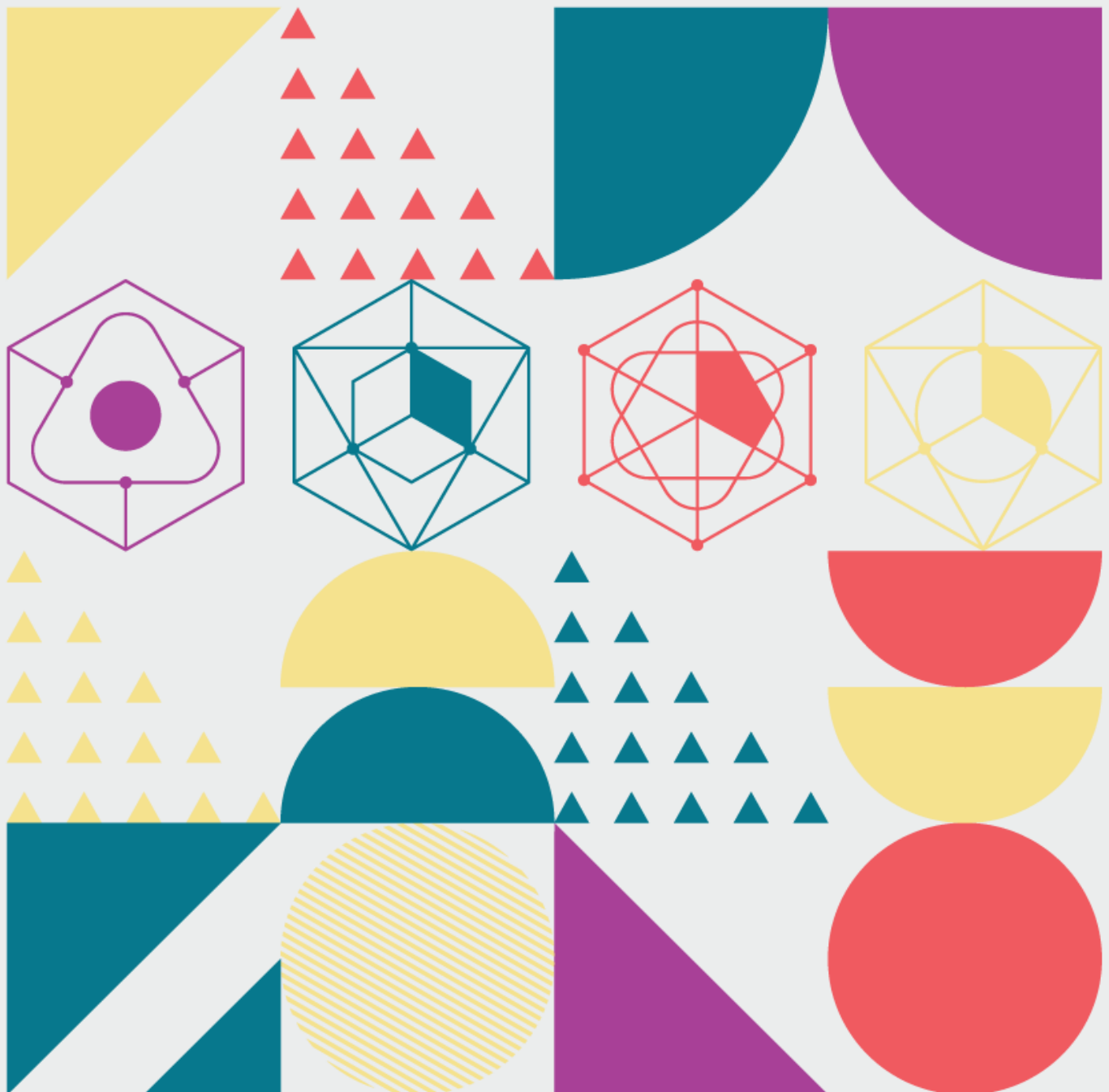


Goal-oriented Retreats

An enhanced
professional
experience based
on a service
design approach



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An enhanced professional experience
based on a service design approach.

Master Thesis Strategic Product Design
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Project Summary

This thesis report presents the result of a graduation project for the master programme Strategic Product Design at the Delft University of Technology carried out with Out of Office Workations. This project aims to understand and provide insight into how the workation service can address the needs and desires of the consultants and create new value propositions relevant for this segment. This problem has been tackled with the use of the Service Design Approach enriched with the Value Proposition Canvas.

Out of Office Workations is a Dutch startup that focuses on organizing and planning unique group experiences outside the usual work environment, called workations. This service provides a right balance between work and leisure inspired by the nomad lifestyle which combines their ability to work remotely dominated by an attractive location offering a variety of leisure activities.

While Out of Office Workations primary target is the digital nomad community, this master thesis focuses on identifying different areas of opportunity for a goal-oriented retreat in new potential market segments since their ambition is to become Europe's customer-centric, innovative and sustainable retreat solution. To achieve this ambition, Out of Office Workations must discover how to fit their offer to new market segments to create a long term sustainable growth with their workation service by stimulating a work-time-balance setting.

First, to gain a holistic understanding of what is a workation and what are the factors associated with this service highly exploratory research, website content analysis, semi-structured interviews with workation providers helped clarified the context, the target audience, and the different value propositions behind the offer of workations. Next, interviews with potential clients are executed to find new market segments for Out of Office. I identified three customer profiles in these interviews, two being addressed by the competitors and one remains relatively uncharted: the consulting segment. I have chosen this customer profile as this new market segment is not being forwarded by the competitors representing a valuable opportunity

for Out of Office to scale their workation to a new unexplored direction.

To properly fit the workation offer to the consulting segment, ten interviews with consultants from a variety of consulting firms were scheduled to understand this customer profile. Once gaining a more detailed and structured view of the consultants' professional and personal life, the design solution "Out of Office Professional Services" is created to meet their needs, aspirations and frustrations.

The presented solution is intentionally transformed as a quotation form to integrate it into the Out of Office website. This quotation form enables consultants to know what value proposition is suitable for their needs and facilitates the construction of their own workation. Once having the answers from the quotation form, Out of Office can create a personal and tailored-made experience for them.

These four value propositions have been validated with the CoFounder of Out of Office Workations, however, to verify fully the effect of them Out of Office should test them in real-life projects with the stipulated target market.

Reading Guide

This reading guide exhibits an overview of the report to assist while reading. Each chapter starts with an explanation of the content. At the end of every chapter, the key takeaways are provided, highlighting the most important findings.

Abbreviations

AW: Alternative Workplace

BMC: Business Model Canvas

HRM: Human Resource Management

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

VPC: Value Proposition Canvas

WFA: Working from anywhere

WFH: Work from home

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1 The Project

This chapter describes the project objectives, scope, research questions and approach by providing a structured overview of the project layout.

1.1 Project Introduction

Technological advancements in communication and mobility change the traditional work-life arrangements into new emerging work-life arrangements driven by digital communication technologies, flexible employment relationships and the growing demand for creative knowledge (Wolf, 2016).

The transition of the traditional work structure toward a knowledge-based economy will be more networked, digital and flexible making the future world of work a common interest-share model seen both in the workplace and the leisure context (Nahles, 2017). This transition blurs the boundaries between leisure and work as fewer employees need to be where work and information are while more often work and information can be where employees want to be and improve their work-life balance.

“Work is no longer a place you go to. Work is about making things happen where you are”.
- Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft.

As the demand for remote work is increasing, the risks and challenges to keep skilled-labor employees are increasing too. Flexible scheduling and work from home (WFH) opportunities play a major role in an employee’s decision to take or leave a job (Gallup, 2017) making difficult for business leaders to optimize their attraction, retention, engagement and performance strategies in this disruptive digital time.

Employees value the opportunity to work remotely, even as working from home (WFH) is a common and offered practice in a corporate level, working from anywhere (WFA) is an emerging form of remote work where employees can live

and work anywhere in the world with a reliable internet connection (Foroughi et al., 2019). The WFA practice becomes the modern workforce for fully remote companies such as Modern Tribe, InVision, Akamai, SAP and Buffer, to name a few who are digital-driven companies that empower and attract their fully distributed employees by adding new work policies on work-life balance benefits that support flexibility.

Unfortunately, not all companies have embraced this type of modern workforce because of major concerns on disengagement on project deliveries, miscommunication with their teams, multitasking, or mixing personal responsibilities with work caused by working remotely. Most of them still operate the traditional workplace by measuring productivity as employees being physically present in the office environment (Waber et al., 2014). Instead, they are looking for a solution that allows them to better compete for and manage the talent by understanding the value of their employees because they recognize that their employees are seeking flexibility and fulfillment across their professional and personal lives; they want to live in a world where work and life have the potential to blend (MetLife, 2019).

From structured work flexibility, there’s a possibility for companies to enable a better atmosphere for employees and enhance a work-life balance setting. A possibility, perhaps the easiest and workable way at their disposal, is delivering a service of a compelling mix of benefits, a goal-oriented retreat. The companies are familiar with team-building retreats and offsite practices hoping to improve the collaboration between teammates, building relationships and bolster team spirit,

nevertheless, the majority of these practices don't always guarantee effective bonding and collaborative long-lasting results because of the lack of goal-oriented activities. The inefficiency of these practices are caused by full leisure-centered activities or luxury events that are committed to offering a short-term experience between the participants (Valdes-Dapena, 2018). This presents an immense expense for the corporation as the promising retreat does not result in the desired outcome.

When looking at the service of Out of Office Workations, it becomes clear that they can help solve the major concerns that companies have regarding the modern workforce needs by making the most optimal solution for this disruptive age. As a response to the inefficiency of the actual team-building retreats and offsite, these retreats can be reframed as a significant part of their professional lives and at the same time contributing meaningfully to their quality of life. Offering the right mix of benefits can give the employees a sense of empowerment that they are desperately seeking, helping them manage their projects, care for their well-being and plan for their future.

This optimal solution is nowadays based on the needs of the digital nomad segment, making it difficult for Out of Office to scale their offer to new for Out of Office to escalate their segments. It is attractive for employees to live and work as a digital nomad, but the workation service does not resonate with their professional and personal lives. Therefore, it is essential for Out of Office Workations to find new areas of opportunity for a goal-oriented retreat in new potential different areas of opportunity for a goal-oriented retreat

in new potential market segments understand their needs, challenges, and frustrations to fit workations in their work-life practices. These insights will be of enormous value for further service development and innovation.

The three lenses of Design Thinking are used in this project to bring innovation to the final design solution; Out of Office, corporate segment and employees. The intention of this Design Thinking perspective is to make the final deliverable desirable for consultants, feasible for the consulting firms, and viable for Out of Office to implement.

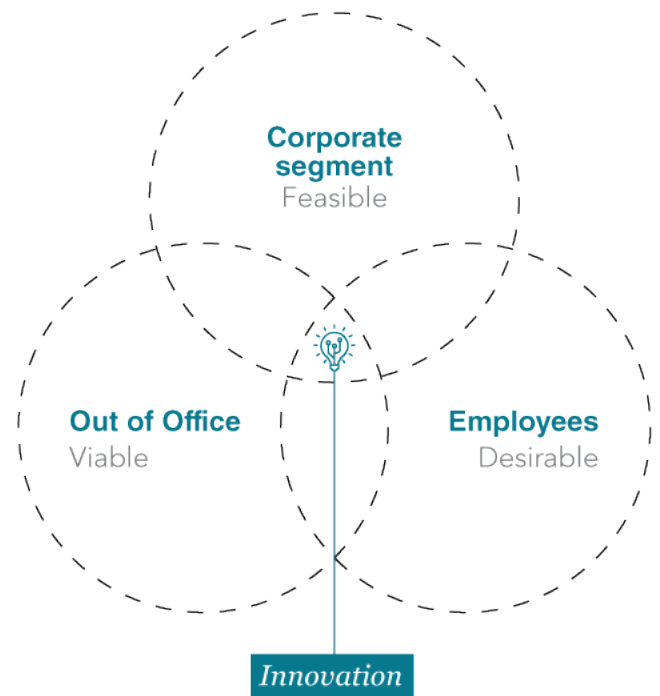


Figure 1: Three lenses of Design Thinking.

1.2 Project Aim & Approach

Starting from the project scope, these factors determine the range of this project:

- Out of Office Workations: This graduation project is based on the current value proposition of Out of Office Workations for the corporate team segment. The yet to be developed value proposition will be created for the use of Out of Office Workations.
- Corporate segment: This study mainly focuses on the modern workforce, the HRM challenges, and the main purpose of a corporate retreat.
- Service Design: This project concentrates on the service design method enriched with several tools and methods based on the same approach. Other design practices are used for inspiration or insights.

Project Aim

The aim of this graduation project is to illustrate an elaborated model of workation design that supports Out of Office Workations to apply it in real-life projects and accurately solved the needs of the new market segment. The design solution is based on three objectives:

- Understand the professional and personal lives of the corporate segment and clarify their motives and priorities regarding workation retreats.
- Select relevant value proposition benefits that will solve and satisfy the new market segment problems and needs, which will be translated into goal-oriented retreats.
- Design a workation Model within the context so it supports and enhances the customer experience of the new market segment.

Research Questions

In this graduation project the following two main research questions are answered:

What are the motives and priorities of mature corporates around workations?

How to position the service accordingly as an attractive opportunity for the segment?

Project Approach

By Applying the service design method, this thesis structures the content according to the four major phases of the method: discover, define, develop and deliver inspired by the Double Diamond approach (Design Council, 2005), which is frequently used at the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering at the Delft University of Technology.

The reason why service design is used for this project is that service design is a holistic user-centered approach that helps organizations innovate or improve existing services to deliver new whole value propositions to the customer based on new technology or market developments. Service design can be planned as an iterative divergent and convergent thinking, which is key when managing a service design solution (Stickdorn et al., 2010). The process needs to be explorative and iterative, as adaptation is expected along the way, building on a series of more repetitions and completing with rich insights.

This process comprises four phases, each building on the outcomes of the previous one. All the phases combined both theory and practice to increase value on this project. Furthermore,

the four phases are explained along with their respective objectives illustrated in figure 2:

Discover

The first part of this process starts by understanding the context of the service, discover the main challenges of the corporate segment and what are the purposes of a corporate retreat. To gain a proper understanding of the situation, highly exploratory research is executed along with literature research as the theoretical background of the project. Then a competitive analysis is executed and presented in two forms, one via website content analysis and another via the perspective of the workation providers.

Define

A synthesis process is executed after gathering the main takeaways from the theoretical background and the main insights from the competitive analysis. This synthesis helped define the next process of the project, which is the identification of new market segments. After deciding for one potential market segment, the consulting segment, more semi-structured interviews were conducted to determine the opportunities and challenges of this new direction.

Develop

This part is enriched by the Value Proposition Canvas (Osterwalder et al. 2015) in order to facilitate new value creation after the synthesis of insights gathered. The fit between Out of Office and the consulting segment is created in this part of the process. The reasons for this addition are:

- Easy organization of insights about the needs of the consulting segment making the patterns of value creation visible and understandable.
- Being stimulated to create an authentic and real solution that reflects on the values and beliefs of Out of Office.
- Avoiding wasting time with ideas that won't work to reduce the risk of failure and pursue ideas that can be feasible and tangible in the short-term.

Deliver

The final phase focuses on the final design. This final design has been validated by the CoFounder of Out of Office. Iterations and suggestions for the final design were made in order to provide Out of Office with a solution that can be put to action.

Involved Parties

Next to the supervisory team of the TU Delft and company mentor at Out of Office Workations additional parties are involved in this project. Facebook administrators of workation groups provided data and statistics on participants. Expert workation providers, consultant facilitators and workation participants are approached for interviews and guidance. Furthermore, innovation consultants are consulted to advise in the execution of the master thesis and an efficient approach to potential clients.

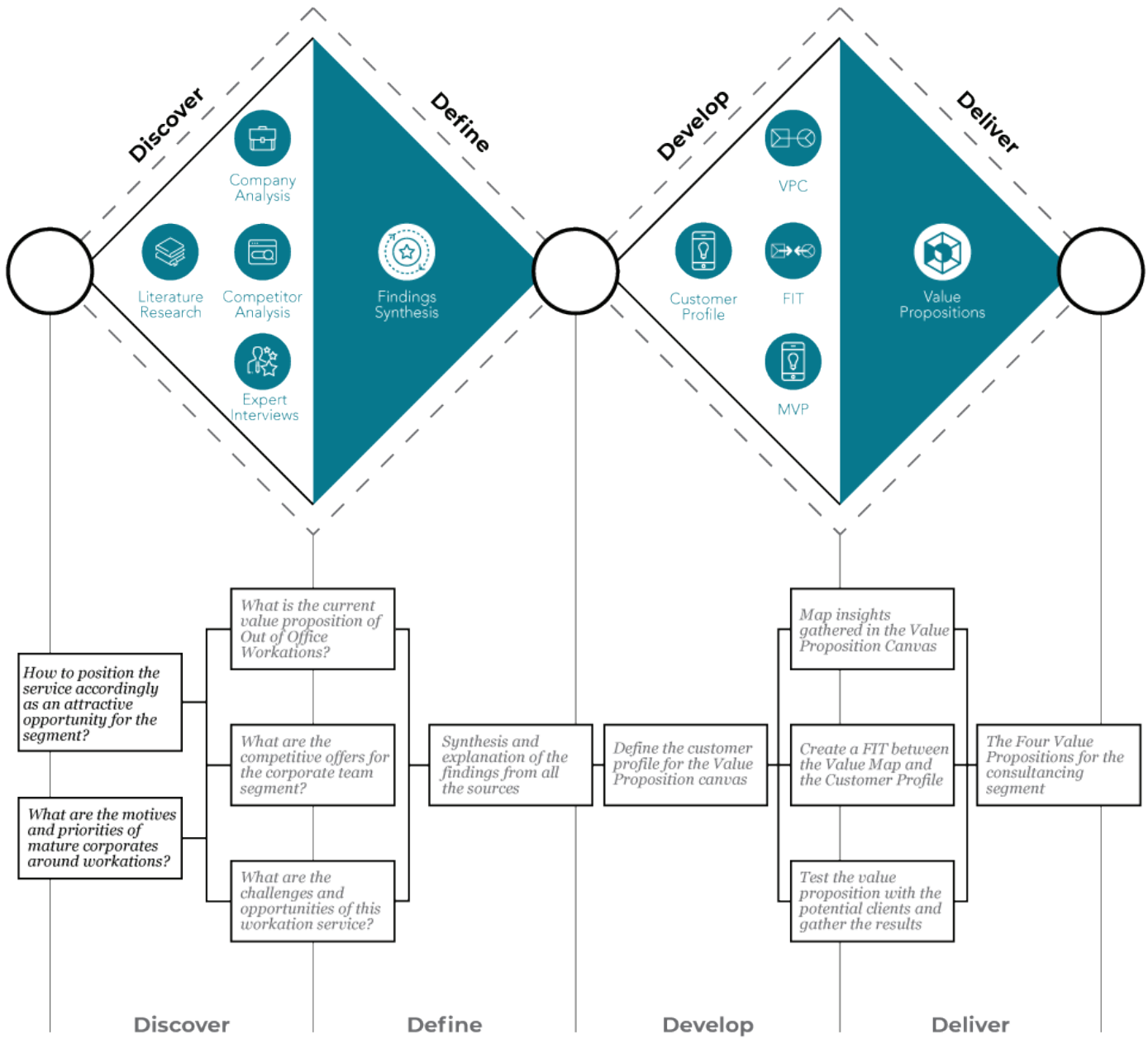


Figure 2: Thesis Structure and Layout based on the Double Diamond Approach.

2 Workation Exploration

This chapter contains extensive exploration research of what is workation and what are the factors associated with this service. First, a company analysis is executed to gain a complete understanding of the current value proposition of Out of Office. Next “setting the context” gives an insight of the context of workations covering trends of the future of work. Moreover, a competitive analysis is executed showing the direct and indirect competition of Out of Office with the purpose of knowing the existing workation offers that are suitable for the corporate segment.

2.1 Company Analysis

A company analysis is necessary to bring more insight into how this company works, what value brings to their current clients, and where it needs to differentiate from the competition to later propose a better value proposition for the corporate segment.

Out of Office Workations was founded in November 2018 in Amsterdam, Netherlands, under the management of the CEO Anne-Marie Jentsch. This startup is one of the few companies that currently provide a workation service in Europe. Out of Office Workations defines workations as a unique group experience outside the usual work environment with the right balance of work and leisure (2018).

Vision & Mission

Out of Office Workations vision is to become the largest online inspiration platform for workation enthusiasts in the Netherlands in five years. The aim of this platform is to have an established online community and create awareness that working from anywhere (WFA) is possible by connecting people interests in order to achieve better results, to grow both professionally and personally, and to improve their work-life balance. The community will inspire each other in terms of productivity, knowledge sharing and networking during the workations and thorough the platform.

Out of Office Workations, therefore, determined as their mission to:

- Connect and grow: Employees have the opportunity to connect with other like-minded professionals and share their learnings and experiences.
- Recharge: Employees can recharge thanks to work-life balance activities that help them relax and enjoy free time.
- Sustainable: Employees are encouraged to give something back to the local community where the workation is taking place.

Multidimensional Promise

The service workation encompasses five multidimensional promises to support their clientele in achieving their desired goals:

- Goal-oriented retreats: full organization and planning to meet the team goals in less time with zero stress.
- Connecting with experts: meet new people while building and working on personal projects.
- Physical team meetings: facilitating workplaces, from coworking spaces to meeting rooms with all the work components needed.
- Attractive destination: suitable and affordable home-like environment by arranging employees' accommodation preferences.
- Work-life balance: being able to commit to working for a specific amount of time and recharge by getting involved with some leisure activities.

Target Group

Currently, Out of Office target two different groups: for the digital nomad community, this workation service fits them perfectly in order to satisfy their need of meet other digital nomads to co-work and share knowledge, allowing them to be productive while enjoying leisure activities. In contrast, the other target is a corporate team. These teams can come from different companies and different branches. The market offers for corporate teams is to design a bespoke, goal-oriented retreat suitable for their work needs and leisure wishes.

Network and Partnerships

Behind the organization of a workation retreat, there are different stakeholders involved. The stakeholders map illustrated in figure 4, helps visualize and identify the roles that the stakeholders play in the workation service. The primary stakeholders are the most relevant for the construction of the retreat such as **finding accommodation that meets the clientele criteria and arranges a proper workspace for the work activities.** After covering the team needs, the secondary stakeholders play their part by offering their different services to live up to the clientele expectations.

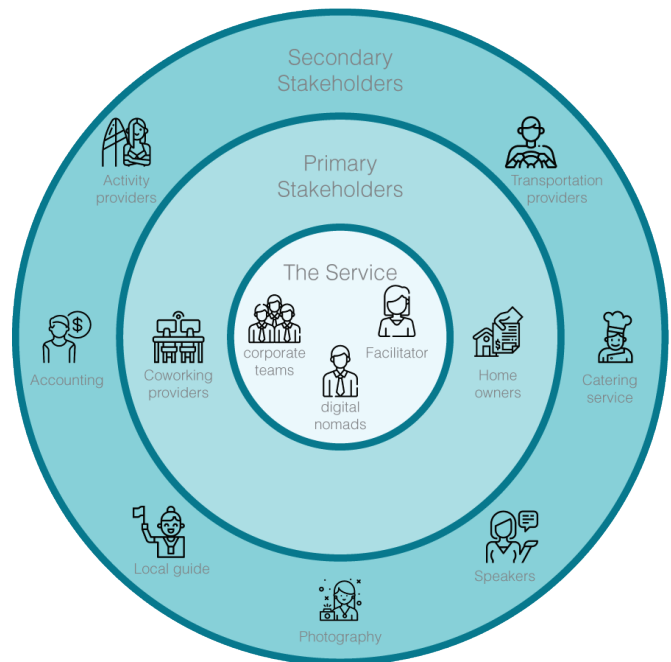


Figure 3: Stakeholders map, Out of Office.

Business Model Canvas

The Business Model Canvas describes the rationale of how Out of Office creates, delivers, and captures value today (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2013). The figure 4 visualization is used to represent and understand the nine basic building blocks of the BMC covering the four main areas of the business: offering, activities, customers, and finances. This shows how Out of Office intends to position their current Value Proposition in the market and it enables to identify strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities. Further analysis and evaluation were made to generate future value proposition ideas on a conceptual level.



Figure 4: Business Model Canvas, Out of Office.

Key insights from Out of Office company analysis

There are different challenges that Out of Office Workations faces in order to set ground in the corporate segment. From the customer segment, there's a lack of trust from the corporate segment, since they are sceptical of what the workation service can do to solve their needs. Furthermore, the term workation has been linked with different concepts, making it difficult to have an overall definition of the term. From the key resources block, knowledge in marketing and IT is absent making the promotion and social media content of the workation service difficult to reach by the desired market and maintain the relationship for future offerings. Although, the corporate segment is not being attracted by the current value proposition, is still generating revenue for the business from the digital nomad community and, consequently, growing the demand to organize and plan new experiences and expanding to new locations by connecting with new partners.

2.2 Setting the context

Through information and communication technology developments, high levels of mobility and flexibility allow employees to work in different work arrangements compared to the traditional arrangements. Thanks to these ICT developments, new ways of working have originate in terms of independent, flexible, and autonomy work arrangements sorting people's wish to blend their professional and personal practices. One example of a new way of working is the phenomenon of workation which responds to the needs of workers that hope for better work-life flexibility (Spreitzer et. al., 2017).

As workations are part of the new ways of working, the future of work is explored in the trend analysis to give a context of how the future value proposition could look like.

Future of Work

The digital transformation has contributed to changes in the economy, labor market, and quality jobs. For companies, major concerns are job losses, erosion of skills, and disruption of the barriers between work and private life (Nahle, 2017). For employees, the fast diffusion of technology introduced smart working modalities that have blurred the boundaries between working and leisure giving them the freedom to choose and work where they want (Manuti & Palma, 2017). Now working from anywhere is possible, desirable, and more valuable than working in a conventional work environment.

Trend analysis

The trend analysis covers the changes in the society that occur over longer periods of time (Boeijen et al., 2014), related to people's evolving preferences and developments in the economy,

politics and technology. The time taken for this project covers five years from now and maps trends from the future of work relevant for the corporate and employee perspective. The trends found were identified from a variety of sources from an international perspective.

Work management - new measurements

As technology is perfectly designed to work anywhere, anytime, bringing the ability for employees to act at increasing levels of accuracy and productivity, opens the opportunity to work independently and flexible making organizations lag behind this technological development (Daheim & Wintermann, 2015).

Integration of automation and smart services is necessary to create new assessment methods and measurements to keep abreast of this development. Furthermore, strategic data analysis will enable organizations to recruit and profile employees for the best fit and gain both knowledge of and about their workforce since there will be a pressure to control age-related jobs and the rising millennial generation with different consumption and work behaviors compared with the early generation (Bakhshi et al., 2017).

Work setting - not fixed in a place

The flexible work model will replace the conventional work model. It comprises employees having access to infinite knowledge in a virtual workplace and adapting their own schedule based on their project capacity. This flexible work model will increase the number of people working in a freelance setting engaging in task-specialized work (World Economic Forum, 2018).

Commonly, this people is looking for a community where rehumanization is a priority, taking part in coworking, coliving or workation services is part of their professional and personal growth (TrendOne, 2019).

E-learning - skills improvement

Universities are witnessing the arrival of digital technologies to increase the accessibility and scalability of their education programs which allow more personalized and flexible models such as Massive open online courses (MOOC) and peer-to-peer (P2P) programs. The people are changing their current job profile through self-management by learning and training in established institutions without attending to the location (McKinsey, 2017). Companies also know the importance of re-skilling their workforce as employees' reaching their full potential means performing in high value-added work tasks and enhancing economic value creation. Therefore, giving employees the flexibility to learn and develop is an augmentation strategy that benefits both parties (World Economic Forum, 2018). Furthermore, a strong emphasis on interpersonal skills, higher-order cognitive skills, and systems skills continue to grow not only for organizations that seek to reduce costs of coordination but also bring balance in the cultural context where globalization and digital technology are taking place (Bakhshi et al., 2017).

Lifestyle - hyper connected people

Living in the city will increase by seventy percent by 2050 because of the attraction of high-quality life, knowledge-intensive industries, unlimited consumption opportunities anytime and more diverse employment offerings (Bakhshi

et al., 2017). Living in the city demands high-tech services and software voice command integration, chatbots in social media channels, and personal assistants which are becoming natural in the modern lifestyle of the common citizen. They help bring immediate solutions by having a simple and fluent conversation, making users feel dependent on it by giving the feeling of being available all the time (Nahles, 2017). Although these smart interactions have been present on mobile devices and computer interfaces, many tech-driven companies have been developing other forms to integrate it in their workforce for team purposes which will increase the connectivity between employees and employers based on their abilities, skills, and interests (Daheim & Wintermann, 2015).

Social wellbeing - Local impact

Wellbeing corporate benefits will continue to grow as employees are being attracted to working conditions that offer a humane workplace. Currently, organizations are offering effective health attention and safety standards at work, yet this offering doesn't represent the humane part that employees are looking. Having the flexibility at work rise the opportunity to enhance the employee's work-life balance, thus, allowing employees the freedom to grow and develop contributes to the physical, mental and social wellbeing (Nahles, 2017). Furthermore, companies are promoting themselves as socially responsible by doing voluntary work for the local improvement attempting to attract employees that find it valuable in an organization and opening green occupations to help the greater urbanization for the interest of environmental sustainability (Bakhshi et al., 2017).

Collaborative actions - Offline and Online

Companies are seeing the benefits of virtual teamwork, as this means operating in an international setting. Social media tools, project management tools, and creative management tools are making their way up to the corporate processes. These tools represent the core structure of virtual teamwork, as they have become an integral part of their daily working lives to guarantee effective communication and collaboration. Nonetheless, physical gatherings between virtual teams are encouraged to establish a formal meet up and show the power that can foster the physical gatherings as the team join forces over a common goal (TrendOne, 2017). Furthermore, companies are approaching to crowdsourcing platforms when they are in need for skills that have a perfect match with the technological and global changes, such as creative, digital and programming engineering occupations ideal for the digital world as they are increasingly cooperative and self-organized in a rapid rise of self-determined learning (Bakhshi et al., 2017).

Key insights from trend analysis

The importance of independent and flexible work allows the employees to enhance their work-life balance by being free to grow and develop in both professional and personal ways. From the start it's pointed out that technology supports people to work anywhere, anytime independently of location. This flexibility work arrangement has been adopted by freelancers who engage in task-specialized work and who take part in a community where rehumanization is a priority such as a workation.

Furthermore, many people have embraced the self-management task as education is provided in a digital format. This allows them to learn and train in well-known institutions without attending to a certain location.

Knowledge-intensive workers living in a hyper connected work will require smart software interactions to help them bring immediate solutions in their hectic modern lifestyles. These smart software interactions are being adopted by companies as well to increase the connectivity between employees with their employers.

After doing this trend analysis, the final value proposition could be a solution for knowledge-intensive workers that need a personalized service in which they can complement their current job profile, change to new professional directions, or train themselves with soft skills fundamental to their leadership practices.

2.3 Competitive Environment

The competitive environment of Out of Office is analyzed to discover where all its competitors are and what is their focus. Finally, the strengths and weaknesses of Out of Office will become apparent, which clarifies the positioning of the company compared to its competitors.

The meaning of workation

The term workation has not been defined neither considered in science yet, but it's closely related to the term "coworkation" which is the blend between coworking and vacation describing a lifestyle that evolved in consequence of work-life blending practices (Klama, 2018).

Workation seems to be the logical continuation of coworking meaning that the coworking movement contributes to the growth of location-independent workers to leave the workplace office to work from wherever and whenever they want. In order to fully understand what is workation and how it adds value to different retreat practices, a website content analysis is executed in order to clarify the product or service it offers to the corporate segment.

Website content analysis

After closely analyzing twenty-six workation website webpages, in their majority European, four major workation concepts appeared: workation spaces, coliving spaces, workation retreats, and workation temp.

Workation Spaces	Location	Main Target Group	Value Proposition
Coworking in the Sun	Tenerife	Digital nomads, online marketing students, Spanish learners and like-minded people	Proper coworking space available for the whole year in a beach destination giving the opportunity to live the spanish way of life
Sunny Office	Barcelona, Andalucia, Lisbon, Tenerife	Passionate freelancers, like-minded entrepreneurs, soon to become self-employed people and PhD students	Coworking spaces in sunny and inspirational places brings location-independent people to connect and network
Alpine Co-Working	Switzerland	Corporate teams, digital nomads, and entrepreneurs	Specialized in coworking interior design to bring digitalization to the mountains

Table 1: Workation spaces distinguished by location, target group and value proposition.

Workation spaces

This workation concept refers to the workation operators offering a coworking space close to a vacation or travel destination for knowledge workers living in wealthy countries. These spaces provide the digital and physical infrastructure needed for social interactions and offer cheaper and attractive locations compared to the bigger cities (Waters-Lynch et al., 2016). From the work perspective, the workation spaces provide specific services and amenities tailored to the users' needs, in contrast, the leisure element depends strictly on the users preference as is his/her own specific task to engage in different leisure activities.

Examples of workation space operators

Coworking in the Sun is one workation operator that belongs to this specific concept. They are located in a vacation destination to stress the need for digital nomads to work in an area where leisure activities are just outside of their coworking space bringing the opportunity to explore and enjoy the surroundings by experiencing the life of a native Spanish (Coworking in the Sun, 2019). Likewise, Sunny Office also applies the vacation proximity as a value proposition to attract like-minded people in a coworking space where intentionally they performed interviews to ensure open-minded personalities fit together in their coworking community (Sunny Office, 2019). Alpine Co-Working also decided to promote their coworking space as a vacation destination due to the attractiveness of the alpine resort region. In addition, they also offer team retreats by providing the work infrastructure and support during the whole retreat duration (Alpine Co-Working, 2019).

Coliving Spaces	Location	Main Target Group	Value Proposition
Swiss Escape	Switzerland, Grimentz	Digital nomads, freelancers, entrepreneurs and groups of company retreats	Coliving and coworking in an authentic Swiss chalet located in the Swiss Alps
Sun and Co	Spain, Jávea	Freelancers, entrepreneurs and digital nomads	Coliving and coworking community in the Mediterranean coast
Coconat	Germany, Brandenburg	Freelancers, entrepreneurs and digital nomads	Coliving and coworking space to inspire, concentrate, work and play in the countryside

Table 2: Coliving spaces distinguished by location, target group and value proposition.

Coliving spaces

This workation concept is based on the coliving-style which is the permanent venue offering, meaning that participants will share the living and working areas for a limited amount of time. Both the workation spaces and the coliving spaces contained the same core elements: workspace availability, access to like-minded community and opportunities for leisure activities, however, the coliving spaces goes one step further than workation spaces due to their **on-site accommodation by avoiding the burden of planning and booking accommodation from external providers.** By taking over the planning related to finding another venue close to the coworking space in these attractive destinations, these **coliving spaces make it easier for participants to just focus on their work and enjoy their leisure time.**

Examples of coliving space providers

Some examples from this workation concept category are Swiss Escape, Sun and Co, and Coconat. Swiss Escape, located in the charming village of Grimentz, offers both the coworking space and the coliving space suitable for remote workers to stay in this outstanding and beautiful scenery (Swiss Escape, 2019). Likewise, Sun and Co offer the coworking and coliving community in a historic setting in Spain. Living and sharing the same facilities with other professionals is the idea that Sun and Co have of work-leisure balance (Sun and Co, 2019). Coconat is also a strong advocator of coliving and coworking community. They have a strong brand reputation in the workation retreat practice and they established themselves as a company who offers location-independent workers the chance to connect with nature in a fantastic location with everything included, from the workspace, the room, and the meals (Coconat, 2019).

Workation Retreats	Location	Main Target Group	Value Proposition
SurfOffice	Spain, Portugal, USA, France, Prague and Germany	Corporate retreats	Delegate the planning and organization of the whole corporate retreat to one workation provider
Wolfhouse	Tenerife, Las Palmas, Tatra Mountains, Island of Krk, England and Bali	Corporate retreats	Access to unique venue network with accommodation, workspaces and activities
Restation	Gran Canaria, Tenerife, Barcelona, and Madrid	Digital nomads and corporate retreats	24/7 support before, during and after the workation retreat to ensure great experience in terms of logistics, hospitality and care.

Table 3: Workation retreats distinguished by location, target group and value proposition.

Workation Retreats

This workation concept is mainly focused on offering workation retreats to the corporate segment. They have specialized themselves on tailoring the needs of many companies to build and plan outstanding workation retreat experiences in suitable and attractive locations. Compared to the workation spaces and coliving spaces, the workation retreat concept doesn't have as their core element the like-minded community because **companies don't want their employees to share their knowledge with external people.** However, this type of concept offers organizations personalized workation retreat packages proven to save costs, effort and time in the structure and logistics of the retreat essential for teams to focus on what matters most.

Examples of workation retreat operators

SurfOffice has become one of the most popular workation retreat operator. They craft unique experience for the team needs, reduce organizational costs and prevent risks during the workation retreat (SurfOffice, 2019). Compared to SurfOffice practices, Wolfhouse enhances the transparency of workation retreat prices in their website and promises workation retreat experiences that boost the productivity and team spirit (WolfHouse, 2019). On the other hand, Restation is growing its market to the corporate team segment. They offer workations for both digital nomads and corporate teams, making them more attractive to a larger audience but less attractive to the organizations audience due to their lack of focus on corporate solutions (Restation, 2019).

Coliving Spaces	Location	Main Target Group	Value Proposition
Flaks	Tenerife, Norway	Entrepreneurs	Offering a platform for adventurous entrepreneurs to share and learn together with the purpose of starting a business
Auf der sonnenseite	Tenerife	Freelancers, digital nomads, entrepreneurs	Spend a week with a few people in Tenerife to live and work in the island of eternal spring
SunWorX	Italy, Mallorca, Netherlands	Freelancers, digital nomads, entrepreneurs	Focus on restoring health on work-life balance in a five-day retreat setting

Table 4: Workation temp distinguished by location, target group and value proposition.

Workation Temp

This type of workation concept is temporary and takes place in different locations based on the clients' demands. Compared to the previous workation concepts, the workation temp **doesn't have full control over the coworking space and the venue space as they tend to come to an end due to the limited amount of time.** Nonetheless, this type of workation concept remains static during the years. The workation temp providers try to offer the same package as they will slowly grow their like-minded community and establish long-term relationships with the host and coworking operators.

Examples of workation temp providers

Flaks, Auf der sonnenseite, SunWorX
 Flaks specialized in adventure workations as a means to create long-lasting relationships between participants due to the exciting new places and the lifestyle of the adventurous mind (Flaks, 2019). Auf der sonnenseite offers temporary workations for small groups who want to go away from the rainy and gray weather of northern Europe to living and working in the sunny island of Tenerife (Auf der sonnenseite, 2019). Compared to the previous workation temporary providers, SunWorX focuses on work-life balance retreats where they prioritize the improvement of happiness, relaxation, and motivation through combining work and physical exercises in a sunny and beautiful environment (SunWorX, 2019).

Key insights from the competitive environment

Apart from the four workation concepts discovered in the competitor analysis, similarities between the concepts have appeared. These workation concepts are being built on the same benefits as the coworking spaces: the need to be part of a community, the openness from like-minded people, and the collaboration setting that these places bring. Nonetheless, compared to several coworking spaces, workation providers are not restricted on membership programs as the workation providers accept participants for short, medium, or long periods. Most of the value propositions of the workation providers are based on offering their services close to a vacation destination, major events (Summits, Expos), or leisure attractions. The majority brand themselves as work-life balance endeavors bringing more importance on the sport element such as surfing (SurfOffice), gliding, (Flaks) or diving (Restation), and sometimes they offer additional amenities to cover the needs of the clients such as catering, transportation, and media management (photography and video presentation).

In Europe, the workation service started in 2013 for digital nomads, compared for corporate teams, this was offered later in 2016 meaning that this service lacks trust to the organizations making it difficult for the workation retreat operators to brand itself as experts in the retreat offer due to the doubtful thinking of the corporate segment (Wolf, 2016). However, thanks to the growth of the like-minded community and the reliability they bring into the workation service, has made easier for workation providers to scale their offering beyond the digital nomad audience. In terms of workspace and accommodation, owning a coworking or venue

space could be more beneficial than depending on the availability of external providers. A likely explanation can be that having on-site accommodation prevents the burden of planning or looking for other venue providers as well as having full control of the premises and tailor the space to meet their clients' needs and expectations. Furthermore, this can also open the doors to future partnerships with a larger workation network, leisure providers, facilitators, event creators or even better, being the exclusive workation retreat operator for corporate teams.

2.4 Positioning of Out of Office

The previous workation concepts identification has helped Out of Office Workations find where they are operating in and how is differentiating itself in the workation market from its direct and indirect competitors. The positioning of Out of Office Workations is illustrated in the following competitor matrix (Figure 5). The matrix is divided into four main categories. The horizontal metric is related to the focus that the workation operator is aiming: from the like-minded community advocates (those targeting digital nomads, freelancers, entrepreneurs, or remote workers) to corporate team strivers (corporate teams or remote teams). The vertical metric is related to the number of coworking and venue providers available in their network (fixed location offer or multiple location offer).

Out of Office Workations position started from the Workation temp concept as they provide temporary workation retreats in different locations several times per year for both the digital nomad and the corporate team audience. The close relationship with coworking and venue providers benefit Out of Office network as these partnerships scale the workation offer to more attractive places around Europe. However, Out of Office still, don't have full control of the work and venue facilities limiting the time and frequency offered. In order to attract the corporate team segment as their main target, Out of Office could position themselves in the Workation retreat concept by entirely focusing their efforts and practices on corporate teams solutions. The target market change from like-minded community advocates (digital nomads, entrepreneurs, freelancers, and remote workers) to corporate team strivers (remote teams, full-

time employees) is a natural transformation that most of the workation operators, that are only offering workation retreats to the corporate segment, have gone through (SurfOffice and Wolfhouse). They all started from building their like-minded community to attract the full-time employees as they feel attracted to the digital nomad lifestyle which combines their ability to work remotely in holiday locations offering a variety of leisure activities. Once the full-time employees engage with this workation experience and learn how to work remotely, they promote this practice to their teams and senior management making it easier for the corporation to embrace and adopt this service.

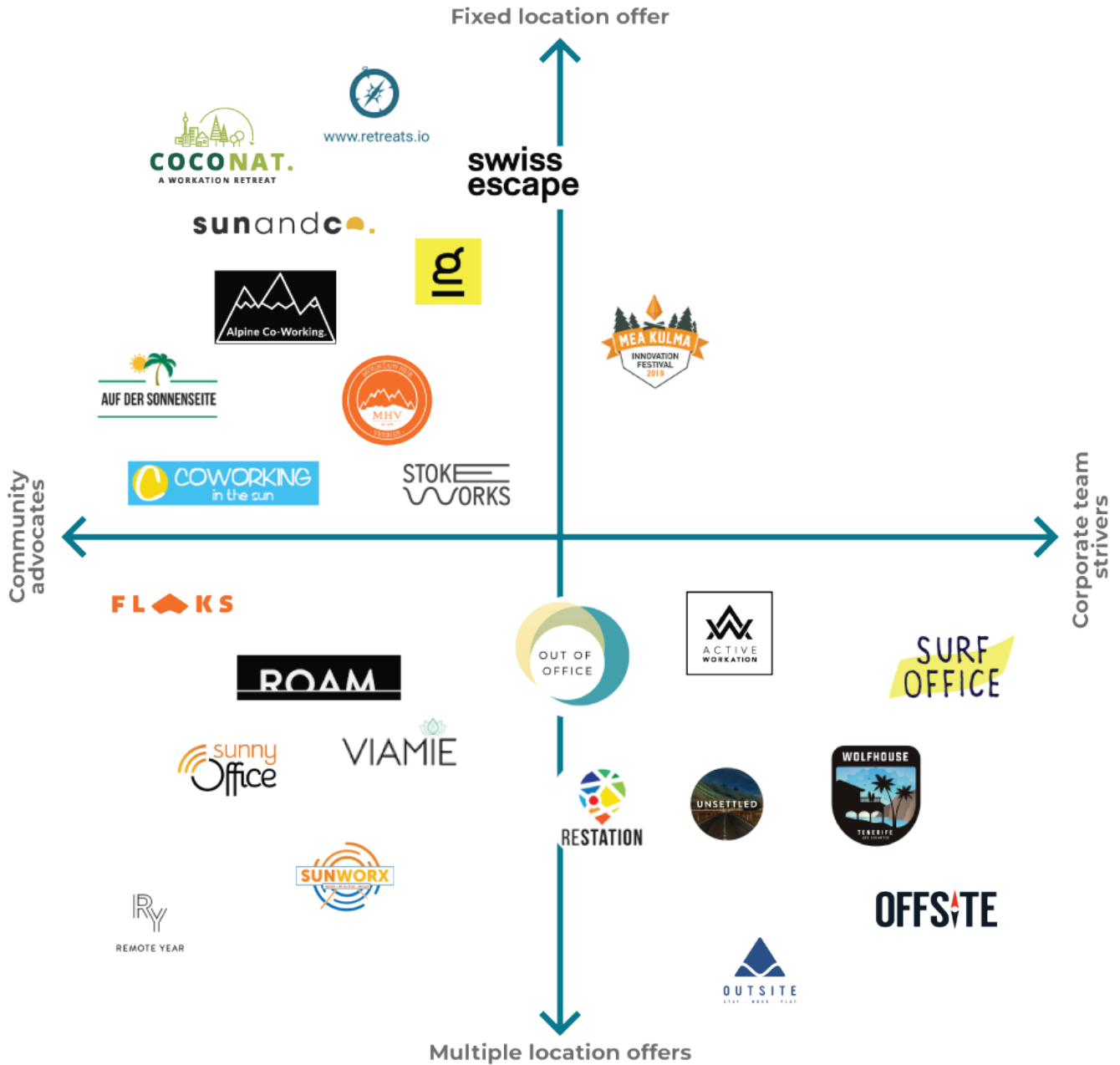


Figure 5: Competitor Matrix of workation operators.

3 Literature Exploration

This chapter describes the findings of the modern workforce, the HRM implications, and the main purposes of a corporate retreat. This chapter understands who are the main actors of the corporate workforce, what are the main challenges corporates have, and how going on a retreat has helped them solve some issues and problems they are having. All these insights helped identify the opportunities and boundaries of workations in the corporate segment.

3.1 Modern Workforce

Jobs are the foundation of not only the financial health of the employee but also dictates the prosperity of their social lives as they give people meaning, purpose and the chance to apply their knowledge to contribute to better societal changes (Bakhshi et al., 2017).

As today's work has evolved from the pure income perspective to a more humane workplace environment, employees, in their majority millennials, are no longer looking for a salary as the ultimate value, instead, the opportunity to thrive professionally and personally in a flexible purpose environment is what they are looking for (Gallup, 2017).

Digitization and mobility have empowered employees to adapt their work-life needs into new ways of working, these results in new challenges that can not be taken lightly as these are forcing organizations to reconsider their working models when the very essence of how, when and where people work are shifting.

In their majority, the millennial generation, the modern workforce, are the main actors within this knowledge-economy era and are the ones engaging and searching for the services of a workation (Wolf, 2016). Their active presence in the labor market has changed the terms of work-life balance, diversity management, skills, motivations, values and aspirations (Manuti & Palma, 2017).

To illustrate the changes made from the active presence of the modern workforce in the labor market, table 1 exemplifies some major differences between the past practices and the future practices of the workforce.

Another characteristic of the modern workforce has is that they are technology-oriented, over-educated, highly ambitious, and open to teamwork. As they are familiar with technology, they generally prefer open and constant communication by being connected twenty-four hours a day. They hold a global perspective on life and seek meaningful roles on highly committed, motivated teams.

A nurturing environment that promotes teamwork is a priority for them as they see more rewarding to success as a team instead of personal attainment (Deal et. al., 2010). Furthermore, their entrepreneurial thinking demands autonomy, the responsibility of critical tasks, immediate feedback with a sense of accomplishment and a high need for corporate engagement and support (Martin, 2005).

Despite their need for urgency, millennials' adaptability thrives in a constantly changing environments, making them beneficial to companies undergoing change processes.

Components	Past Practices	Future Practices
Work	Fixed contract	Self-employed forms of work
Value	High security in the labour market, social benefits and rights	Flexibility and mobility Sense of professional purpose Self-worth and value of time Like-minded team that care and support for each other
Career transfer	Fixed career for life with low possibilities to change and work on other professions	Multiple career choices Frequent changes of job-based on self-interest and motivation Voluntary work
Location	Centralized and preset offices	Alternative Workplace Free choice of work Working from home Working from anywhere Coworking spaces Multi-purpose spaces (e.g. coffee shops, libraries, and universities) Virtual workplace
Training	Practised at the beginning of the job contract, for more, fixed dates and time for limited periods, budget and participants	Independent of time, place and profession Determined by the employee's needs and desires Self-driven and self-directed
Culture	Regulatory work environments Subject to institutional regulations Company oriented	Values that contribute to the relationships between working time and work-life balance Approachability and transparency Accessible and collaborative Employee oriented
Leisure	External to the work environment Limited number of vacations predetermined commonly at the beginning of the year	Opportunities to mix work and leisure and enhance work-life balance Traveling and work is possible Leisure-oriented services reinforce work practices Positive effects on personal relationships and social practices

Table 5: Past and Future practices of the workforce

As already stressed, the modern workforce is considered the digital generation in which the rapid advances in technological innovation have drastically shaped and improve their lives, raising productivity, living standards and average life span, and give them the freedom for personal and professional fulfillment (Pwc, 2018).

However, this also brings risks to the organizations because of the increasing global competition forcing employers to become more competitive (Dekker & Veen, 2015).

Organizations pressures their current workforce with higher workloads to respond quickly to the changing market demands. As a consequence, this constant pressure has an intense deterioration and negative impact on the health and wellbeing of the employees, making them unable to plan and prepare effectively (Eurofound, 2017).

As a result, it's not surprising that more employees are changing their work-life styles as workers with permanent employment contracts no longer experience greater time autonomy and wellbeing at the workplace compared to flexible employees (Felstead et. al., 2015).

Chart 1 shows that workers aged 50 in Europe has now surpassed the younger workers aged under 35 as there's a continuous increase in the ageing workers from 24% in 2005 to 31% in 2015 exceeding the younger workforce from 35% in 2005 to 31% in 2015, making the ageing population the current workforce available for full-time employment contracts (Eurofound, 2017).

The increase in part-time employment from 18% can explain these workforce changes in 2005 to 20% in 2015 and the self-employment preference that represents 50% of the total workforce in Europe.

Another explanation can be the friction between the older generation and the younger generation. While the older generations want job security and structure, the modern workforce wants employability and flexibility as they want to constantly upgrade their skills in a meaningful way.

For them, work is not an income criterion but an opportunity to enrich and fulfill personal and professional goals (Manuti & Palma, 2017).

Senior workers surpassing the young workers

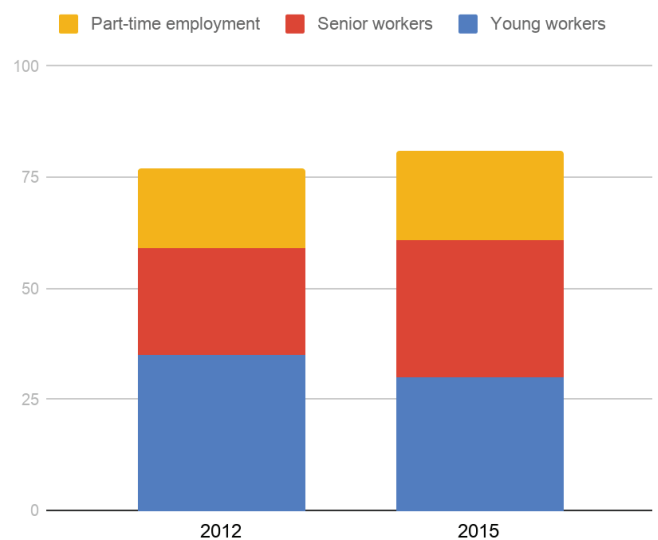


Chart 1: Senior workers surpassing the young workers

Key insights from the modern workforce

This modern workforce research has been made for the reason that they are the most suitable audience for the workation service. Their values and aspirations match the work-life balance style that the service workation is known for as they prefer to work autonomously in a nurturing and collaborative environment where they can fulfill their professional and personal goals.

They have changed the meaning and the value of work, as digitization and mobility have empowered them with the tools to excel in this knowledge-economy era. They are looking for a job that gives them meaning, purpose, and the chance to contribute majorly in society.

As corporates are aware of the importance that this generation represents, they are trying to attract, retain and train this modern workforce because of their over-educated knowledge and technology-oriented skills suitable for today's clients' needs. However, as they pressure their current workforce with higher workloads, the modern workforce feels the loss of autonomy and freedom. For this reason, they prefer to work in a self-employment arrangement.

3.2 HRM Challenges

Thanks to the disruption of the modern workforce in the labor market, Human Resource Management (HRM) is being challenged in the shifting changes in the economy, globalization, and cross-generation friction. (Stone, & Deadrick, 2015).

Since the final value proposition is being addressed to knowledge-intensive workers, exploration of these HRM challenges is needed to know what is the perspective of corporations of the entry of the millennial generation in the labor market and what are they currently doing to satisfy the demands of this modern workforce.

Table 6 shows the context in which the potential HRM challenges take place and summarizes possible opportunities on how these challenges can be addressed.

Globalization

The rise of organizations that operate on a global scale represents a crucial challenge for HRM when bringing consistency in their practices. Managing employees on a global scale raises concerns about the **different attitudes and values of changing demographics and cross-cultural variations** (Burke, & Ng, 2006).

Because of the language barrier, cultural differences, social, political and legal procedures, large companies struggle to develop a coherent culture that aligns the company's vision and mission with the employees' cultural values (Stone, & Deadrick, 2015).

However, globalization has also brought new labor markets, global collaborations and globally distributed teams. From the labor

market perspective, organizations have adopted the outsourcing system where the work is transferred to cheap labor places to strive lower-cost production to remain competitive. This outsourcing method means saving costs from the organization perspective, whereas from the employee perspective means losing their full-time job as basically any type of work that can be done over a wire is at risk of being outsourced (Burke, & Ng, 2006).

From global collaborations, globalization has changed the relationships between employees and employers. Now workers will have jobs in a more temporary, freelance, and contract-based forms. From the employers perspective, it's easier and cheaper to hire employees in a contract work manner, however, employees commitment and loyalty are at risk since the engagement with the company will be minimal.

Service or Knowledge Economy

The nature of work has now changed from a manufacturing-based economy to a service- or knowledge-based economy. This economy emerge from the transformative power of ICT developments and the increased complexity of production systems which trigger the need for skilled and specialized knowledge to deal with the new service developments (Gallouj et. al., 2015).

This new economy has a major impact on HRM as many of the **traditional processes are still defined by the industrial era and tailored by the manufacturing organizations making them obsolete to the knowledge or service organizations** (Stone, & Deadrick, 2015).

Challenges	Context	Opportunities
Globalization	Globalization opens the door to new markets, labor, and globalized distributed teams needed to getting the skills where they are required to be, spreading state-of-the-art knowledge and identify employees which abilities work in favor of global work arrangements	Expand markets for new products and services with no barriers Enhance creativity and innovation due to cultural diversity Global strategic alliances and international cooperative agreements
Service or Knowledge-Economy	Service and knowledge activities dominate the economy, making the knowledge workers' skills and abilities essential for knowledge organization's future success	Knowledge-based jobs that emphasize full autonomy and participation in decision-making process Training and employee skill development Incentive programs fostering employee identification, innovation and retention
Cross-generation friction	The older workers have become the majority of the workforce in the organization, resulting in increased competition for younger workers leading to a war for talent	Transfer of knowledge from the ageing workforce to the modern workforce through mentoring programs by pairing older mentors with new cohorts providing access to specialized skills, experiences and perspectives Ageing workers' advisors on professional and personal career objectives

Table 6: Potential challenges of the field of HRM

Some companies that want to adapt to the shifting changes in the economy, are creating new job categories in the digital sector to contribute to wider employment opportunities attractive for the modern talent as this people is fluently engaged in the digital realm and have a facility to adopt new ways of working (McKinsey Company, 2017).

However, offering digital opportunities does not always guarantee the retention of the modern workforce in the company, as they also want to become key players in the decision-making process of the business. Thus, there is a need for these companies to reconsider work policies and practices to maintain this modern talent and create suitable working conditions (Manuti & Palma, 2017).

In comparison, knowledge organizations prioritize employees' knowledge and skills as drivers for organizational success and therefore contribute to employee retention as individuals' skills are not expandable. Their knowledge-oriented jobs are designed for knowledge workers who want more autonomy, innovation, continuous improvement, and active participation in decision making (Burke, & Ng, 2006).

Cross-generation friction

Previously stressed, it is expected that the ageing workforce will be the majority of the labor market. Coupled with the lower birth rates and the younger workers engaging in higher education instead of entering the job market have resulted in a shrinking labor pool affecting HRM when managing the shortage of skills within the organization.

To address this problem, some organizations have worked in offering benefits to retain the skilled ageing workforce delaying their retirement until qualified replacements can be found or trained (Burke, & Ng, 2006).

Another problem for HRM is the age distribution, since the characteristics, behaviors, values and purposes of the modern workforce will be totally different from the ageing workforce.

This represents a modification in the HRM practices to attract and retain the new cohorts and at the same time manage the complexity of aligning reward and compensation systems with the values of the multiple generations (Stone, & Deadrick, 2015).

Key insights from the HRM Challenges

Some companies have difficulties to cope with the changing nature of work for the reason that their traditional work arrangements are still defined by the industrial era making them unattractive in the eyes of the modern workforce. By knowing the challenges that HRM is having regarding the modern workforce way of working, the final value proposition could be tackled in three possible directions:

- Help knowledge-economy workers find real purpose in their work practices without sacrificing the flexibility to be who they are professionally and personally.
- Create an open and safe space for transparent and constant communication since the modern workforce wishes to collaborate with seniors in a non-restrictive work environment.
- Help companies align their cross-generational workforce and bring opportunities to seniors to transfer their knowledge to the new cohorts.

3.4 Corporate Retreats

Much of the work done in organizations is completed through teamwork, which is the practice of employees working together with their team leaders to achieve a common goal that wouldn't be possible to execute when working alone (Marks et al., 2001).

Finishing the work is not the only purpose of the team, but also the process and the setting of the teamwork practice are important for the accomplishment of the work. Enhancing these elements will enable organizations to manage, select, train, develop and reward skilled talent for effective and engaging team collaboration.

Knowing the importance of teamwork, organizations invest in retreats that will orient teams towards working cooperatively and efficiently to fulfill the organization's strategic goals and performance indicators (Cleary & Horsfall, 2015).

For this reason, this corporate retreat exploration is needed for the purpose of knowing in what way a retreat is used in a corporate level and how corporate teams are solving their problems with the use of retreats.

The purpose of a Retreat

Retreat can be defined as a meeting designed and organized to facilitate the ability of a group to step back from day-to-day activities for a period of concentrated discussion, dialogue, and strategic thinking about their organization's future or specific issues (Malvicini & Serrat, 2017).

Retreats commonly occur in a comfortable and relaxed environment preferably in an external venue to improve workplace relationships and

minimize work distractions in order to bring attention to the collaboration setting and to create a climate of trust (Cleary & Horsfall, 2015).

Careful planning is needed to achieve successful retreat outcomes, therefore a facilitator is crucial for planning and guiding the whole retreat making it easier for the participants to reflect, renew, recommit, refocus, and re-energize by providing a source of increased creativity, productivity and satisfaction (Bower, 2004).

As there are many issues and challenges facing an organization, HR managers and team leaders look forward to retreats with different purposes in mind. Commonly, it's used for three different purposes that are the drive for every other objective about the retreat:

Staff satisfaction

As time and technology change the landscape of the workforce, keeping the employees professionally fulfilled and engaged is a top priority for HR managers and team leaders. To avoid direct financial costs of replacing top employees, a creative retention strategy employed by HR managers and team leaders is hosting retreats. This has helped stabilize and retain strong, trustworthy talent (Clevenger, 2007). This type of retreat has been a powerful practice in today's competitive market offering bonding experiences, improving team relationships.

Strategic vision

The leadership team is usually engaged in this type of retreat to establish a new strategic direction. It produces insights and reflection on the current business to further implement smart

actions that will give direction to the company (McBratney, 2015). Major decision-making processes are made in this type of retreat as the participants set aside time for analysis, evaluation and future direction of the organization (Marks et al., 2001).

Task fulfillment

This type of retreat is based on action processes. Common practices are monitoring progress by tracking the task and working on it until the mission is accomplished (Bento, 2017). Team leaders orchestrate the timing and sequence of the work by giving assistance to team members to perform and deliver their tasks on time. The assistance may occur by providing team member feedback, coaching, or guidance (Hackman & Wageman, 2005).

Table 7 presents a summary of the retreat purposes, challenges, participants, objectives, and expected outcomes to give more insight into the structure of the three different retreats.

Purpose	Challenges	Participants	Objectives	Outcomes
Staff Satisfaction	Loss of top talent Negative workforce morale Skillset shortage Conflict management	Any employee from any department	Revitalization Team building Team effectiveness Team engagement Retaining and training Positive workplace Creating a common framework and point of reference Improving working relationships and increasing trust	Professional development Shared positive social experience Staff satisfaction, rewards, and recognition Moral commitment
Strategic Vision	Outdated processes Misalignment of the workplace culture Unrelated values with brand strategy Disconnection of business units	Leadership teams such as the owners, co-founders, top managers and business leaders	Mission analysis Goal specification Strategy formulation and planning Fostering a collective vision Developing annual goals, objectives, and budgets	Developing a mission statement for a specific unit Set values and core beliefs Define a goal setting
Task Fulfilment	Lack of guidance Inadequate structure Mismanagement of time and resources Misalignment of project requirements	Team Leaders with core team members	Monitoring progress Assigning responsibilities Managing team boundaries Challenging the team Team coaching Tracking milestones for project delivery Generating creative solutions for entrenched problems	Group efficiency Recognition of teamwork Perceived capabilities to perform on time Capable of working together

Table 7: The different purposes of a retreat

Key insights from the Corporate Retreats

One way to address the challenges that corporations have regarding their workforce management, training, development and reward system are solved in a retreat service.

Corporations know that allowing their teams to go on a retreat has resulted in measurable outcomes that contribute to the success of the company.

The common purposes retreats are used for are: staff satisfaction, which is the retreat were team-building practices and bonding experiences are offered to improve the teams' relationship, strategic vision, which is the retreat for leaders to talk about the future of the company, and task fulfillment, which is the retreat where hands-on work is executed.

These findings will help as guidelines and inspiration for the final value proposition design to ensure that the corporate expectations and needs are covered.

4 Field Exploration

This chapter describes the service design research made for the semi-structured interviews, data analysis and synthesis. This is with the purpose of investigating the workation phenomenon from expert workation providers to further conceptualize new value propositions for the corporate segment.

4.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Developments in ICT makes the work possible from anywhere at any time opening the opportunity for employees to look for options within their organizations to blend their professional and personal lives.

Providing flexible work arrangements is a major HRM practice that determines the retention and attraction of skilled talent (Spreitzer et al., 2017).

Changes in the nature of work lead to changing work-life balance behaviors to which HRM needs to respond. Out of Office Workation appears to respond with their workation retreat offer the needs for employees to have a flexible work arrangement in an attractive setting enhancing the work-life balance they are desperately looking for. However, why and how does the workation service currently respond to this emerging need?

Based on the assumption that there is a growing demand for blending work and leisure activities, field research about the current value proposition of the workation service for the corporate segment has to be done to find explicit and observable knowledge.

The areas of interest are the need for organizations to give their teams a workation service and how the workation providers are responding to these needs, thus, this service design research focuses on the lens of various workation providers experiences on how to offer a suitable workation service to the corporate segment. In order to meet the aim of the project, five objectives were formulated from these initial research questions:

Research question:

What are the motives and priorities of mature corporates around workations?

How to position the service accordingly as an attractive opportunity for the segment?

First, the workation concept needs to be clarified in order to talk about the value proposition that each of the providers offers to their client needs. Consequently, how to build a suitable proposal based on the problems to be solved. For background references, importance on how the corporate segment reached the workation providers is investigated along with the stakeholders and partners crucial for the workation service to work. Lastly, both successful and challenging outcomes are discussed to bring insight into how to further improve the current service.

Objectives	Method
Grasp the concept of workation and the value proposition behind it	Website content analysis of competitors that offer workation retreats for the corporate team segment. Expert interviews with workation providers.
Build the workation proposal Problems to be solved or goals to meet	Expert interviews with workation providers.
Reaching the target group Principal contact or social channel	Expert interviews with workation providers.
Stakeholders and partners Important players that make the workation service work	Expert interviews with workation providers.
Outcomes from successful experiences or learnings from challenging situations	Expert interviews with workation providers.

Table 8: Research objectives

The principal methodology used to successfully reach the aforementioned objectives is conducting semi-structured interviews with workation providers experts in the workation retreat offer for corporate teams.

Conducting interviews with the potential direct and indirect competitors of Out of Office made easier the understanding of workations, how they actively applied it and why. In this way, this would guarantee the quality of the data gathered by having a better judgment of the business, what methods they employed, and what are they holding them back.

Table 5: Past and Future practices of the workforce

4.2 Service Design Research

As mentioned in chapter 1 the approach followed in this master thesis is the service design approach as it facilitates the execution of rapid prototyping to test solutions in an iteratively and quickly way while generating new insights and ideas from a firm foundation on real-life practices (Stickdorn et al., 2010).

The service design research is used to understand the user, their motivations, and their behaviors. Although the final target for this master thesis is the corporate segment, it is necessary to know the backstage operations and business processes that enable the front-stage success in order to gain a holistic view of the workation service.

Research Planning

Qualitative research method

This service design research follows an exploratory research which objective is to find answers to “why” questions, hence, a qualitative research method is executed in order to generate rich data that will further become ground theory. This research method is suitable as it can be open-ended, exploratory, organic and flexible, which will evolve further to suit the needs of the project (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The answers gathered in this qualitative research take into account the participants experiences and personal opinions which in return this will help generate a range of insights that will evolve in ideas to create new value for Out of Office Workations.

Existing service context

This research is made for the existing service workation within an existing situational context. Workation providers are the first contact for this research, however, current customers, employees and stakeholders involved are observed and investigated when they interact in the context of the workation service.

Sample selection

The sample selection refers to the people that can take part in this research. For this master thesis, the maximum-input sampling is followed (Stickdorn et al., 2010). This means finding workation providers that have a comprehensive overview of the entire service in order to get the maximum input from their knowledge and experiences. The previous website content analysis suggested potential interview partners for the semi-structured process.

Sample size

The sample size of this master thesis remained flexible until theoretical saturation was reached (Stickdorn et al., 2010). This means as soon as the data collected stops bringing new insights from the recurring patterns and starts to confirm the same patterns over and over again.

Data collection

As the workation phenomenon is a novel topic with no science or academic background, exploratory research is needed to find available data and information from various methods such as secondary data, website content analysis, and semi-structured interviews.

Company	Country	Main Offer
SurfOffice	Spain, Portugal, USA, France, Prague, Germany	Workation retreats Workation retreat category
ReStation	Gran Canaria, Tenerife, Barcelona, Madrid	Workation retreats Workation retreat category
Swiss Escape	Switzerland, Grimentz	Coworking & Coliving Coliving Space category
Flaks	Norway, Tenerife	Coliving Workation Temp category
Nijskens Branding Agency	Portugal, Lisbon	Workation retreats Workation Temp category
Auf der Sonnenseite	Tenerife	Coworking & Coliving Workation Temp category
Roam	Bali, Maimi, Tokyo, San Francisco	Coworking & Coliving Coliving Space category

Table 9: Workation providers interview partners.

Expert Interviews

As mentioned before, semi-structured interviews were conducted to successfully reach the five objectives previously formulated (Appendix A). In total seven interviews were conducted, with participants from Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Norway, the Netherlands, and the USA. All the interviews were recorded and executed via Skype lasting approximately 1 hour. The interviewees received beforehand a brief introduction indicating the master thesis goal, the aim of the research and the key topics discussed in the interview. However, the interview guide was not provided in order to avoid biased answers and to ensure free responses to the open questions.

Table 5: Past and Future practices of the workforce

4.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis will follow an inductive approach in which the research will immerse into the data and generate categories and insights from the data itself (Stickdorn et al., 2010). Following an inductive approach is suggested in the field of service design as the identification of customer needs is mostly an inductive theory-generating approach (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The data from the workation operators' interviews are analyzed, categorized and coded to generate a codebook (Appendix B). This forces the researcher to look into the data for deeper structures and find patterns that will be presented as key insights (Saldaña, 2012).

Findings

The findings are composed of the results from the workation operators interviews and are used as a guideline material for the final design. These findings are clustered in fifteen categories.

During this sense making phase of analyzing the interview transcripts, the connections between categories of clusters gradually became apparent. This section describes the fifteen categories in four themes illustrating their content with interviewee quotes to enrich the category.

Hearing of workations

This first theme include the categories of how the corporate teams approach to workation operators, what do they hear about them, and what they think about workation.

Workation service

“The workation is perceived as me-time; a time to work on yourself professionally and spiritually.”

Knowing the meaning of workation was one of the first questions asked in the interview guide in order to have a common understanding of their workation practice. The meaning that the workation operators are using in their business is very varied. However, there are similarities in naming them as collaborative bond practices were work and leisure combines in an attractive (vacation destination) setting. Others directly addressed it as a company event where the team members travel and work together. The workation operators categorized in the coliving space concept give the description as a: “coliving and coworking practice for full-time employees”.

Building the community

“Freelancers build the community, they don't bring money but they build the idea behind the workation service.”

As mentioned before in the website content analysis, building the community is a core element of the workation service that plays an important part essential for attracting the corporate team segment as they feel lured to this remote lifestyle. The community also works as a project incubator, skill talent pool, and network platform where a large mix of professionals gather together to discuss future ideas, share learnings or work on each other's projects.

Channels of communication

“Having a blog is important to communicate the workation offer.”

Most of the workation providers have a blog section on their website pages that announces their last workation retreat experiences. Content creates a good relationship with clients as corporate teams can read about how the workation retreat works and what work and leisure activities are offered in this service. As an example of successful communication with

corporate teams, SurfOffice has shared content on learnings and successful outcomes gained during their workation retreat offerings. This just proved that being honest and transparent is the best policy to gain the trust of their clients.

Principal Contact

“It’s difficult to reach this customer but most of them come by a recommendation of the previous customers.”

The principal contact is about the people that reach the workation providers and ask for the workation service. Start-ups founders, HR managers and team leaders are the principal contacts that ask for this kind of service. Since this answer was expected a probe question was anticipated to know which channel works the best to reach the corporate teams. As surprised for the workation operators they are unsure which channel triggers the corporate teams to reach them. The most common answers are through word of mouth and recommendations from other clients. Other workation providers talked about offering themed events in which potential clients are invited to participate and discuss current trends. In this way, participants know about the workation operators and later they bring their whole team to participate in this service.

Planning and structure of the workation

This second theme includes the categories of how this service is built. Starting from the principal value propositions of workations, following to the importance of the accommodation and the relevant partners of workations. Expectation management of the corporate segment is also included in this theme due to the relevance that is managing the expectations of the corporate segment from the

beginning of the workation planning.

Potential Value Proposition

“Organize and take care of all the logistics by speaking the same language.”

The potential value proposition is discussed with all the workation providers during the interview process. Each of them has a unique selling point that differentiates them from competitors, but they all share the organization and planning skills that make them experts on the workation retreat offer. Another commonality found is the availability to offer accommodation in attractive locations, mostly in Mediterranean places due to the exciting sport opportunities.

Delegation

“The team leader can delegate the organization to us so they don’t need to worry about anything and they don’t have to spend resources and time.”

As stressed in the value proposition category, the delegation of tasks is a fundamental part of the workation service. From the corporate perspective, this delegation practice means allowing workation providers to be responsible for the whole structure of the retreat and organize all the logistics needed to make all the team members participate and enjoy the whole experience without worrying of any detail. Another important aspect is, by delegating the organization to the workation operator, the corporates can save time and resources needed for their main job priorities. From the workation operator perspective, being responsible for the whole logistics means facilitating the process for the corporate teams and gaining their trust for future opportunities.

Accommodation

“The accommodation it’s very important because that’s the first touch point that the team will have with the service.”

Having suitable accommodation is the first requirement that the workation providers have to present in order to pass the corporate team approval. This means choosing the right venue for the retreat in the right place at the right time including full furnished room facilities for all the participants, close to an attractive location (holiday, nature, event destination), and with a proper workspace with high internet quality. The search for these all-inclusive venues is an almost impossible task that all the workation providers have to endure.

Strategic Partners

“We try to really think and work with the best partners.”

Relevant partnerships are beneficial for the workation service to be successful. Local tourism, local hosts, expert speakers, facilitators, coaches are some partners that all the workation providers used to offer some extra services to their clients. On the other hand, is associated with location operators is more important even for the workation providers that already are owners of an accommodation site. By having a large network of venues at their disposal they have more opportunities to extend their services on other locations.

Managing the expectations

“Corporates often expect to get very fast input and results in the new work.”

Workation providers mentioned several times that one of the main limitations when selling the workation services is managing the unreachable

expectations that corporates have regarding the workation retreat. Some expectations they have are reasonable assumptions that will happen naturally in the workation experience. Working against loneliness in a social environment with proper workspace facilities are some reasonable expectations that corporate teams will find in the workation service. On the other hand, receiving very fast input from hosts accompanied with instant results and adaptation in the new way of working are some unreasonable expectations that a lot of corporate teams have regarding the workation service. For these reasons, some workation providers have invested in an Expectation Manager to have good communication with clients about what is the workation service and what they can expect from the service.

The needs of workation

This third theme includes the categories of how what the corporate segment is trying to achieve in the workations. Expert workation operators gave relevant information about what goals corporates want to tackle during the workation.

Achieve teams' goals

“The goals are so different from one company to another, but three standard patterns arise: vision retreats, practical retreats and team-building retreats.”

This category is one of the most important as this directly talks about the needs for corporate teams to demand a workation retreat service. The common goals the corporate teams want to tackle during the workation service are:

Motivation and retention of their top talent by trying new team experiences to bond and build personal relationships outside of the work setting,

Need for an intense work environment with no distractions away from the daily work noise to have productive workation session and deliver on time,

And the opportunity to have a brand new vision of the future direction of the company

Team Attraction

“Everybody wants to work with a company that organizes team retreats right? It says a lot about how they care about their employees’ happiness.”

With no intention to talk about the potential of workation retreats as an element to attract and retain skilled employees, workation providers mentioned that most of their corporate clients send their teams to a workation retreat by means of branding themselves as a company that cares for their employees’ happiness. Team-building or trust-building activities are the most common requests. Other workation operators share the hiring portal website of their clients in their blog to let future talent know that some companies care about the well-being of their employees and invest in workation retreats.

Work-life balance

“Employees want to experience the remote lifestyle and having a balance between their work and leisure time it’s their motivation to manage it.”

Reaching a work-life balance was a major demand mentioned from the workation providers. They stressed the practice of remote

working by presenting the elements of freedom, flexibility and autonomy to work digitally everywhere anytime. Most of the workation providers assist their corporate teams’ clients to feel in charge of their work duties while being a tourist destination. Work-life balance also means active participation in the community, meaning that consuming local products and giving something back to the local community brings also the satisfaction of having a work-life balance.

Cultural changes

“The workation is a starter, it slowly starts infecting the company world and then that’s the opportunity to change the cultural mindset.”

Some full-time employees have adopted the workation service as a cultural changemaker. As some employees have learned how to manage their work remotely and see the benefits of charging their energy with exciting leisure activities, they see the workation service as an innovative and creative approach that can be embraced in their companies. For this reason, most of the corporate teams come with the idea that these workations deal with digitization, transformation process, and change management.

Workation Outcomes

This last theme includes the categories of the successes and learnings scenarios of workations. From the successful perspective, being able to contribute and impact the corporate team in a meaningful way is the most rewarding outcome that workation operators are enjoying more. From the learnings perspective, the financial burden of booking attractive venues on time and managing large groups, are great challenges that workation operators are facing in their daily practices.

Successful outcomes

“As soon as the corporate teams see the benefits of the workation service, they want to engage in more experiences.”

Professional and personal development, changes of their mindset by practising the freedom of working remotely, opportunities to be productive in a design sprint setting, are some positive outcomes that corporate teams have experienced when participating in the workation services. However, the best outcome that any workation operator can desire is to have a long-lasting relationship with one corporate team client as this means being the exclusive workation operator for their future needs.

Financial burden

“We, as workation organizers, pay a lot of money in advance to book the accommodation without fully knowing that clients will book our services.”

Many learnings were explained and reviewed with the workation providers as soon as the challenge topic was discussed. Not having enough time to find the perfect venue or not having the minimum capacity to have their

investment back are the most challenging factors that the workation operators have to deal with. Among others is the difficulty to manage large groups for a large amount of time, or even relying blindly on external partners to give a proper service to their corporate clients.

Now, with the help of the literature exploration, specifically discovering the corporate's use of a retreat, having an array of different workation concepts and having investigated the workation operators perspective, it is possible to answer the research questions of this thesis: First, What are the motives and priorities of mature corporates around workations?

Table 10 shows an overview of the different motives that corporates have regarding the workation service.

Motives	Description	Sub-categories	Example
Work	The motive detected is related to doing hands-on work, strategic thinking work, or team-building purposes.	Hands-on work	"Teams just want to work on their projects and finish as fast as possible"
		Strategic thinking	"Their motive is to go on a workation and think about the future of the company"
		Team-building	"They like to send their teams to a workation to bond and work on their relationships"
Learning	Learning is a common drive for employees as they want to keep themselves trained and prepare for future opportunities.	Professionally	"They are looking for personal guidance in our workations"
		Personally	"They just want to know how it's like to be in a workation"
		Novelty	"Our prices are cheaper than a travel agency"
Venue	Venue refers to the accommodation of the workation associated with the infrastructure and space.	Cost-benefit	"Our prices are cheaper than a travel agency"
		Facilities	"We offer attractive workspaces, in-house or coworking deals"
Location	Location represents the wish to work in an attractive place with an enjoyable environment and participate in different activities ruled by that specific location.	Environment	"They want to escape from the harsh winter"
		Attractiveness	"Mallorca is a common location preference"
		Activities	"Surfing, hiking, or cycling are very popular activities"

Table 10: Principal motives of the corporate segment part A

Motives	Description	Sub-categories	Example
Delegation	Teams want to have all the workation solved from the logistics to the participants' coordination.	Logistics	"We are in charge of the whole logistics of the workation"
		Coordination	"Making sure the participants are there, safe and sound"
		Convenience	"They like to send their teams to a workation to bond and work on their relationships"
Change	Workation seems to be the driver of cultural change within the organization, as well as the interest to change the lifestyle or have some free time.	Culture	"They think that workations are an answer to a better work culture"
		Lifestyle	"They want to learn and live like a digital-nomad"
		Time-off	"They just want to relax and enjoy the workation"
Community	The community represents the wish for having a platform where networking practices, project incubators and share-learnings are promoted.	Networking	"They like to meet and connect with like-minded people"
		Incubators	"They want to know some potential business partners"
		Share -learnings	"It's just about getting inspired by people's learnings"

Table 10: Principal motives of the corporate segment part B

Having outlined these different motives and priorities, the opportunities of the workation service can be developed. It is now possible to speculate about some possible solutions to the workation service out of these findings and with the purpose of responding to the next question: How to position the service accordingly as an attractive opportunity for the segment?

Workation as a multipurpose trip

Work-related practices are one of the main motives that corporate teams use workations, but that doesn't always mean that this goal is the only thing that they are looking for in the workation. The workation service has the potential to combine multiple benefits in one package in which the aim of getting the work done is mixed with professional and inspirational workspaces, recreation activities for the team in the attractive destination, and/or volunteering in socially responsible activities for the local good.

Workation as a development agent

Learning has been another common motive factor that rules the goal of a workation. From a professional or personal perspective, a workation can offer means for corporate teams to allow their employees to develop themselves further in new business areas that will be beneficial for corporate success. This comes from the increasing pressure of companies to attract top talent, and from the workers wish to stay employable, skilled, and continuously educated.

Workation as a work-life balance advocate

Often, workation providers have offered relaxation and reward-system programs to corporate teams within their workation services. For corporates, this means improving the work-life balance of

their workforce as the workation promises a change from the daily office routine and the opportunity to disconnect and recharge for the health and sanity of the workers enabling them individual freedom and flexibility.

These three possible solutions are just a first inspiring iteration on how to position the service accordingly for the corporate segment. In the next chapter, a customer profile is defined, selected, and investigated with the purpose of creating a more varied and suitable value proposition design that can help Out of Office to expand their workation offer to new market segments.

4.4 Synthesis

This synthesis is a reflection on the workation exploration, literature exploration and the field exploration before jumping into the next chapter which is the Customer Profile Exploration.

Before moving forward to the design solution, a synthesis process is executed with all the insights gathered. Some of the most important insights are underlined in color. The reason for this is the importance these sentences describe the most valuable insights for this project.

They are divided into three categories:

- **Guidelines** the guidelines applied to the insights that have helped define the design solution, either to arrive at a more concrete solution or to discard focus areas.
- **Inspiration** the inspiration insights did not play an important part in the design, but they have helped shape the decision tree process as an inspiration source.
- **Challenges** these sentences are related to the insights that present limitations or barriers related to the workation service and its practice.

5 Customer Profile Exploration

A wide range of insights were gathered through the literature exploration, website content analysis, and expert workation interviews. During the synthesis, these insights were clustered and combined to elicit differences and similarities that helped clarify the opportunities and challenges of Out of Office. This chapter presents the next step of this project, which is finding a suitable customer profile and offering a solution that resonates with their needs. To find the ideal customer profile, new interviews with potential clients were made resulting in three different directions. At the end, the consulting customer profile was selected for the Value Proposition Canvas exercise to make a value proposition suitable, visible and tangible.

5.1 Value Proposition Canvas

The Value Proposition Canvas helps create value and comes from two building blocks of the Business Model Canvas: the Value Proposition and the Customer Segments (Osterwalder et al., 2015). These two building blocks are the two sides of this canvas; the Customer Profile comes from the Customer Segments which describes and clarifies the customer pains, gains and jobs, and the Value Map comes from the Value Proposition which describes what is the new value intention for that specific customer. The purpose of this canvas is to create Fit between the new value generated and the corporate team segment by offering pain relievers and gain creators that match the customer segment jobs, pains and gains.

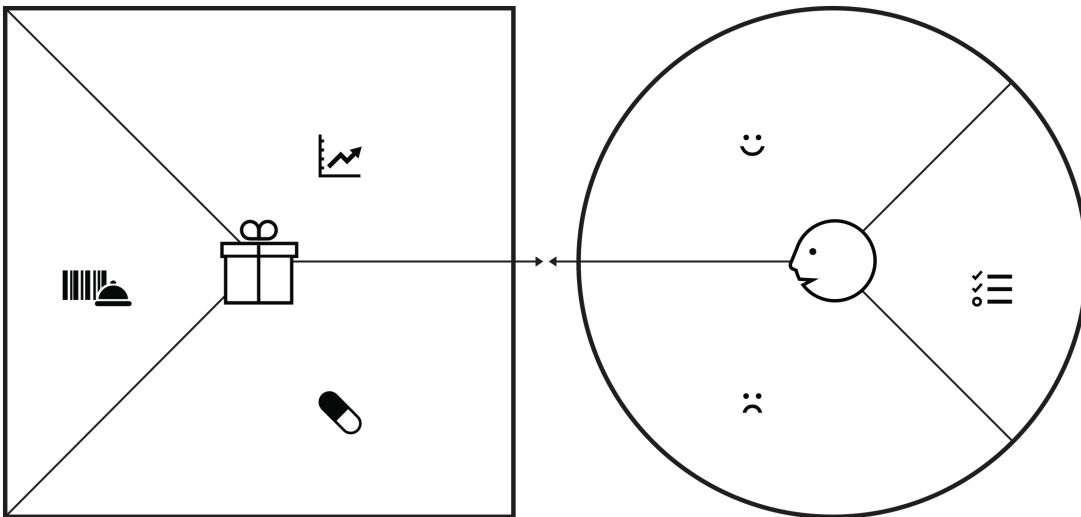


Figure 6: Value Proposition Canvas

5.2 Customer Profile

Potential client interviews were conducted to know what tasks are they trying to solve, how do they manage their teams, how do they communicate with their teams, and what were their current experiences with retreats (Appendix C). Six interviews were conducted, with participants from Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and the USA. All the interviews were recorded and executed via Skype lasting approximately 1 hour. The interviewees are selected on purpose as any of these might approach to Out of Office for a project. They received beforehand a brief introduction showing the master thesis goal, the aim of the research and the key topics discussed in the interview. However, the interview guide was not provided to avoid biased answers and to ensure free responses to the open questions.

Company	Type of Industry	Job Title
Festo GmbH, Germany	Control and Automation company	Product Training
Robert Bosch GmbH, Germany	Engineering and technology company	Management Consulting
Thought Works	Software consultancy	Team Leader and Project Management
Moving the Needle	OKR consultancy	Leadership Consultant
Modern Tribe	Digital agency	CEO at Modern Tribe
EY	Professional services firm	Team Lead Manager and Consultant

Table 11: Potential client interview partners.

The key findings of these interviews showed three different perspectives of retreats.

The yellow company, Festo GmbH, stressed the idea that having a retreat for training purposes is important to keep the different countries aligned from a product and sales management perspective.

As this company has offices in different regions, they have the need to create these training retreats for three main purposes: first get the training and information about the latest programs and learn about it, second: share experiences between participants from other regions and trainers which are technical specialist from the headquarters, and third: offer a space for networking activities to get to know colleagues from other regions to give and get feedback directly.

These training retreats have a huge impact in their company as they have presented valuable results in terms of retaining and training their workforce for the reason that these retreats are participant-oriented. Participant-oriented means that the participants, product managers and sales managers, choose what training they would like to have in these retreats.

Moreover, these retreats are complemented with evening events that reinforce the relationship between colleagues which are three principal categories: action-base activities (hiking, cycling, running), networking-base activities (barbeque nights, dinner events, bar events), and social responsibility activities (planting trees, preparing their own food from a local market).

“We create a participant-oriented training twice a year for 300 people to allow the trainers and participants to share their knowledge, connect, and have a chance to meet colleagues behind the screen”

- Product Training specialist

The red companies, BOSCH, Moving the Needle and EY, emphasized the idea of having a retreat as a professional consulting service. They considered that having a retreat was fundamental to address three main objectives:

- Discuss the idea of a strategic. Necessary for leaders that need to meet and discuss important mission, vision and strategic milestones. The task of these consultants is to put themselves in the position of moderators and motivate the participants to reflect, learn out of their feedback, and define the next steps for company success.
- Get to know their teammates. Here, the consultants role transform into coach companion to help participants develop themselves and discover their personalities outside their daily work to check their compatibility with their team, and ensure their teamwork dynamics independent from their original job descriptions.
- Operative problem-solving. For this retreat, participants' main objective is to work on something and get it done as fast as possible. The consultant's job is to facilitate the retreat and help them get their own conclusions as fast as possible.

The consultants pointed out that 90% of their retreats are executed in a different setting, a productive natural environment, with the intention to make the participants leave their four walls and motivate them to have a different perspective.

Participants are aware that they can not always innovate or think disruptively inside their usual work environment because their mind, routine, and behavior will be the same. Moreover, the consultants have recognized that there is a magic size of a team which is 10 to 12 participants due to easier management and effective communication.

From these three main objectives it's perceived that the role of a consultant is not always fixed. Being a coaching, facilitator, moderator, and mediator at the same time in a retreat has presented a frustration in the consultants' job due to the expectations of the client is potentially high as they assume that the consultant will execute all these roles in a retreat, which is really hard to manage as they have to differentiate the roles in the right moment at the right time.

Even more, sometimes the clients assume that the consultant will organize and plan the whole structure and agenda of the retreat. This false assumption has created a demotivation from the clients' side as they don't have time to organize the retreat.

“It’s not my job to plan and organize the retreat. My job is to bring some questions to my client, the know-how, and the content of it. I don’t want the responsibility of organizing and planning the logistics” - Leadership Consultant

From the blue companies, ThoughtWorks and Modern Tribe, having a retreat is a main part of their business. These companies, Thoughtworks and Modern Tribe, are remote base companies that need to have physical team meetings several times per year to keep the flow of work and trust between their international teams effective. Three main purposes are mentioned by these remote advocates:

- Trust retreat: a trust retreat's intention is to meet everybody and live together for a certain amount of time to build trust between teammates and have a personal relationship independent of their job. This retreat is fundamental for the remote-base companies as they have the constant challenge of feeling disconnected from their teams and from their company as there's no constant colleague interaction in their daily work lives.
- Vision retreat: this type of retreat is considered as a leadership retreat where directors are gathered together to talk and discuss the company's future. To enhance the content of the discussion, motion activities are necessary to make leaders think from a different perspective by shifting their mental space and being inspired or stimulated by external factors occurring in the environment.
- Focus working retreat: this type of retreat is used when things have to get done. Teams are gathered in one place, shut down their other responsibilities and are focused on solving one specific project. Their setting is a quiet place with a natural environment, where no external factors can stimulate them to avoid distractions.

It is interesting to note that these retreats represent 30% of their annual budget, which is a significant investment that travel agencies are not correctly addressing due to the lack of experience and low quality of services.

For this reason, these remote companies have organized their own retreats and work on a standard solution to avoid wasting their workforce capital in organizing and planning the retreats which is 30% to 40% of their operational time.

“Travel agencies are not giving me the experience that I’m looking for. There is definitely a gap in creating a really meaningful corporate retreat”
- CEO Modern Tribe

After analyzing the potential client interviews, a proper definition of the customer profile is required before generating statements on each part of the customer jobs, pains and gains.

As the main target of this project is the corporate segment, an appropriate customer profile has to be selected. Criteria for selecting the appropriate team are; teams should come from knowledge-based economy organization, preferably digitally driven, that provides flexible work arrangement opportunities in the categories of management teams; senior managers directing and coordinating their teams, and project teams; execute specialized time-constrained tasks and then disband (Sundstrom & al., 2000). Likewise, the composition of this team can be strategic project leaders managing a group of employees and combining their attributes to have a powerful influence on the processes and outcomes.

Three types of teams have been detected from the potential client interviews:

Global teams

Location independent team members from a global organization who work together to achieve common goals. They work virtually, remotely and independently through the use of ICT, expanding their opportunities to a wider talent pool.

Challenges: As they are geographically dispersed with different work time schedules, they have limited opportunities to communicate and even more limited to have face-to-face interactions. Barriers in communication and collaboration are the common difficulties that virtual teams face. As being global teams means working with people from different cultural backgrounds and different languages. Hence, establishing a common purpose and alignment with the barriers of language and cultural diversity can be challenging, as there is a risk of being misunderstood, confused, or offended. Having constraints on their communication generates unclear role expectations, lack of motivation, and trust between team members.

Opportunities for Out of Office: When team members are separated by distance and have a high level of dependencies between each other, there’s a need to have trust between them to work effectively and collaboratively. By bringing the global teams together for the purpose of having a designated allocated time for activities that help relationship-building, meaning that when doing regular face-to-face meetings the communication between team members will develop some deeper collaborations that will reinforce the social bonding on a personal level.



Figure 7: Global teams

Regional teams

Team members who don't work together but have the same job and profession working on the same company in charge of delivering results on their assigned regional area. They are multi-site parties co-located in different locations across the region sharing responsibilities and objectives. Compared to global teams, these co-located groups share a physical workspace making face-to-face collaboration accessible and available. Common reasons for them to meet face-to-face with other regional teams are exclusively for hands-on training sessions, activation of new products or annual guideline meetings.

Challenges: some urgencies encountered in these teams are the need to transfer the valuable knowledge from the older generation to the next generation and therefore, train them and teach them accordingly. Another reason for regional teams to share their knowledge is to avoid the repetition of mistakes that can easily be solved by communicating with other regional teams that already solve the same problem. Furthermore, differences in values, skills, motivations and aspirations across the generations have generated friction making the relationship between team members undesirable and troublesome. Preferences and demands of new cohorts can lead to misunderstandings as well as concerns that influence team engagement, resulting in problems of employee retention and turnover.

Opportunities for Out of Office: the workation service can help solve some challenges that HRM has from the demanding modern workforce and avoid risks of future mistakes. Some practices can be offering a knowledge-sharing platform

where seniors can be mentors for the new cohorts and teach them to thrive professionally and personally in a nurturing environment that promotes teamwork. Likewise, the knowledge-sharing platform can also work as an opportunity for regional teams to have physical gatherings where sharing their learnings, best practices, and experiences is encouraged to help them prevent making the same mistakes as other teams did and together build and develop new approaches to solve their current business problems and aligning their regional strategies for the next quarter.



Figure 8: Regional teams

Consulting teams

To be more specific, this description is explained by the relationship of consultants with their clients instead of the relationship between consultant and consultant.

This team is composed by expert multidisciplinary members who work together to provide professional help, advice, or guidance to a variety of clients exposed to different problems and industries. Common practices of consulting teams are constantly traveling to work near their clients' premises as well as managing different projects at the same time.

Challenges: as consultants have to work closely with their clients, effective collaboration is essential to deliver the appropriate solutions or design strategies accordingly to their needs. Likewise, the success of the consulting team highly depends on building strong relationships with the clients.

To set a collaborative environment, facilitating a workshop is a common practice made by the consultants to encourage the clients to be creative and develop concepts together.

This ideal collaborative scenario is sometimes blocked by the limited or restricted premises of the clients' offices making the consultants responsible for the coordination and execution of the whole structure of the workshop setting instead of focusing on their actual consulting task which is the content and activities of the workshop.

Opportunities for Out of Office: to alleviate the pressure, time and resources of consultants for finding a suitable place to facilitate their workshops, the workation service takes part in the full coordination, arrangement, planning and structure of the workshop setting covering the space, materials, and catering needed. From the leisure part, providing recreational activities can enhance an ongoing engagement outside the traditional project-based model ensuring the success of the consulting team relationship with their clients which is crucial to understand the client's issues and create long-lasting bonds.

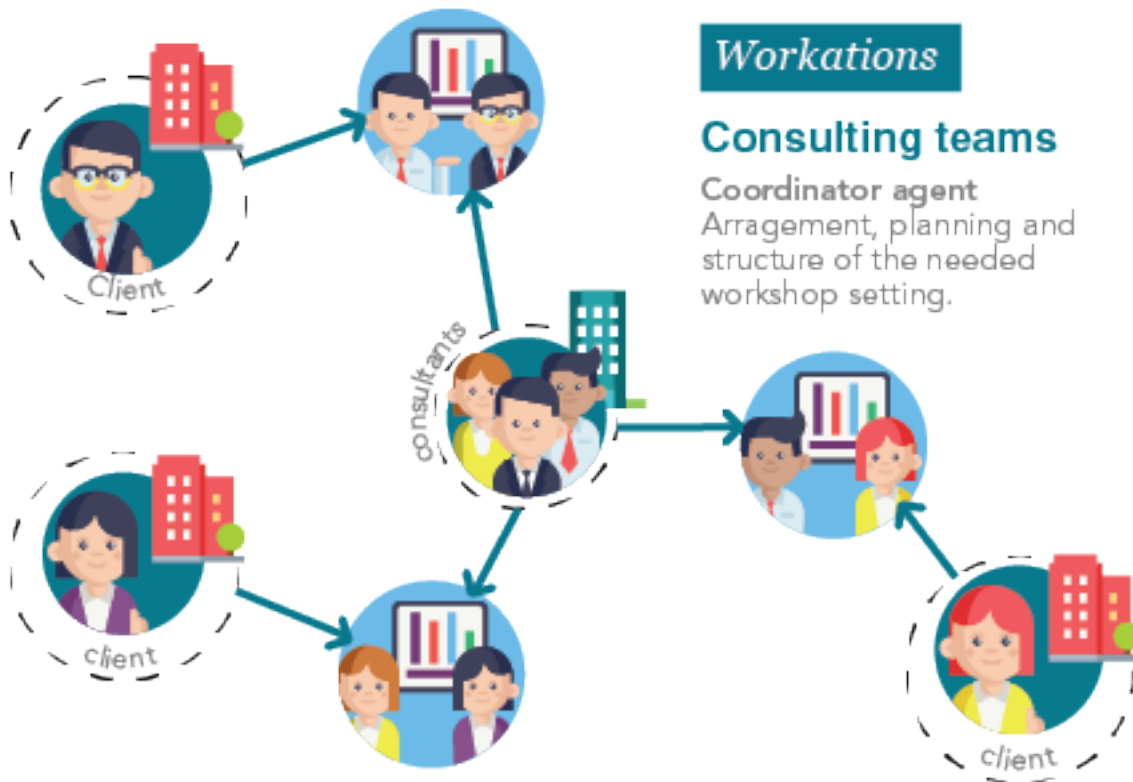


Figure 9: Consulting teams

5.3 Customer Profile Map

After reviewing the teams identified, and the criteria pre-determined, the consulting team has been chosen for this customer profile definition in the interest of being the close partners of consultants and be their direct agents when struggling to find a suitable place to perform their collaborative practices with their clients.

These are the four main decision factors that sustained this customer profile direction:

- Compared to the global teams and regional teams, who are commonly the current corporate target from the workstation operators, consulting teams are not yet addressed by the competitors.
- The European size of the consulting industry is worth more than \$280 billion (ConsultancyUK, 2016) being the DACH region (Germany, Austria and Switzerland) the 24% representing the largest consulting market, meaning that Out of Office can play in this sector and grow with this uncovered market.
- Being a consultant, it's likely related to not having free time because of the grueling hours imposed on their consultant practices. Therefore, there's an opportunity to offer wellness practices to support their need to balance their work-life routines.
- As seen in the potential client interviews, consultants are expected to organize the retreat session with their clients. Because of the lack of time of consultants to plan and organize a retreat setting, a lot of opportunities have been lost.

Once defying the background of the customer profile, the purpose of this side of the value proposition canvas is to describe the consulting team in a more structured and yet simple way. It is divided into three parts: the customer jobs which describes what they are trying to achieve in both their work and their lives, the pains which describe the bad outcomes, risks, and obstacles related to their jobs, and the gains which describes the outcomes they want to achieve or the benefits they are looking for.

To have a better overview of the consulting segment jobs, pains, and gains, table 12 presents the 10 more interviews that were scheduled with consultants from different firms. This helped bring a better understanding of the consultants' needs, challenges, and frustrations.

Company	Job Title	Type of consultancy
Perform Globally	Owner, Global Executive Coach and Consultant	Leadership Consulting
Spark Reply	Senior Innovation Consultant	Strategy and Design firm
Porsche Consulting	Senior Mobility Consultant	Strategy Consulting
Kimberly Penharlow Consulting	CEO Leadership Coach and Consultant	Leadership Consulting
Board of Innovation	Senior Innovation Consultant	Strategy Consulting
Deloitte	Strategy consultant	Management Consulting
Design Affairs	Strategy Consultant	Strategic Design Consulting
COBE	Strategy Consultant	Digital and Design firm
Publicis Sapient	Strategy Consultant	Digital Consulting
Tata Consultancy Services	Strategy Consultant	IT Consulting

Table 12: Interviews with the consulting segment

Customer Jobs

In charge of executing innovative strategic projects that will deliver value to the clients and at the same time bring new challenges and learnings that will build on personal growth.

The customer Jobs mentioned by the consulting teams are principally related to designing innovative strategic projects where the right question is answered. There are in charge of strategic-innovative projects where the outcome expected from their clients is generally to deliver new value that will impact their business ensuring their future success.

More tasks related to this principal job is building a relationship that proposes an ongoing collaboration even outside of the normal work hours, this means facilitating the communication between consultants and clients and more involvement on the project. To make this collaboration work, consultants' main way of working is by creating workshops. These workshops have different objectives:

- Pitch workshop: Small presentation of what consultants can do for the client and make them interested in their proposal.
- Validation workshop: Here the clients and the consultants gather together to validate their understanding about the clients' needs, the content of the project and the direction of the project.
- Proof of concept workshop: In this workshop, consultants want to have the green light to build a prototype to make tangible their proposal.

- Iteration workshop: consultants present their results to the clients and both of them iterate on the project.
- Final presentation workshop: At the end of the project, consultants present their delivery to the clients.

Important factors to ensure the success of a strategic client workshop are: effective co-creation between clients, stakeholders and consultants, and expert facilitation of the retreat session to keep everybody aligned.

From their personal side, as the consultants know that their job requires high efforts of strategic thinking and long hours of perfecting their projects, they take advantage of these new learnings and challenges to apply them in their personal objectives such as creating their business, applying their knowledge in new fields, and deep-dive on new high-tech trends.

Most of the consultants' aspirations are about satisfying their curiosity to grow and develop themselves professionally and personally. They crave for novelty in their lives and they are not afraid of changing the subject of expertise as they don't want to be fixed in one specific sector or area for a long-term.

Customer Pains

Lack of communication and time to synchronize all the stakeholders involved in the project thus lowering the chances to have an assertive and objective understanding of the process execution forcing the consultants to invest more time on aligning agendas or coordinating times.

The customer pains mentioned by the consultants are related to gaining and retaining the client's trust as this means assertive communication to establish a common ground where the complexity of the project is reduced and the alignment of the project scope is properly defined. A

s consultants work in an increasingly agile rhythm, intensified by rapid digital innovation, clients are expecting more value with high quality work and faster delivery of solutions. They need to prepare the content of the workshop fast and good. This preparation is sometimes blocked by the time consultants invest on planning the logistics of the workshop setting as they need to put a lot of effort and time in this organizational process.

To get the best out of every workshop, consultants try to motivate their clients to be disruptive and think of unconventional ideas. As they are responsible to analyze their industry, look at the disruptors, and look at the competition, consultants create an urgency setting to thrive the clients to dare to think differently, however, not all the clients participate in this task as they don't speak their minds freely due to hierarchy pressure or simply because disruptive thinking is not welcome in a conventional industry.

Moreover, conveying the message of how the project is going to be executed is sometimes not clear for the client make them misunderstand and expect different conclusions. This may result in client spontaneous changes means more time investing on the project, more time preparing the content of future workshops, as well as delaying the pre-establish delivery date.

Customer Gains

Clients completely engaged with the project praising the consultants by their unique strategic process hence increasing the chances to deliver a significant impact on their business without compromising their personal lives.

The customer gains mentioned by the consultants are related to total delegation of organization, planning, and structure of the workshop as they don't want to waste time on any of these tasks.

To give their best when working with a client, they want somebody else to take charge of the organizational work of a workshop including the time booking of all the participants, booking the venue, preparing the material, preparing the catering, and making sure everything is in place and on time.

There are aware that getting the right participants, the right content, and the right timeline is a very underestimated job that needs hours and effort of complete preparation. Likewise, getting expert help to keep the agenda align with the timeline structure is something that they want to have when moderating a workshop.

Furthermore, from their personal perspective, a lot of consultants stressed out the idea that having free-time is a luxury that requires proper administration of time management and personal commitment to designate fixed times following an adequate work-life routine that not every consultant can afford. They want to have it in their lives but both their hectic ways of working and their constant business traveling tasks doesn't allow them to have work-life balance routines in their lives.



Figure 10: Customer Profile Map

5.4 Value Map

The purpose of this side of the canvas is to set the new value proposition based on the current service in a more structured and detailed way by creating benefits and expectations that can attract the consulting segment. It is divided into three parts: the service that the value proposition is built around, the pain relievers that will alleviate the consultants' pains, and the gain creators which describe how the service will create customer gains.

Products and Services

Organization and plan structure of the workshop setting integrated in a goal-oriented retreat accompanied with expert help in facilitation, moderation, or coaching terms.

The products and services listed are the actual offerings from Out of Office. These have been prioritized by the relevance of the consultants' interests. The intangible services that come first are the organization and plan structure of the workshop setting based on the consulting segment needs integrated in a goal-oriented retreat.

Furthermore, a portfolio of workation retreats focused on work-life balance, personal growth and professional development are already structured and schedule ready to book, the differences are the location which can be in a summer or winter spot, and consequently, the accommodation and activities surrounding these areas change. Another intangible service is expert help during the workation retreat, such as coaching, facilitating or mediating, depending on what the consultants want.

For last, transportation to the nearest hub, catering and wellness activities are nice to have services for the consultants' interests.

Pain Relievers

Saving time and effort when delegating the organizational work to Out of Office in terms of logistics management and coordination of clients and stakeholders.

The pain relievers explain how the products and services from Out of Office alleviate specific customer pains. The pain relievers that can be more valuable are the produced savings on time and effort when planning the workshop for the consultants and at the same time keeping the clients and stakeholders informed and engaged with all the processes, meaning that having a clear structure on the project execution is a pain reliever that consequently enhance the effectiveness of the collaboration.

It is desired to have accommodation with the proper work components that address no distractions or external stimulation to keep the clients and stakeholders focused on the workshop by working in an agile way, intensively, in less time prioritizing on what is important.

A private accommodation, all inclusive hotel, it's a must due to the professional relationship that the consultants have with their clients, however, accommodation in the countryside is desirable as being in a natural environment promotes a space that limits external disturbances, nonetheless, it should be close to a major city or hub for emergencies.

Gain Creators

Clear pre-set agenda with designated time slots for hands-on work, leisure evening activities, and wellness activities to balance the work efforts made in the strategic client workshop.

The gain creators explain how the products and services from Out of Office create and reach the expectations and benefits from the customer gains. The gain creators that can be more valuable are establishing an agenda and timeline template for the strategic client workshop with designated time for work and leisure activities based on the consultants' needs accomplished by the expert help of a facilitator that shapes the whole retreat and promotes the generation of ideas.

More gain creators can be a step-by-step guidance through a personal growth retreat emphasizing the importance of balancing work with wellness and leisure activities in a natural environment.

Gain creators that would be desirable are a critical analysis documentation of the strategic projects, get constructive feedback from clients and a wide range of leisure activities every day to get everyone engaged and involved.

Last, breaking the office routine with social events for innovation discussion, profile skills, personal behavior are nice to have gains for the consultants.

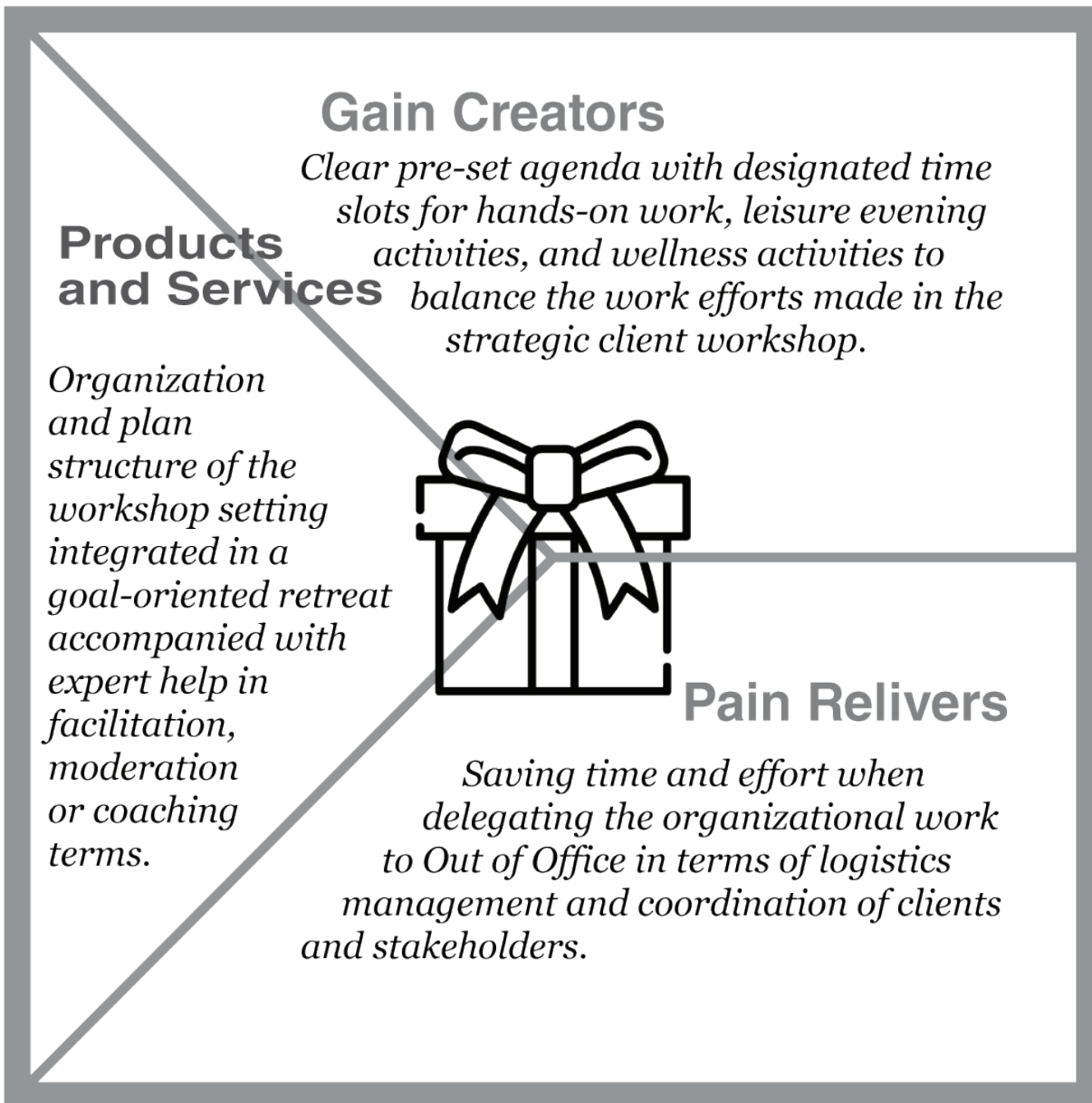


Figure 11: Value Map

5.5 Fit

For the final step of the Value Proposition Canvas, Fit needs to be delivered. This is achieved when some important jobs, customer pains and the customer gains are addressed by the pain relievers, the gain creators and services proposed. It is recommended to fit just the most important, extreme and essential factors that the consultants have as is impossible to target, apply and maintain all of them in one value proposition.

In order to confirm the fit between the Value Map and the Customer Profile, further review of all the products and services, pain relievers and gain creators are matched with possible jobs, customer pains and customer gains. This Value Proposition Canvas helps create fit statements in a simple yet clear manner. Figure 12 shows how a fit statement can be generated with the help of the customer profile map and the value map.

The following statements show the result of this matching process resulting in the interconnection between the important jobs address by different products and services, pain relievers and gain creators which at the same time address customer pains and customer gains.

This interconnection shows four main themes:

Support in the organizational work of a strategic client workshop

Our organizational and planning structure helps consultants who want to have support in the organizational work of a strategic client workshop by delegating the logistics tasks to Out of Office and gaining more time to prepare the content of the workshop while ensuring the participation and collaboration of all the stakeholders and clients involved in the strategic project.

One of the important customer jobs mentioned by the consultants is the creation of strategic client workshops were co-creation and expert facilitation sessions are key to have a successful collaboration with stakeholders and clients and keep everybody aligned. As described in the customer pains, investing time on planning the organizational work of a workshop affects the preparation and content of the same. For this reason, they want somebody to help them in this logistics task in order to have time to prepare properly for the workshop session.

Give team-based engaging programmes

Our team-based engaging programmes helps consultants who want to collaborate with their internal teams by decreasing the silo thinking and raising the chances to work together while solving critical business problems.

Team-based workation solutions are on demand as consultants have requested to participate on summer retreats where their internal teams can meet, discuss their projects, and share their learnings. This presents an opportunity to create a personal bonding with their colleagues and unleash creative energy which allows teams to get work done.

Provide professional development

Our professional development workations helps consultants who want to have professional training to increase their personal intelligence capital by reducing the feeling of being stuck and enhancing their constant learning ambition while keeping them up-to-date with the new market and industry trends relevant for their consultant careers.

The professional development workation is born from the consultants need to learn and satisfy their curiosity in terms of professional development as they want to be triggered and challenged with new projects. Moreover, this need for constant evolution is fed by their urgency to be experts in different fields as clients are constantly asking for their services and expecting quality service solutions from them.

Assistance on personal growth and wellness comes from the consultants' need to have free-time for themselves and disconnect from the work related responsibilities to bring balance to their work-life routines as their high-performance jobs and constant traveling schedules don't allow them to have consistency in the work-life practices.

Assist on personal growth and wellness
Our personal growth workations helps consultants who want to have guidance on their personal goals by lowering the feeling of being professionally overwhelmed and enabling to have a chance to reevaluate their career objectives while recovering in a relaxed setting.

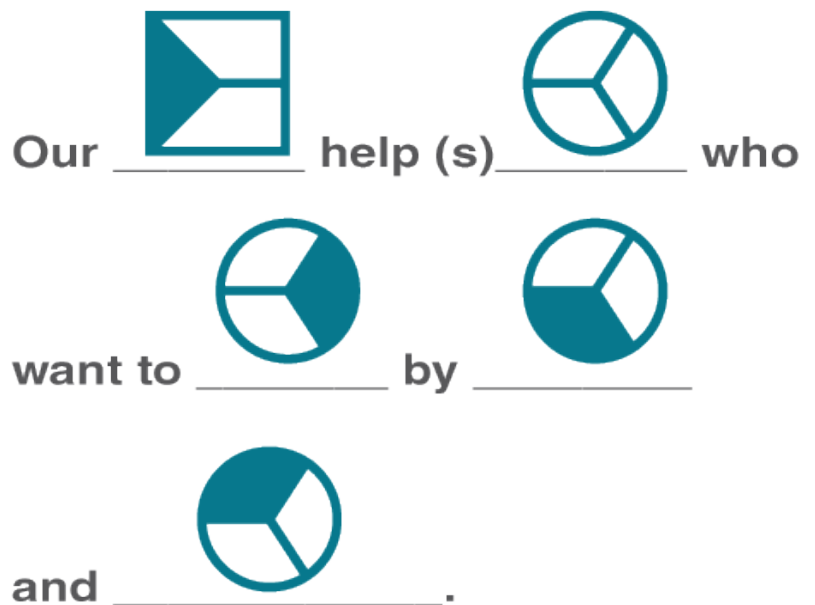


Figure 12: Fit process

6 Value Proposition Design

Thanks to the interconnections discovered in the Fit exercise, an initial decision-tree was designed with the four main value propositions as the base. This decision-tree is the background structure of a digital quotation format that will be incorporated in the website of Out of Office workations as a means to give clients a first draft of a workation project.

6.1 Decision-tree

The decision-tree main goal is to facilitate the negotiation between Out of Office and future consultants. The root of the decision-tree is based on the four value propositions made in the Fit exercise. As the four value propositions are made from the consultants jobs, pains and gains, these are integrated in the first part of the decision-tree as the initial requirements that consultants will ask for when requiring to have a workation service.

In general terms, the decision-tree is divided into five important parts:

- In the first part, the four value propositions are offered: support on the organizational work of a strategic client workshop, give team-based engaging programmes, assist on personal growth and wellness and provide professional development. After deciding on one specific direction, a more specific offer is presented before jumping to the logistics work of the workation.
- Structure of the workation: Once the consultant has decided on one of the value propositions, the logistics construction of the workation starts from this part. Here the size of the group, the days availability and the expert assistance mode required are discussed in this part of the decision-tree.
- Environment of the workation: here the topics of location, venue, and accommodation preference are addressed giving broad options on the location and venue topics, but the main options of the accommodation preference, which are private room arrangement and shared room arrangement, remain the same no matter the choice made.
- Next comes the work and leisure components needed for the workation. From the work components, the offered options are booking a coworking space, booking a meeting room, or booking a collaborative space, this with the intention to cover from the most social space option to the most corporate formal option. From the leisure components, activities are very dependent on the goal and the location that workation will take place. In order to broadly indicate what leisure activities can be offered, three main options are provided: active/physical activities, relaxed activities, tour activities, and adventure activities and competitive games.
- Last, the extra amenities choices are discussed. Here are the extra needs that are sometimes taken for granted, such as catering or transportation. In order to avoid misunderstandings, Out of Office will ask directly to the consultant if they need these services in their workations.

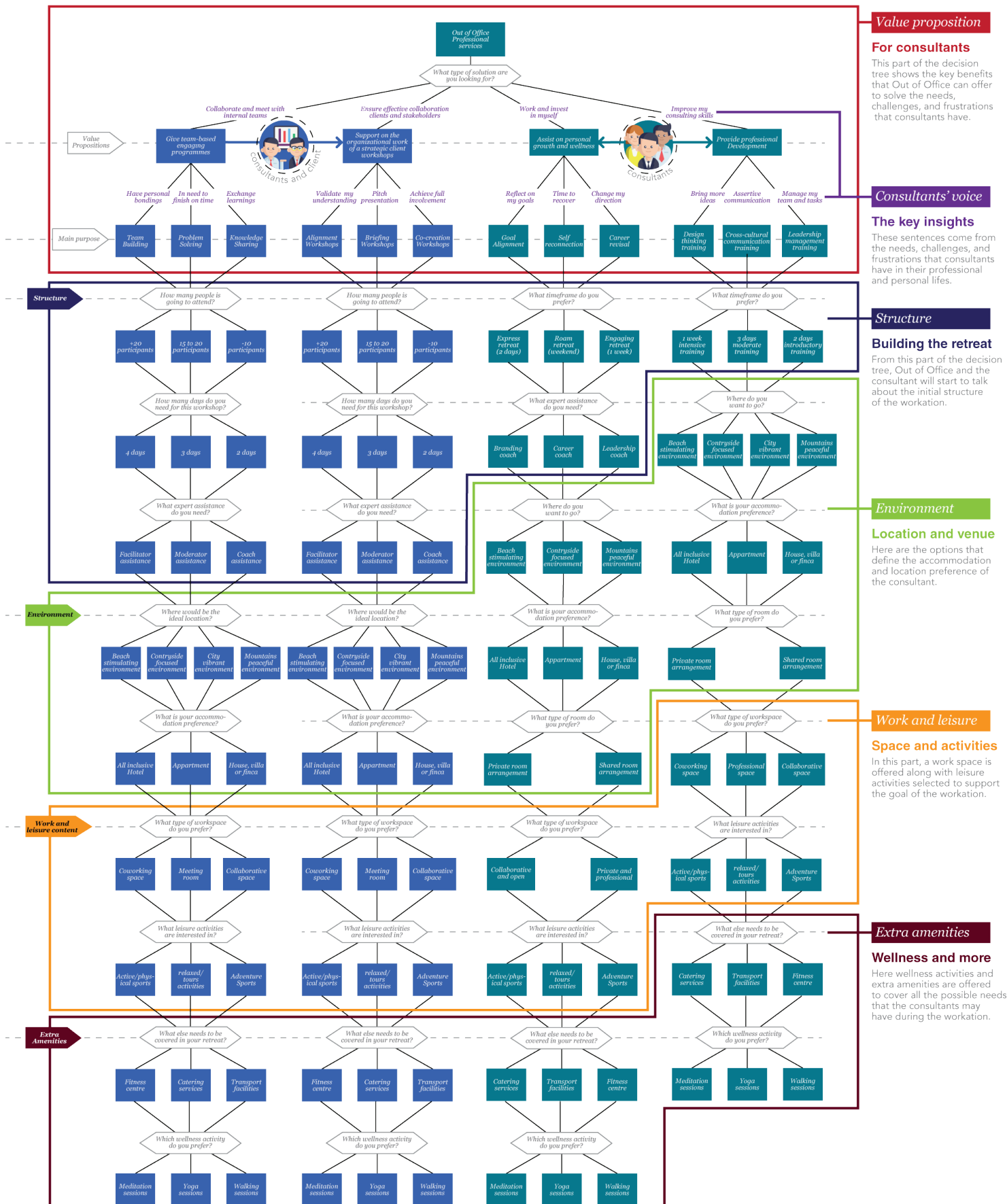


Figure 13: Decision-tree Value Proposition

6.2 Workshop -based

Micro purposes: Briefing workshops, alignment workshops, and co-creation workshops.

Support in the organizational work of a strategic client workshop comes from the consultants' need to have an effective collaboration with their clients and stakeholders in a workshop setting. To be even more specific on their workshop requirements, three options are provided in this support category:

- Alignment workshops: this type of workshop will help clients, stakeholders and consultants align their strategic objectives, hence validating their understanding of the process and the execution of the project.
- Briefing workshops: this type of workshop promises to give an absorption setting to allow consultants to pitch their project presentation to their clients by enabling them to exhibit their ideas without external distractions.
- Co-creation workshops: this type of workshop is essential for consultants that want to work, create and prototype together with the clients. The output of this workshop would be a jointly developed idea or concept that can be used by the client in the future.

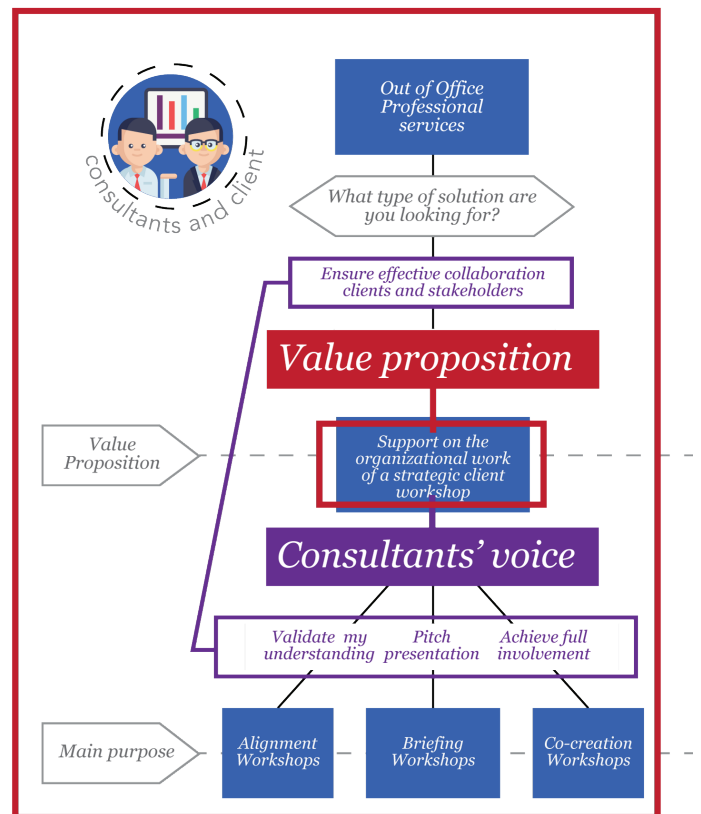


Figure 14: Value Proposition Workshop-based

6.3 Team-based

Micro purposes: Team building, problem solving, and knowledge sharing.

Team-based engaging practices are offered because of the consultants' wish to collaborate and meet with their colleagues in a retreat setting for the reason that there are few opportunities to work and see face-to-face. Three options are offered in this workation category:

- Team building: this team-based workation is for teams that want to build strong relationships with their colleagues and easily collaborate in future projects.
- Problem solving: this team-based workation is for teams that want to work on a certain problem by leaving others responsibilities behind and enhancing the focus on solving the project.
- Knowledge sharing: this team-based workation is for teams that want to benefit from each other's expertise as exchanging information and discussing successes and learnings are vital for the teams to learn and connect.

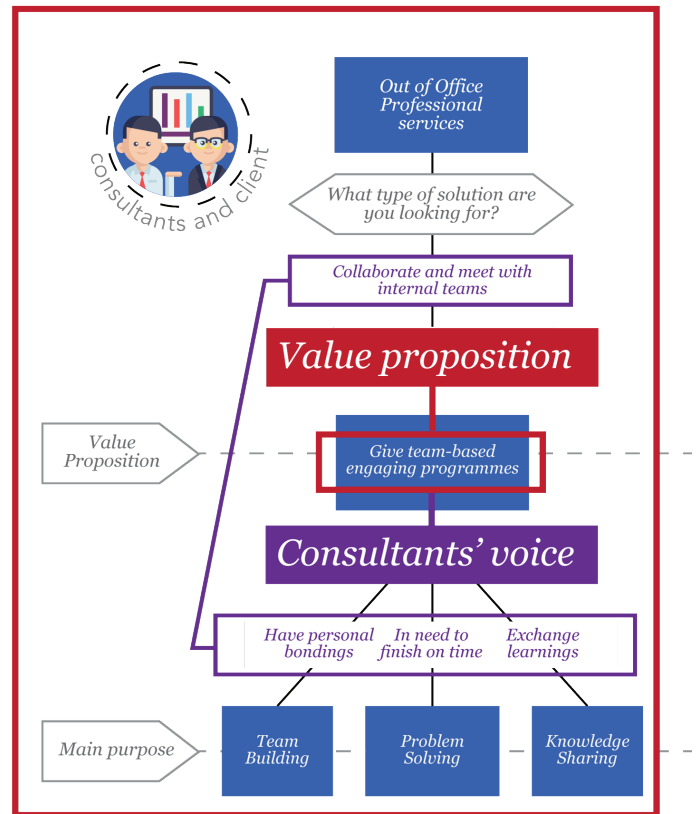


Figure 15: Value Proposition Team-based

6.4 Professional Development

Micro purposes: Design thinking, cross-cultural communication, and leadership management.

Provide professional development comes from the consultants' need to improve their consulting skills where they can evaluate their own progress as continuous and immediate feedback are the norm in their way of learning. To provide a more detailed offered, this type of workation has three different training options:

- Design thinking: this type of workation is offered for consultants that want to have the skill of generating creative ideas in a fast-paced manner by exploring different possible solutions and draw conclusions that will help later in their strategic projects.
- Cross-cultural communication: as consultants work with multiple international clientele, this type of workation will focus on how to communicate, negotiate and share information effectively with their clients and how to navigate in this cross-cultural environment.
- Leadership management: being a good leader means being responsible for motivating and delegating tasks to others. For this purpose the core of this workation is to give leadership management training for consultants that want to have a more important role.

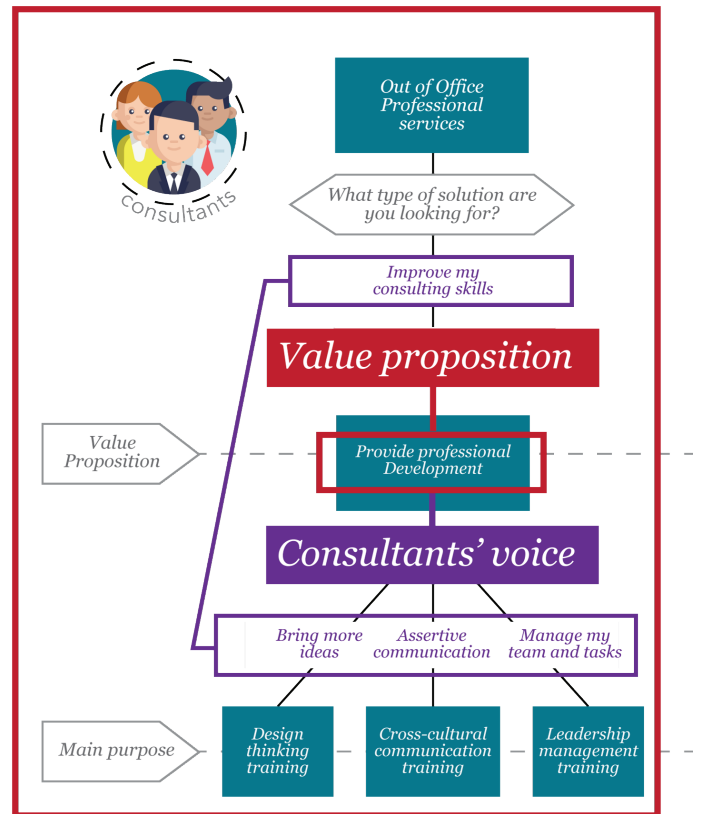


Figure 16: Value Proposition Professional Development

6.5 Personal Growth

Micro purposes: Goal alignment, self reconnection, and career revisal.

Assist on personal growth and wellness comes from the consultants' need to invest in themselves in a personal level and get away from the high workload routine to be immersed in a reflective and recovery setting allowing consultants to recharge and reset their goals. To have a complete understanding of what the consultant is searching for, this type of workation has three options:

- Goal alignment: this workation focuses on assisting consultants to define an important and meaningful goal that will resonate not only in their professional objectives but also in their personal aspirations and identify what actions will move them towards that goal.
- Self reconnection: this workation is for consultants that are burnout and want to enable their mind, body and spirit to recover. The work part of this workation is concentrated in mindfulness exercises in which consultants are taught and trained to build their emotional intelligence skills needed for dealing with stressful and anxious situations.
- Career revisal: this workation offers career coaching for consultants that want to evolve and change their subject of expertize to a new area that matches their skills, abilities, and personalities. Here the career coach will help them define a new career path.

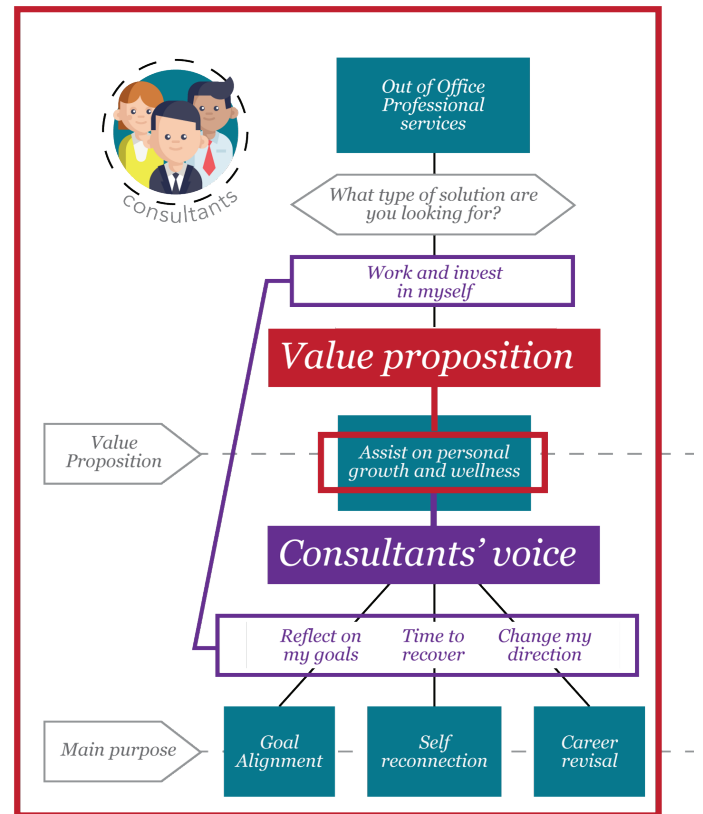


Figure 17: Value Proposition Personal Growth

7 Final Conclusion

In this last chapter, the results from the quotation form and the final conclusions of the thesis are presented, along with a discussion about the limitations, implications, and future recommendations for Out of Office.

7.1 Final Design Evaluation

Seven consultants from various firms and agencies evaluate the quotation form of the final design “Out of Office Professional Services”. This quotation form has been made in a digital format to support flexible accessibility and allow the consultants to test it without any software restrictions.

In order to have an adequate feedback from the consultants, five assessment questions were asked in a scale from 1, being the lowest rate, to 5, being the biggest rate, and explain the reason of that rating. The aim of these assessment questions is to check the efficiency of the final value propositions. The following questions were:

- 1. How guided did you feel when using the quotation form?***
- 2. How clearly differentiated were the four value propositions?***
- 3. How much did the quotation form support your workation construction?***
- 4. How much did the quotation form help you envision the impact of workations?***
- 5. How easy is to use this quotation form by someone regardless their workation experience?***

Next, the results of the evaluation by the consultants are presented in the following order: first the answers to the assessment questions a discussion of the quotation form.

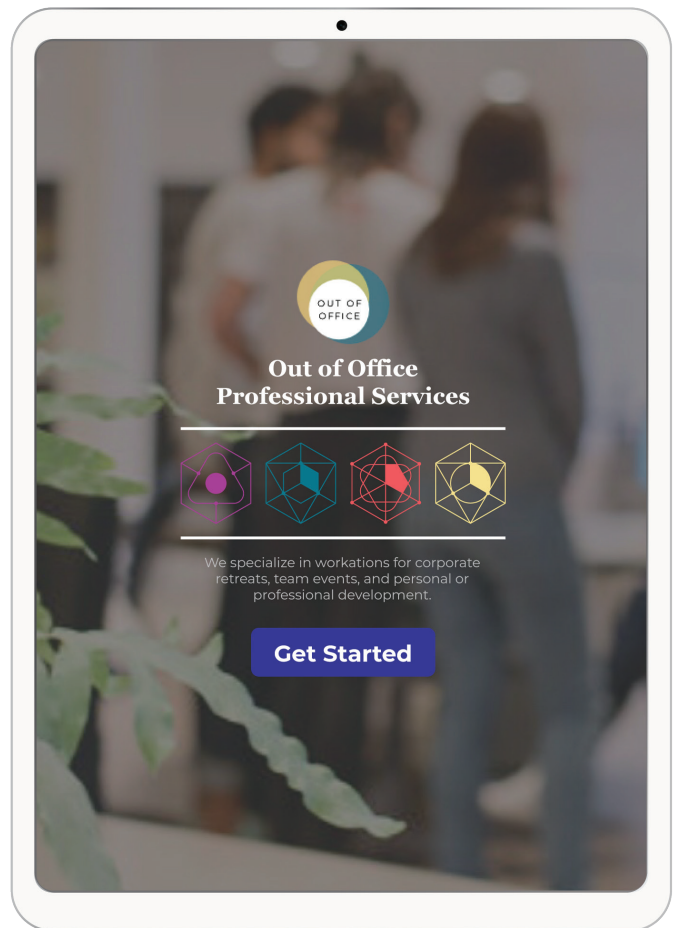


Figure 18: Quotation Form digital format

Assessment questions

The assessment questions were rated on a scale from 1, being the lowest rate, to 5, being the biggest rate, and then giving their reasons for that rating. Each of the questions is presented with the general rating and some relevant quotes.

1. How guided did you feel when using the quotation form?

Average rating: 4/5

“At the beginning of the exercise, it doesn’t feel that this form guides you on the process, but once the form is letting you know what the next questions are going to be, it feels that there’s a structure behind it” - Leadership Consultant

This assessment questions was intended to know the consultants feeling of how easy and understandable the flow of the questions are. Most of the consultants were confused in the “purpose question” which is directly related to the value proposition that they chose.

They were confused because they thought the value proposition was the only goal of the workation, but once they saw the related purpose options, they understood that the purpose intention is to have a clear and define the goal of the workation.

2. How clearly differentiated were the four value propositions?

Average rating: 5/5

“The four workations are easy to understand and easy to relate in our daily business life... the one that I like the most is the workshop-based workation because it’s always good to have a little extra help when dealing with

clients” - Management Consultant

The differentiation of the four value propositions was clear in the quotation form as they have a visual representation and a short description of what they can offer. All the value propositions made sense for them to be in a workation setting, but the one that surprised the most was the workshop-based workation as they thought this idea could be of great help when dealing with challenging clients.

3. How much did the quotation form support your workation construction?

Average rating: 5/5

“I was basically just choosing the options that were perfect for my personal growth, I didn’t find the need to include something that it is already asked in the quotation form” - Strategy Consultant

The construction of the workation felt natural and straightforward as the questions made perfect sense in the order they were introduced. However, the aim of the quotation form is to give a workation draft and start the conversation between consultants and Out of Office, the consultants felt that the answers were just sufficient to set up and define the solution.

4. How much did the quotation form help you envision the impact of workations?

Average rating: 4/5

“It made me think of how the team-based workation could work with my colleagues, it would be great to have a time away from client responsibilities and just learn from each other” - Design Consultant

The quotation form helped consultants envisioning the impact of how workations can be beneficial for them or what kind of problems they can solve with the help of workations. Some consultants asked what are the common outcomes of participating in these workations as they want to position themselves in that scenario and evaluate if workations are good for them.

5. How easy is to use this quotation form by someone regardless their workation experience?

Average rating: 3/5

“I don’t think everybody is aware of what workations are, I didn’t know until you explained to me, but the quotation form makes it easier for anybody to answer it” - Innovation Consultant

The quotation form is intended to be answered by anybody who is interested in workations, specially consultants. However, people who are unaware of what workations are will have a hard time to understand the potential of this service but that doesn’t stop them to answer the quotation form.

Discussion

Consultants did not find the quotation form difficult. In general they had a positive reaction with the quotation form and they were able to choose their preferred option with no struggle. Some explained that some questions were a little difficult to understand at the beginning, but by following the flow of the quotation form, the transition of the quotation form became natural and comprehensible.

“At the beginning I was a little confused with the workation purposes, but after a couple of minutes, I understand and picture myself in that situation” - Innovation Consultant.


One surprising insight from this evaluation exercise is that consultants tend to choose one workation for their work practices and another for their personal benefit. This discovery was found because consultants were encouraged to choose at least 2 different value proposition that resonate with their needs. For example, an innovation consultant chose the workshop-based workation and the personal growth workation. Quoting her words: “I want to choose the workshop-based option and the personal growth option. This one (referring to the workshop-based workation) is good for the job, but this one (referring to the personal growth workation) is for myself.”

7.2 Results Quotation Form

Next, general feedback of the four value propositions is presented along with the quotation form presentation of each. It is important to say that various iterations have been made during this testing and validation process.

Workshop-based

This workation solution brought a lot of curiosity to the consultants as they wondered how this workation was going to help them establish a good relationship with their clients and at the same time have a successful workshop session. Consultants pointed out that these two promises are a great mix to be offered in a workation service, but they advice to be careful on the execution as dealing with clients means carrying an immense responsibility.



**Workshop-based
Collaboration with clients
and stakeholders**


Get Started

The workshop-based workation helps consultants who want to have support in the organizational work of a strategic client workshop. By delegating the organizational and logistics work to Out of Office, consultants gain more time to prepare the workshop content and ensure the participation and collaboration of all the client and stakeholders involved.

Figure 19: Workshop-based quotation form


Team-based

The team-based workation solution is found to be the most enjoyable one. Consultants saw immediate value in this workation as they feel connected to the need for investing time with their colleagues and meet them at a personal level. Others saw more value in terms of working with their teams non-stop without distractions in an attractive destination. Some consultants are already engaged in this team-based practice as they shared their experiences and talked about their successes and learnings. Overall, the team-based workation is the most suitable solution for consultants that want to have a close relationship with their colleagues and establish good work chemistry.



Team-based
Collaborate and meet
with your colleagues

Get Started



Our team-based engaging programmes helps consultants who want to collaborate with their teams by decreasing the silo thinking and raising the chances to work together while solving critical business problems.

Figure 20: Team-based quotation form

Professional Development

The professional development workation was the least preferred choice. Consultants value the face-to-face training that this workation offers but the reason that they were not inclined to choose this workation, is that they are more involved in digital learning platforms as these are more suitable for their hectic lifestyles. They proposed that this workation should be offered for companies instead of individuals, as this makes it easier for consultants to join the workation.



Professional Development
Specialized trainings
for skills improvement

Get Started




Our professional development workations helps consultants who want to have expert training to increase their personal intelligence capital by reducing the sense of being stuck and enhancing their continuous learning ambition while keeping them up-to-date with the new market and industry trends relevant for their consultant careers.

Figure 21: Professional Development quotation form


Personal Growth

The personal growth workation was the most preferred choice among women. They are more attracted to this workation for the reason that they can detach from everyday stress and relax for a short period of time. At the beginning, the consultants perception of the personal growth workation were just to be in a safe space to disconnect and loosen up, but once they saw the goal alignment and career revisal option, they were even more convinced that this short periods of time away from the hectic job environment is required for their personal growth.



Personal Growth
Be immersed in a reflective
and recovery setting

Get Started



Our personal growth workations helps consultants who want to have guidance on their personal goals by lowering the feeling of being professionally overwhelmed and enabling to have a chance to reevaluate their career objectives while recovering in a relaxed setting.

Figure 22: Personal Growth quotation form

7.3 Limitations & recommendations

To conclude this master thesis, the research questions set at the start of this project What are the motives and priorities of mature corporates around workations? and how to position the service accordingly as an attractive opportunity for the segment? have been answered with the four value propositions Workshop-based, Team-based, Professional Development, and Personal Growth in the quotation form.

The quotation form has been chosen as the final design of this master's thesis because it is easier to implement and integrate into Out of Office main website. Even though, this quotation form has the facility to be answered by anybody in a digital format, the principal aim of it is to start the conversation between Out of Office and future clients and facilitate the agreement of the final workation.

During the evaluation phase, consultants gave their feedback on the four value propositions and agreed on their potential and value that these will bring to their professional and personal lives. However, these four value propositions have not been tested in a real workation project, therefore some iterations of the formulation of the quotation form would be necessary to obtain optimal results.

Furthermore, limitations have been presented in terms of:

Academic research on workation

Relatively little research has been conducted regarding workations. Luckily, there are a few interesting papers that talked about the building blocks of the workation phenomenon, but their focus is on tourism development instead of professional services. Furthermore, it was not

always clear how to connect workations with the corporate segment. One way to connect it was to study the future of work, explore the HRM challenges and search for empirical research on the current retreat practices.

Research sample size

Due to the setup of this thesis project, just 10 interviews were conducted during the customer profile exploration. For the purpose of finding and selecting one customer profile, this was sufficient. However, a larger sample size will draw more directions and find a specific uncharted target.

Evaluation sample size

Even though seven consultants helped in the evaluation process, it was not possible to evaluate the design with more consultants due time limits. As they have a tight schedule, some consultants were only able to evaluate the design on January 2020. Nonetheless, the seven consultants that did helped in the evaluation gave constructive and critical feedback that formed the final design as it is now.

Workations for corporate teams

To gain an understanding of the workations for corporate teams, interviews with workation operators and the CoFounder of Out of Office were made. However, being in this process first-hand could help to understand and experience how this segment behaves and define what their needs are.

7.4 Acknowledgements

With this master thesis, I finalize my 2-year master programme in Strategic Product Design at the Delft University of Technology. Now that everything is finished, it is time to look back and reflect on all the successful, challenging and fun experiences that I faced in this journey. Looking back at these five months, I am proud to present my master thesis which it could not be possible without the people that helped me the most and encourage me to trust in my work and in my way of thinking as a professional designer.

I am entirely grateful for the opportunity to work with Anne-Marie Jentsch from Out of Office Workations on this service design challenge and my supervisory team from TU Delft, Henk Kuipers, and Anne Kranzbühler for giving me the guidance necessary to accomplish this challenge, and the freedom to make my own decisions and trust in my design skills.

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world of workation. Thanks for introducing me to your precious network, potential collaborators, interview partners and workationist participants. Most of all, thanks for teaching me that no matter how big your dream is it can be done with the right people and the right mindset.

Thanks to my wonderful family, my parents Roberto Mendoza and Laura Villaneda who support me, love me and believe in me even more than I do. Thank you Laura, Braulio and my beautiful nieces for setting the expectations early on my life. Thank you, Roberto, for showing me that following your dreams takes courage. Thank you, Carolina and Juan for your tremendous help both academically and professionally. Thank you, Carolina, for being my coach and being there non stop when I needed it the most. Germán, thank you for your constant and unconditional care which brighten and strengthen me up. Last, but definitely not least, thanks to my friends for listening to all my struggles, cheering me up and helping me to get out of my comfort zone.

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