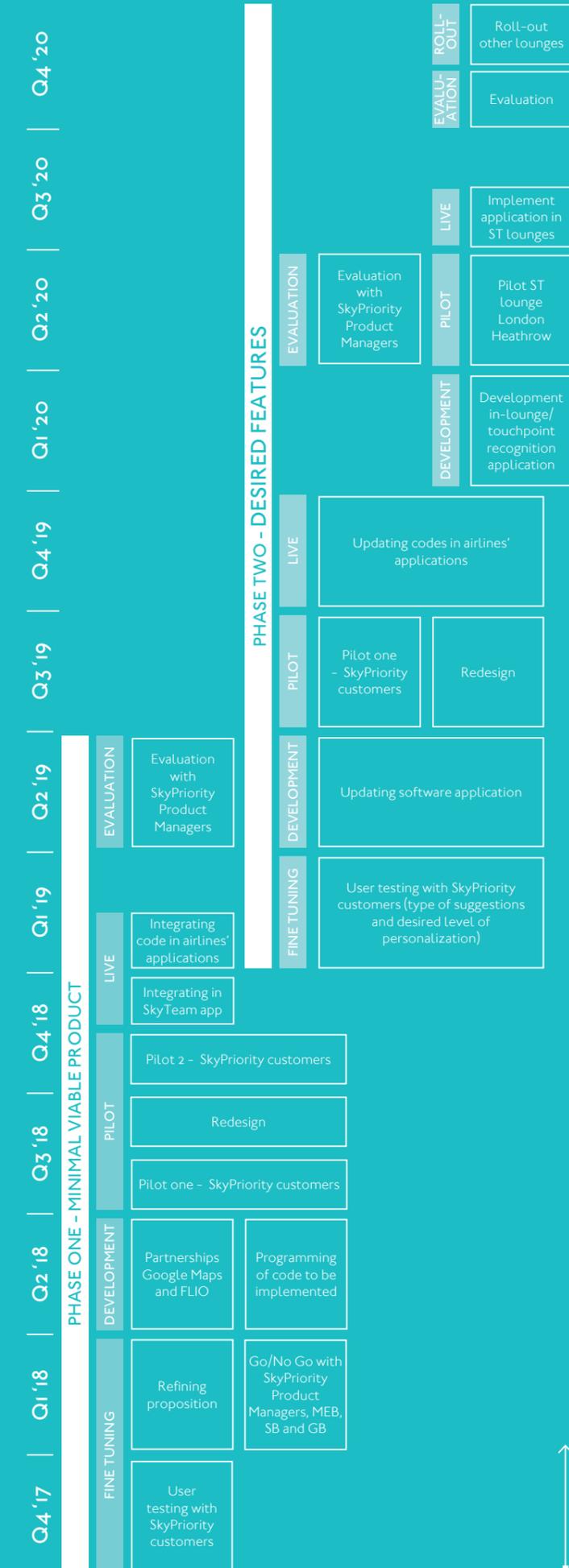


Figure 52 - A roadmap of implementing Cura



CHAPTER

10

CONCLUSION

In this final chapter of the thesis, the project is evaluated. This evaluation is divided in two parts: the first part will elaborate on the requirements as determined in Chapter 8 and the extend to which the concept meets the parameters that resulted from the benchmark in Chapter 9.5., in the second part the graduate student will give a personal reflection of the process of the project. The outcomes of the evaluation are processed as recommendations for the further development and eventually implementation the concept. The chapter concludes with a conclusion, in which the graduate student looks back on the link between the concept and the initial assignment and the insights from the research once more.

To create support for the further development of this concept, a movie is made that will be distributed among SkyTeam's member airlines. This movie will also briefly be discussed in this chapter.

10.1. EVALUATION

EVALUATING THE CONCEPT

Eight design requirements were determined to be of importance in Chapter 8. These requirements were:

- ▶ Consistency between different airlines & airports
- ▶ Transparency with regard to SkyPriority
- ▶ Present during the entire journey
- ▶ Reducing stress
- ▶ Empowering
- ▶ Pro-active
- ▶ Empathic
- ▶ Relaxing

The first four requirements are directly related to the concept, the last four to the intended personality to be experienced, as defined in Chapter 5.4.

Although all elements of the concept are repeatedly evaluated and refined together with customers, it is useful to evaluate the final concept with the target group in order to determine where to focus on during further development of the concept. However, since the mock-up only shows what Cura could do but isn't able to fully operate as it is supposed to do, the complete experience can not be tested yet. Therefore, the first four requirements are evaluated by the graduate student in consultation with experts from the Customer Experience and Information Management Departments of SkyTeam. An overview of this evaluation can be found in Figure 53. By using the mock-up, the personality is tested with SkyPriority customers.

THE PERSONALITY

In order to detail the concept, three elements to focus on were defined: functionalities, wording and design. Each of these elements in turn consisted of several parameters, and together covered all of the desired characteristics (see Appendix G).

Evaluating the functionalities of Cura with SkyPriority customers in this stage is difficult, since the mock-up of the application is not functioning as it would in real life. This could make it difficult for customers to assess them, and the results of this evaluation would be less useful. Evaluating the functionalities is therefore something that should be done with a working prototype as a next step. However, the wording and design can be evaluated together with customers, since for this purpose the existing mock-up is suitable.

By an online questionnaire, 18 SkyPriority customers shared their thoughts on the concept. After a short introductory text, a visual with an overview of the application and a short movie, they were asked to rate the 15 parameters of the concept on a scale from 1-5. All parameters were presented together with a short definition. In the video, the scenario as presented in Chapter 9.4., only showing the screen of the phone of Oscar Collins, was shown. Finally, the participants were asked to select the values that would be applicable to them if they were traveling with Cura (see Chapter 5.1), and to again rate on a scale from 1-5 to what extend they

thought that traveling with Cura would feel like traveling with their personal assistant. This rating was accompanied by a short, mandatory explanation.

The results of the evaluation can be seen in Figure 54. The parameters with the highest ratings are *approachable* and *dedicated* (both 4.3), the parameters with the lowest ratings *sophisticated* (3.7), *quirky* and *empathic* (both 3.8). Although overall the ratings are quite high, it could be concluded that it should be researched what people exactly consider to be *sophisticated* and *quirky* (in the questionnaire defined as 'being elegant' and 'having a certain personality'), and try to incorporate this into the design to a higher extend. Regarding the parameter *empathic*, it could be doubted whether the used set-up is the appropriate method, since the given scenario was for another person with which the participants might not have been able to identify themselves.

To the question to what extend traveling with Cura would feel like traveling with their personal assistant, the participant on average gave a 3.4. As one of the participants mentioned: "It seems to provide pro-actively most of the information I would be looking for while traveling so I'm quite confident about Cura". Participants that were less positive about the concept, mainly stated that although Cura should give the feeling of being a personal assistant, it stays an application. This feedback also came forward during the user testing in the lounge.

Regarding the values, 13 of the 18 participants thought that using Cura would give them the feeling of being informed and 12 thought it would reduce the experienced hassle. Other values that were mentioned by at least 9 of the participants were *integrates*, *quality* and *saves time*. From this it appears that although *integrates* and *informs* would be added as new values by introducing Cura, still no emotional values would be addressed by the SkyPriority service (see Figure 55). However, testing with a working



"I've been looking for an app like this, but it didn't exist yet, so I'm really glad someone is working on it!"

prototype for a longer period of time could be necessary in order to discover possible emotional values.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Although at the moment of finishing this thesis the project isn't finished yet, I have started with a personal reflection on the process.

The project started with a broad assignment: *Develop a new proposition for SkyPriority customers.* Having only little knowledge about this target group, I initially started to emerge myself in the world of the first- and business class passengers by reading forums on the internet. After reading comments like: "There was no Bloody Mary, I will never visit this lounge again", I have to admit that I had a completely wrong image of these type of customers at first. First insight: not only read about your target group, but try to experience what they experience. Although making use of SkyPriority myself appeared to be difficult due to the many involved parties, visiting the SkyTeam lounge in London not only enabled me to talk to these customers in real life and understand why they say the things they say, but also to experience what they experience. This visit made me realize the real value of SkyPriority: the airport

Figure 53 - An overview of the evaluation of the first four requirements

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN AIRLINES AND AIRPORTS	TRANSPARENCY OF SKYPRIORITY	PRESENT DURING THE ENTIRE JOURNEY	REDUCING STRESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Due to the white label design, Cura will have the same look and feel in all apps, but also be in line with the identity of the airline. ▶ Cura creates a consistent SkyPriority experience by making people aware of privileges at all airports. ▶ The concept will inform people about their possibilities at all SkyTeam airports and hereby enable them to be in control of their own time. ▶ Cura can be used during all trips, regardless of the SkyTeam airlines. This turns Cura into the consistent factor throughout trips. ▶ The use of Cura will result in a link between online and offline, due to lounge recognition. ▶ The ease of integrating Cura in the existing airlines' apps, depends on the programming language used in the applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The concept gives customers an overview of their privileges at arrival at the airport, taking into account status and cabin service. ▶ The concept gives people an overview of all possibilities while waiting, including additional lounge access if needed. As one of the participants mentioned it takes away the need of checking of the complicated maps in the terminals. ▶ As mentioned by Dirk Gemke (Director Information Management), this concept could contribute to making the SkyPriority privileges easier to understand ▶ Although Cura provides the customer with information with regard to his privileges, the current concept doesn't tell him why he doesn't have access to a certain privilege. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Because of the link with SkyLink, Cura is able to assist the customer regardless of the airline he is traveling with. ▶ Notifications and messages are used to give customers the feeling of being accompanied throughout the whole journey. ▶ By sending a message the day before and after the flight and by helping in arranging transportation to and from the airport, the presence of the airline and SkyTeam in the customer journey is extended. ▶ GPS of WiFi signal is needed for suggestions and notifications based on location. ▶ Sharing of flight statuses with OAG and the exchange of rebooking information is crucial for the well-functioning of the app. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cura reduces stress by keeping the customer up to date in case of disruptions. ▶ The customer feels more relaxed by knowing that he will be informed in case of disruptions. ▶ The concept reminds customers at important moments (e.g. start boarding). ▶ As mentioned by one of the participants, the concept takes away the need to stay close to the information screens and by doing so give him freedom to do whatever he wants. ▶ Without an internet connection, Cura is not able to send notifications in case of disruptions to reduce the experience of stress.

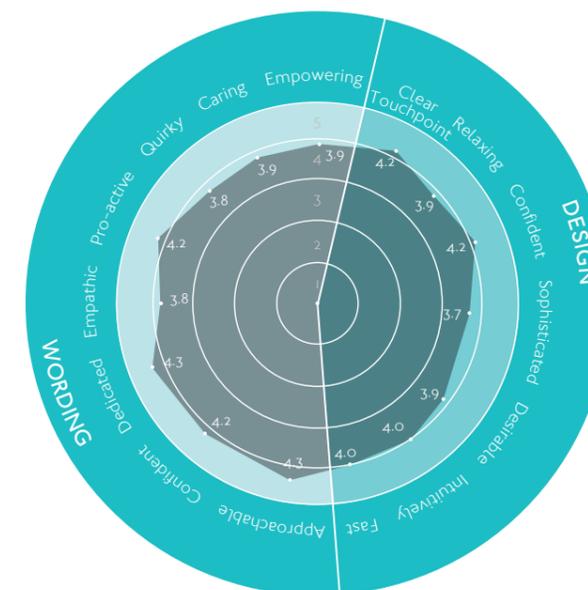


Figure 54 - Evaluation with customers

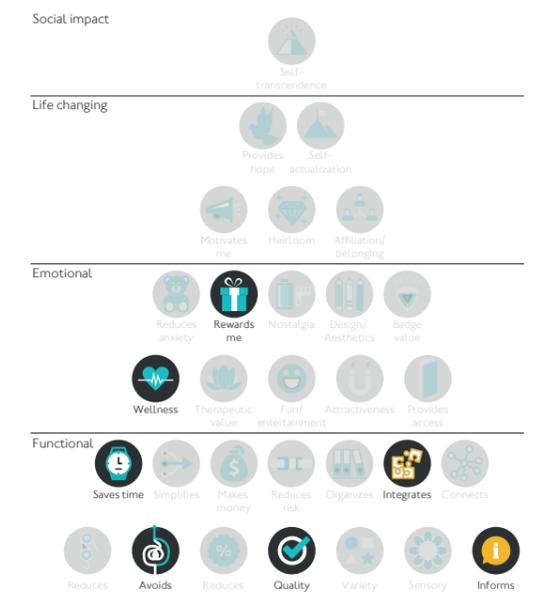


Figure 55 - Newly addressed values

is a place that business travelers want to spend as little time possible.

Also doing a case study on the partnerships of KLM and mapping out the implications on the journey of fictional Oscar Collins helped me a lot in creating more understanding of the customer. Besides, this persona was very useful in communicating my insights and clarifying difficult situations to others in multiple stages of the project.

Finding the 'Elements of Value' theory of Almquist et al. (2016) felt like finally seeing the shore after a long boat trip. Having a method to use as red thread throughout my project gave me much more confidence and helped me in defining my next steps. From this I learned that, especially in longer projects or when working alone, it can be very comforting to have a method as the consistent factor.

In the first stage of the ideation process I sometimes found it hard to keep thinking outside of the box. At that stage I noticed that all the insights and knowledge I had gained in the meanwhile also restricted me. Dividing the design brief into smaller pieces and involving others in the ideation process was a way to enjoy the ideation process again, since I really like facilitating these sessions and their energy. Although the best ideas in such complex contexts are generated by yourself, as already predicted by Christine, these sessions definitely gave me new inspiration and helped me in shaping my concepts.

Another challenging element of my graduation project was doing a project for 21 stakeholders at the same time. Not only keeping them up-to-date, which I did using the monthly conference calls and e-mail, but also taking into account all their individual interests, made this project quite complex. Besides, this project made me realize once more that involving stakeholders is not only necessary to get the right information, but also to

create support for the final results.

Finally, I learned that I am a real team player. Although I really liked doing all the research, I mostly enjoyed the moments in which I could discuss findings and next steps with others. I always thought that I would enjoy working alone and not being dependent on others, but especially the alternation between working alone and together I most enjoy.

Although sometimes graduating was tough, there are so many things that made my graduation project the nicest and most challenging project of my Masters: interviewing CEOs, talking to customers in the lounge, going to Gent to present the results of my research, having contact with customer experience managers from all 20 members airlines on a regular bases, facilitating brainstorm sessions and workshops with SkyTeam employees, creating concepts out of the tons of insights, flying to Shanghai to give a presentation, presenting my concept to experts in the field and receiving positive feedback and, last but not least, having a company mentor that obviously was enthusiastic and serious about this project the entire time. The fact that I had all these opportunities, and that the results of my project will be shared with all member airlines (see 'Leaving a trace'), makes me feel appreciated and like having contributed to something valuable.

LEAVING A TRACE

To leave a trace of the outcomes of this project among the stakeholders and to inspire both SkyTeam and the member airlines with possibilities for the future, a movie will be made. This movie will mainly focus on the experience of the customer when using Cura. In addition, this movie will be shown during the final presentation of this project. The initial scenario of this movie can be seen in Appendix I.

10.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Based on the outcomes of this project, suggestions for further development of the concept can be listed.

► As mentioned before, the concept should be tested with a real working prototype in order to completely evaluate and improve all elements. Especially navigating through the timeline, getting personalized suggestions and receiving notifications in case of disruptions, which is an essential element of the concept, are things that

couldn't really be evaluated with this mock-up. It could be that swiping is not the most suitable way to navigate through the app. Also the possibilities of e.g. voice-control could be explored. In order for the suggestions to be tested, it would also be advisable to develop an algorithm that determines the type of suggestions while waiting. This algorithm should also determine when to give the most which suggestions for upgrades, based on the phase in the customer journey and the travel history

of the customer. In this phase, also differences between leisure and business customers could be explored.

► SkyTeam should also test if a GPS signal at the airport is sufficient for Cura to operate, in case there are no WiFi networks available. If this appears not to be sufficient, SkyTeam should consider investing in WiFi networks to track the customer's location and improve the service offered.

► The determined functionalities of the application could also be extended in the future. First of all, the Audit Program could be integrated in the concept in order to collect all SkyTeam's benefits at one place, and to lower the threshold of doing an Audit. Another useful functionality could, for example, be the possibility to check-in directly via Cura. This functionality could be empathic and pro-active by remembering the customers travel document details. Another empowering functionality would be to give customers a prediction of the waiting times at security. A way to do so could be by installing beacons at the security checks at (eventually) all SkyTeam airports that register the amount of phone signals in the area, and by doing so determining the amount of people and thus waiting times. These waiting times could be taking into account in determining the

10.3. CONCLUSION

This project started with the design brief to develop a proposition for SkyPriority customers that fits the desires of the wide variety of customers and is differentiating among other highly innovative alliances. This proposition should increase the customers' benefit when making use of the network of SkyTeam, foster the loyalty of SkyPriority customers and attract new frequent flyers, and with this improve their position as one of the leading alliances.

After months of executing extensive research and ideation, Cura is proposed as the answer to this design brief. In Figure 56, the customer journey as created in Chapter 5 is used to give an overview of how the concept responds to the different customer needs as identified in the first phase of this project. The concept not only responds to the goal of SkyPriority to make the journey faster and more convenient, but also reduces the experienced stress and lack of control of SkyTeam's HVCs. This service therefore increases the customers' benefit when traveling with the SkyTeam airlines, fosters the loyalty of existing SkyPriority customers and could possibly attract new customers. Moreover, the concept responds to the wish of the member airlines to become more digital (see Chapter 4.3.), but also allows them to customize and deliver the service as being their own, and increase the relevance of their current apps in case of traveling with multiple airlines. Besides, the concept will lay a new path of opportunities for innovation with regard to alliance wide matters. Worth mentioning is that there

departure time to the airport. Another possibility would be to extend the presence of the concept within the customer journey beyond helping the customer in traveling to and from the airport, through additionally helping him in booking a room for the night, a car or maybe even a table at a nice restaurant the evening after arrival.

► It could also be valuable for SkyTeam to discover how many customers exactly make use of SkyPriority, and how many customers have a SkyPriority status, but don't make use of the privileges. If it would appear that many customers do not use their privileges, SkyTeam and the airlines could consider making an effort in making people aware of them. If decided to make the application available for all type of SkyTeam customers, and not only SkyPriority customers, it would be advisable to also test and improve the concept with non-SkyPriority. Making the service available for all customers would, according to Lily Van Outersterp (Head of SkyTeam & Partners at KLM), improve the experience of all customers and lower the average development costs per customer.

► Finally, the name of the concept should be evaluated. It should be pronounceable in all languages and should be checked on unwanted meanings.

currently is no other alliance that offers such a product to its HVCs. Therefore, introducing Cura would, as desired, differentiate SkyTeam among highly innovative alliances.

The awareness within SkyTeam of the possibilities in this area has strongly improved since the beginning of this graduation project. Although initially not everyone was aware of the importance to keep extending and improving the SkyPriority service as currently existing, this realization grew gradually, partly due to the endless enthusiasm and support of Customer Experience Manager David van Dongen. The growing awareness not only became evident from the creation of a position for a Coordinator Digital Marketing & Innovation halfway through the project, but also by the fact that I was flown to Shanghai to present the results of the research to the member airlines. After this meeting, Mauro Oretti (Vice President Marketing Commercial Synergies of SkyTeam), shared his interests in this topic and the wish to continue with this project after completing the graduation project.

I am very proud to have been part of such an international organization with so much experience and knowledge for 7 months, and to have had the opportunity to contribute to the enormous challenge of improving the journey of so many people around the world. Cura not only is an answer on how to improve the journey of SkyPriority customers, but could serve as an inspirational source of what the future journey in the entire industry could look like.

	PREPARING THE TRIP	TO THE AIRPORT	BEFORE SECURITY	AFTER SECURITY	BOARDING	ON BOARD	TRANSFER	ARRIVAL	TRIP TO FINAL DESTINATION
CUSTOMER ACTIONS	<p>Preparing the flight, Booking the flight, Packing bag, Checking in online</p>	<p>Transportation to the airport</p>	<p>Arriving at the airport, Checking-in, Baggage drop-off, Security, Passport-control</p>	<p>Shopping/eating/drinking, Lounge, Orientation, To the gate, Waiting at the gate, Announcement to board</p>	<p>Boarding</p>	<p>Flying, De-boarding</p>	<p>Transfer Desk</p>	<p>Baggage pick-up, Lost & Found, Customs</p>	<p>Transportation to final destination</p>
CUSTOMER NEEDS									
BUSINESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Making and managing bookings via multiple channels 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Speed throughout the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Being in control of own journey ▶ Having choice of freedom regarding activities while waiting and on board ▶ Being recognized 					
LEISURE									
BOTH		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minimizing hassle ▶ Minimizing stress on way to the airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Finding balance between time to spend at the airport and experienced stress ▶ Being provided with the right information at the right time ▶ Avoiding crowded areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Being provided with the right information at the right time ▶ Knowing what to expect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minimizing the amount of waiting and standing in line 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Being provided with the right information 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Door-to-door service
CURA									
ACTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reminder to check-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Suggestion of how and at what time to go to the airport (based on preferences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Welcome at the airport with available privileges to optimize speed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Keeping the customer up to date in case of delays, cancellations, rebookings and other disruptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reminder to go boarding and (if applicable) presence priority boarding 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Welcome at the airport with available privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Welcome at airport with available privileges and baggage belt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Hope to see you soon message after arrival at final destination or of moving away from airport
RE-ACTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Account linked to airline account or easy sign up with social media ▶ Poss. to manually edit/add trips ▶ Providing information about check-in possibilities ▶ Providing information about privileges during the trip ▶ Offering possibility to upgrade* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Possibility to add first/final location for better assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pop-up with request to connect to available WiFi and enable GPS for best assistance ▶ Providing information about privileges to use that day ▶ Providing opportunity to guide customer through process as fast as possible ▶ Acces to an overview of all important messages at all stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Doing a suggestion of how to spend time based on customer profile, location, time and past behaviour ▶ Navigation at the airport and help in finding facilities ▶ Enabling the customer to be recognized at the lounge ▶ Enabling customer to book additional lounge access if not eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offering possibility to download favourite lecture, based on customer profile and past behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Overview of basic flight information (time left, meal, wifi, literature) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ See after security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assistance in arranging transportation to final destination ▶ Navigation at the airport and help in finding facilities 	
BACK-END	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Creating passenger profile based on answered questions and behaviour ▶ Link with user-account airline apps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Calculating travel time to the airport from current/start location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Linking boarding pass with SkyPriority-Finder database to give a personalized overview of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Going through flow chart to select the most suitable suggestion of how to spend time ▶ Message to the lounge employees that customer is about to arrive if he/she is detected within a 20 meter range of the lounge 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Linking boarding pass with SkyLink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Linking boarding pass with SkyLink 	
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Customer's boarding pass ▶ Link with audit app* ▶ If available: personal information customer through airlines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Uber Open API ▶ Google Maps traffic information and routing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ SkyLink for privileges per airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Airlines - for most accurate flight statuses (via OAG) ▶ Flio - for doing suggestions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Airlines - for most accurate flight information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Airline information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ SkyLink for privileges per airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Uber Open API 	
REQUIREMENTS & PARTNERSHIPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Update of airlines apps (integrating assistant and, if not yet required, opt-in accessing e-mail, opt-in locations and opt-in WiFi access) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partnership with Google Maps for door-to-door advice 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partnership with Google Maps for indoor navigation and door-to-door advice ▶ Partnership with FLIO for suggestions and facilities per airport and for booking additional lounge access ▶ Link with system in the lounge for notifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partnership with newspaper and magazine publishers 				

Figure 56 - Linking the concept with the insights

* Possible/required in all stages



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