Strategic Plan for the Travel Mobile App - The NoQ

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Abstract

This Master thesis pretends to develop a detailed strategic plan for the innovative idea of the NoQ mobile travel application. The main purpose of this plan is to examine the feasibility and viability of the project. In order to achieve this, several fundamental steps have been taken.

First, the key concepts for this thesis, such as tourism, visitor attractions and smart tourism, were identified and explained for their better understanding and unification. After that, a micro and macro analysis of the market in which the project will be implemented was conducted. To deepen the investigation, an internal evaluation of the company was carried out and the level of its competitiveness was examined.

The knowledge and data obtained in the first part of the thesis were used in the following functional part. This section defines the future objectives of the strategic plan, as well as, the development strategy that includes the mission, vision, values and critical success factor of the NoQ. The final chapter contains the project implementation plan, including marketing activities shown by means of the Marketing Mix, along with the company organizational structure and schedule of operations for setting up the business. Furthermore, this section specifies the NoQ's key resources, which have been broken down into human, physical, intellectual and financial resources. Finally, the implementation requirements for establishing a company and additional legal requirements have been defined.

Resumo

A presente dissertação de mestrado pretende desenvolver um plano estratégico detalhado para a aplicação móvel de viagens NoQ. O principal objetivo deste plano é estudar a viabilidade deste projeto. Para isso, várias etapas fundamentais foram tomadas.

Primeiramente, os conceitos-chave para elaborar esta tese, como o turismo, as atrações turísticas e o turismo inteligente, foram identificados e explicados em detalhe para uma melhor compreensão. Seguidamente, foram realizadas uma micro e macro análise do mercado em que o projeto estará integrado. Para aprofundar a análise, foi realizada uma avaliação interna da empresa e foi também analisado o seu nível de competitividade.

Os conhecimentos e dados obtidos na primeira parte da tese foram utilizados na parte subsequente da tese. Esta secção define os objetivos futuros do plano estratégico, bem como a estratégia de desenvolvimento que inclui a missão, visão, valores e fator crítico de sucesso do NoQ. O capítulo final contém o plano de implementação do projeto, incluindo as ações de marketing apresentadas por meio do Marketing Mix, juntamente com a estrutura organizacional da empresa e o cronograma de operações para a implantação do negócio. Além disso, esta seção especifica os recursos-chave do NoQ, que foram divididos em recursos humanos, físicos, intelectuais e financeiros. Por último, foram definidos os requisitos de implementação para o estabelecimento de uma empresa e os requisitos legais adicionais.

Palavras-chave: Aplicação móvel, Turismo inteligente, Startup, Gestão de atração de visitantes

Classificação JEL:
   M13 - New Firms/Startups
   Z32 - Tourism and Development

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1. Innovative Proposal Identification

The rapid development and spread of the information and communication technology has significantly influenced the lifestyle of modern people. They rely heavily on these tech solutions in every aspect of their lives and use them to facilitate their daily duties. An illustration of this phenomenon are mobile phones, which are an integral part of our day-to-day activities and are with us round-the-clock. Information technologies are not only a way to make people's lives easier and more efficient, they might also be a solution to many global problems. The tourism industry recently struggled with an extremely serious issue of overcrowding in many tourism destinations around the world, until the end of 2019, when the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down tourism and contributed to the introduction of numerous restrictions preventing or limiting travel and sightseeing. Both the above-mentioned problems and their consequences can be mitigated by using information technology solutions. Therefore, this strategic plan focuses on the innovative idea of a mobile application called the NoQ (see Annex A), created on the basis of the business model of well-known and successful companies such as UberEats and Booking.com.

The NoQ is designed for numerous stakeholders from the tourism sector with an emphasis on tourists, local communities and businesses. Its main purpose is to enable them to track in real-time the number of visitors to tourist attractions located in Poland. It is this feature that influenced the name of the application (the NoQ), which is a word game and an abbreviation of the phrase *No Queue*, that represents the opportunity of avoiding crowds and queuing, and thus the loss of valuable time while travelling.

In addition, the app offers the possibility of buying tickets online, which will streamline the purchase process and minimize paper waste thanks to digital tickets in the form of a QR code. Moreover, the NoQ contains all kinds of tourist attractions, from lesser-known sites to the flagship ones, accumulated in one app for more convenient, enjoyable and in-depth exploration of the given destination. Finally, it allows the users to plan their trip in advance, which in turn will contribute to the most efficient use of their leisure time.

From the business side, however, the NoQ app is a great additional tool for promotion and sales. By working with this software, tourist attraction businesses can increase their reach and sales in return for commissions. This strategy was inspired by the business model used by one of the world's most successful companies, Booking.com.

Furthermore, the mobile app supports the monitoring and management of the flow of visitors and thus eases the phenomenon of seasonality and overcrowding, as well as, ensures compliance with the rules imposed in connection with restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Tourism

Tourism dates back as far as Antiquity. Over time, its form has evolved and its importance has grown. In 1980, the World Tourism Conference convened by the World Tourism Organization emphasised the significance of tourism, describing it as a crucial activity for the nations due to its direct impact on their economy, education, socio-cultural sector, and international relations. It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by this concept.

John Urry (1990) draws attention to the significant distinction between leisure activities (tourism) and organised work. The writer specifies that tourism is a journey to and staying in a destination, that is outside of the normal place of work and residence, for a temporary and short period of time. The foregoing definition is close to the one provided by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). For the United Nations agency, tourism means the movement of visitors to locations other than their typical environment in order to achieve personal or professional goals. These visitors can be divided according to the form of travel (inbound, outbound or domestic) and the length of stay (an overnight visitor - tourist or same-day visitor - excursionist). Although both of these definitions date back to the end of the 20th century, their relevance is still important as they have given rise to modern interpretations of tourism.

A further definition with a slightly different perspective is given by Goeldner & Ritchie (2009) who explain that tourism is "the processes, activities, and outcomes arising from the relationships and the interactions among tourists, tourism suppliers, host governments, host communities, and surrounding environments that are involved in the attracting and hosting of visitors". The authors believe that the aforementioned groups play a vital role in a thorough understanding of this phenomenon. What distinguishes this definition from the one proposed by John Urry and UNWTO is primarily its complexity. Goeldner and Ritchie see tourism as much more than just travelling to and stay in a given place for leisure or professional purposes. They consider all aspects of this industry, from tourists themselves and their expenditures within the borders of a destination to hospitality services (e.g. accommodation, transportation, food and beverage) and all the business that provide those services to visitors to meet their needs and wants.

However, in order to develop tourism in a given location in the first place, the area ought to have a number of specific features. According to Nazmi Kozak and Metin Kozak (2019), these are "a variety of natural, social, and cultural resources and services, special events, transportation systems, facilities (accommodation, catering, entertainment, activities), ancillary services (banks, media, hospitals, etc.), host community, a local council, and an active private or public sector". These components make up the so-called tourism destination.

The abovementioned elements can also be referred to as tourist attractions because it is mostly on their basis that visitors choose one destination over another. The literature presents many perspectives for their classification. In 1995, Swarbrooke (cited in Nowacki, 2013) proposed the classification of visitor attractions based on their origin. The first group comprises all kinds of special events regardless of the size (from mega-events to local ones). Examples of such events are art and religious festivals, fairs and markets, historical anniversaries, traditional customs, and sporting events. The second group is identified as natural attractions and includes beaches, caves, forests, flora and fauna, rivers and lakes, as well as rock faces. In other words, it can be anything that was created without human intervention. The following two categories are man-made, one of which was created to draw tourists to a place and the other was not originally intended for it. The former refers to heritage, garden, leisure, recreation, and exhibition centres, amusement and theme parks, museums and galleries, marinas, factory tours, safari parks, picnic sites, as well as casinos and spas. The latter encompasses religious facilities such as cathedrals and churches, archaeological sites and objects, historic parks and gardens, architecture monuments, relics of technology, steam railways, and reservoirs.

A different perspective for the classification of visitor attractions was adopted by Crouch and Ritchie in 1999, who divided them on the grounds of their importance in the process of attracting tourists. These are core and secondary attractors. As the name suggests, the former is the main motivator for visitation. The latter, in spite of their lower direct impact on the destination appeal, plays a significant role in supporting the main attractors in order to achieve greater success. This group includes infrastructure (e.g. potable water supply, electricity, transportation), facilitating resources (such as education and financial institutions), entrepreneurial nature of the place, as well as its accessibility (determined, among others, by visas, regulations, and capacities). However, what mostly drives tourists are primary resources, which fall into six categories: market ties, physiography, activities, events, the tourism superstructure, together with history and culture. Ethnic ties and VFR travels (Visiting Friends and Relatives) exemplify market ties motivator. This factor can be broadly understood as the linkages between the destination and its residents. Subsequently, physiography can be described as comprehensive characteristics of natural conditions of an area, which includes its landscape and climate. Both of those motivators are beyond the management capabilities of the destination authorities. A similar situation occurs in the case of cultural-historical factor, which, in fact, is slightly more susceptible to management but should not be altered for their value. This attraction is defined by history and time and is considered a heritage of the local population. The remaining attractors, on the other hand, may and ought to be controlled and constantly developed by the destination managers. This applies to activities, events and tourism superstructures. The first two are closely related and cover all kinds of things to do and happenings offered by the destination, which

can involve both the local community and tourists. The scale of them ranges from small local events to mega-events of international importance. The last motivator, tourism superstructure, refers to major facilities that are above ground and incorporate food and beverage services, accommodation, and major visitor attractions.

For all these businesses to operate effectively, some type of organization and well-planned management are needed. The concept of management involves the exploitation of all the resources that the facility has, such as human resources, technology, and finances, to create products and services that meet the needs and requirements of customers. Moreover, it is intended to introduce some kind of organization and order in the tasks that must be undertaken for the business to be successful and to achieve its goals (Page, 2011). Furthermore, management, particularly of visitor attractions, can be broken down into four key areas – resource management, visitor management, product management, and site management. The first one covers topics such as sustainability, ecotourism, and conservation of the site, along with its interpretation (authenticity, learning, narratives, identity) and National Park or World Heritage Site designation and their subsequent impact. Visitor management examines visitors demand in the form of preferences, expectations, and motives, and identifies their segments based on the numerous characteristics. This area also investigates customer experience, behaviour, perception, attitude, satisfaction, engagement, and interactions. The third key area, product management, is not only about developing and diversifying products at visitor attractions, but also about financial management and activities aimed at creating the image of the place and its promotion. Lastly, site management consists of the management of stakeholders, staff, and technology of the visitor attraction, as well as its accessibility and transportation. This key area of management is also responsible for analysing management issues (e.g. performance, productivity, demand), and examining the role of a facility in a given destination and its impact on the economy, visitors and local community (Leask, 2016).

Each of the four abovementioned areas of management is associated with many challenges that must be overcome and resolved by the visitor attraction authorities in order to ensure the success of a place. For the purpose of this project, the focus should be on one specific issue within the resource management field, which is tourism carrying capacity. This concept is closely related to sustainable tourism, which is why it is so important nowadays that the management of it is well planned and implemented. There have been numerous attempts to explain tourism carrying capacity and many of those definitions ultimately overlap. In 1981, the World Tourism Organization used this term to refer to "the maximum number of tourists that a space can absorb without lowering of the quality of the visitor's experience and without serious consequences for its ecology and its socio-economic structures". In 1998, Middleton and Hawkins (cited in European Commission, 2002) wrote that carrying capacity is "a measure of the tolerance a site or building are open to tourist activity and the

limit beyond which an area may suffer from the adverse impacts of tourism". Additionally, this concept can be approached from several different perspectives. The most common are economic, social, and physical. The first dimension includes all the economic measures used to manage tourism development. It utilizes income, cost, and benefit parameters to determine the resource's capacity. The second dimension aims to find the optimal number of tourists in a given destination that will not adversely affect the local population, their sense of identity and tolerance for visitors. Lastly, the most common perspective of carrying capacity, physical one, refers to the maximum number of people that the site can accommodate and which still allows their fairly free movement (Massiani & Santoro, 2012). This limit varies depending on, among others, the physical characteristics of the place and its population's features. Bad or non-existent management of the site's carrying capacity, and thus, exceeding its limit of visitors may lead to extremely negative consequences. One such outcome that is widely described in the literature is over-tourism. This concept can be understood as an excessive concentration of tourism in a destination or its part, which leads to harm to the local environment, and has a negative impact on the host community and their quality of life, as well as on the experiences of visitors (Koens, et al, 2018).

Constant control and monitoring of the carrying capacity of a place is, therefore, an extremely important tool ensuring sustainable tourism and its balanced development. This term can be understood as the minimalization of the negative impact of tourism on the local culture and the natural environment. This measure can contribute to the protection of both natural and man-made tourist attractions and thus preserving them for future visitors.

2.2 Smart tourism

One of the best and most common answers to over-tourism and many other tourism management problems nowadays is the use of information and communications technology (ICT/IT). IT refers to the latest advances and developments in computers and communication technologies. Their use is aimed at obtaining, analysing, storing, applying and disseminating information. Moreover, it is a tool used to increase the competitiveness of both the entire region and individual enterprises (Buhalis, 1998). These technological innovations enable and induce numerous positive changes such as improvement of business outcomes and resource management efficiency, sustainability enhancement, and maximizing competitiveness. It contributes to the growth of the tourism product itself, but also to the improvement of external linking in the form of marketing and distribution. Ultimately, IT development has changed the traditional framework for tourism development and became the core of the latest phenomenon - smart tourism.

There are three components of smart tourism – smart experience, smart business ecosystem, and smart destination. A logical evolution of the last of them was shown by Jovicic in 2019, who proposed

3 different approaches to its understanding. The traditional/classical approach is based on perceiving the destination only as an agglomeration of services (accommodation and transportation) and attractions without strong links and cooperation between entities involved in the tourism of the place. This perception evolved to the systemic approach in the mid-1990s giving tourism destination a more comprehensive meaning and defining it as a network of interrelated elements that include tourism service companies, local authorities, local community, and tourists. The final result of this constant transformation is a smart tourism approach, which introduces tourism destinations as a much more complex system. This perspective ensures facilitated collaboration of the previously mentioned stakeholders of the industry thanks to the digital revolution, which enables an exchange of knowledge and information.

However, the phenomenon of smart tourism can also be seen as a logical progression from traditional tourism, with an additional stage in-between, that has been brought about by the digital revolution, which is e-tourism. Despite the apparent similarity between e-tourism and smart tourism, there are some notable differences. First and foremost, smart tourism brings together the digital realm and the physical sphere, while e-tourism operates only in the digital world. This bridging is possible, among others, thanks to the use of tools such as the Internet of Things or IBeacon technology, which enable smartphones to react to signals received from the real world. Furthermore, fundamental technologies for smart tourism are smartphones and sensors, while e-tourism is website-based. These sensors constantly record and collect data (e.g. consumer behaviour, location), consequently creating an enormous amount of digital information also known as big data. The purpose of smart tourism is not only to collect this data but also to process it and use it intelligently for the future development of all businesses. Another key difference between e-tourism and smart tourism is the phase of travel in which they apply. The former refers to the pre- and post-trip activities such as booking a hotel room or commenting and rating visitor attractions after the journey, while the latter additionally covers activities during the trip itself, e.g. using geolocation to navigate from one place to another. What is more, the structure of e-tourism is based on the value chain and intermediaries, while smart tourism operates on the principle of an ecosystem that includes interconnected stakeholders. This system refers to sharing information and knowledge, as well as using technology to create, deliver and manage intelligent services and visitor experiences. Lastly, e-tourism provides customers with a minimum level of participation and interaction. Information exchange works on the basis of B2B (Business to Business), B2C (Business to Consumer) and C2C (Consumer to Consumer), which illustrates the one-way distribution channel of information. Smart tourism, on the other hand, allows for the active participation of tourists, such as commenting or sharing photos and videos, which means that they are no longer just customers, but become part of the public-private-consumer collaboration (Gretzel et al., 2015; Yalçınkaya et al., 2018).

Having examined the differences between e-tourism and smart tourism, the next section of this essay addresses more comprehensively the concept of smart tourism. On the basis of what has been discussed above, along with the definitions proposed by Wang et al. (2016) and Gretzel et al. (2015), it can be concluded that smart tourism is a tourism platform that integrates tourism sources with information and communications technologies. Its aim is to collect, harness and share information derived from physical infrastructure, as well as human and government sources with the use of technologies in order to convert the acquired data into knowledge that will ensure the continuous development of all stakeholders and to provide tourists with the highest quality services and on-site experiences. This can be achieved through the use of its core technologies, namely cloud computing, Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence, and mobile communication.

Cloud computing is a general term for the delivery of various types of services over the internet that are not installed on a server or local computer. It is also the hardware and software located in the datacentres that provide those services. This technology helps computers store, process, manage and share information and programs. "Additionally, through cloud services, such as TripAdvisor, WhatsApp, Tripcast and HearPlanet, tourists can get information irrespective of time and space by the use of mobile phones or portable devices" (Jovicic, 2019; Yao, 2011). This feature opens up a wide range of possibilities for both visitors and travel service providers.

The idea of the second smart tourism tool, the Internet of Things, assumes the existence of objects around us, including actuators, sensors, mobile devices and many others, that interact and cooperate with each other in real-time to achieve common goals. Those real-life objects are connected to the Internet, thus bridging the gap between the physical world and the digital one. Furthermore, IoT favors "a shift in service provision, from always-on services, typical in the Web era, to always-responsive services" (Gretzel et al., 2015). This development facilitates access to content and data at any time and place, it also enables the response to tourists' needs at run-time. The technology is contributing to changes in the way of living, working and interacting. From the point of view of tourists, this means that they can discover tourism destinations simply by using their mobile phones and with immediate access to information. In the context of tourism management, the Internet of Things can be applied in order to regulate the number of visitors to a given tourist attraction. Several types of sensors are used for this purpose, and their point of reference is the previously discussed site's carrying capacity (Gretzel et al., 2015; Jovicic, 2019).

The next fundamental technology of smart tourism is artificial intelligence (AI). In simple terms, it is a reference to machines, including computers, that can express wisdom, otherwise known as human intelligence. Forms in which AI manifests itself include chatbots and voice customer assistants. There are many advantages to this technology. "This computer-based system has capabilities of problem-solving, storing memory and understanding human language" (Wang et al., 2016). It also improves

customer service by providing 24/7 real-time assistance. The use of intelligent agents or chatbots allows to automatically answer frequently asked questions, which facilitates the work of employees. Moreover, it can act as the brand's digital expert and transfer experiences and services from a physical shop to an online one. Lastly, AI enables tracking the inventory levels in a store, examine and control the flow of traffic in a given facility, automate repetitive manual tasks, save costs and much more (Tsaih & Hsu, 2018).

The last and most essential smart tourism tool in this essay is mobile communication. This refers to the use of portable communication devices in order to communicate and interact both with other individuals and with the source of information while being away from a fixed location. The main device of this type is a mobile phone, which has undergone tremendous changes from its invention to modern times. Originally it was used only for voice communication, with time its functionality has been extended to include short message services, also known as SMS. Nowadays, mobile phones have evolved into advanced computing devices that allow access to a wide range of online information. In conjunction with the Wi-Fi, they have become portable Internet devices, allowing interaction with other people, devices and sources of information, as well as searching databases regardless of place and time (Ling, 2015). Therefore, smartphones have become one of the foundational technologies in tourism nowadays due to their portable nature that enables permanent connection and Internet access.

Furthermore, the invention of the open operative systems makes it possible to download a seemingly infinite number of applications. This achievement is extremely important due to the ever-growing number of mobile applications and their downloads. From 2016 to 2020, the number of mobile apps downloads increased by over 50% worldwide (from 140,68 to 218 billions) (Statista, 2021b). What is more, travel-related apps are included in the top 10 most popular mobile apps of the Apple App Store as of March 2021 (Statista, 2021a).

In the context of tourism, mobile applications enable users to plan a trip, buy tickets, rent a car, book accommodation or a table in a restaurant and more. There are many types of mobile tourism applications. For the purposes of this dissertation, the classification proposed by Xiang & Wang (2012) will be adopted. The authors have distinguished eleven categories according to the main information service provided. These are single city destination guide, online travel agency, language assistant, flight manager, theme park and resort guide, facilitators, multiple city destination guide, food finder, entertainment, live camera, and currency converter.

The most numerous group is a single city destination guide which constitutes 21% (63 apps) of all applications. This is simply a travel guide on the phone that contains interesting information about a given location, such as transportation, visitor attractions and restaurants. Additionally, a multiple city destination guide works on the same principle, however, it is not limited to one destination but

includes many of them. This application offers a location-based service to determine the user's current location in order to provide context-appropriate knowledge. The next travel-related app, an online travel agency, is designed to facilitate the search and booking of, among others, transportation tickets and services such as accommodation or car rental. Language assistants are simply mobile applications that support users in language translation and offer a database of basic common phrases and local greetings. Currency converter, as the name suggests, contains the most up-to-date currency exchange rates. The following category is the flight manager, which incorporates live information about the flight, including the ability to check-in, search and track specific flights, find gates, check weather reports and so on. Theme park and resort guide apps apply to Disneyland, other theme parks, cruises, and resorts. The purpose of this type of app is to provide tips and recommendations to visitors to the above-mentioned destinations, e.g. estimated waiting times for rides, crowd level or schedule of the events. The so-called facilitator app is a collection of useful information for tourists, ranging from the location of toilets, Wi-Fi spots and gas stations, through maps of various airports and time differences, to the possibility of creating a packing list before the journey. The food finder category of mobile applications is rich in places that offer catering services, in particular bars and restaurants, but also facilities associated with the nightlife. Additionally, they offer users personalized recommendations as well as access to customer reviews. The last two groups (live camera and entertainment) are mainly intended to enrich visitors' experiences, for instance by the possibility of observing a given place through an installed live camera or thanks to the function that allows locating previously visited spots on the map and link the photos that were taken to each of them (Xiang & Wang, 2012).

Mobile technology and its associated applications are revolutionizing the tourism industry. Their use, especially in visitor attractions, continues to grow and thus brings more and more benefits to all stakeholders. From the tourists' perspective, "smartphones have enhanced the temporal alignment between people, the things they need, destinations and attractions, and activity options by providing better awareness of opening hours, immediate opportunities and the time required to access resources" (Dickinson et al., 2014). In addition, mobile technologies contribute to the improvement of visitors' experience by using information and entertainment to involve them more in their tour along the tourist attraction.

At the management level, this development enables the collection of an enormous amount of information that can be used to interpret travel patterns and predict them in the future. It also facilitates understanding and real-time management of travel congestion and visitors flow in tourism facilities, as well as improve the carrying capacity management process. Moreover, mobile technology is an ideal tool for marketing and promotion of visitor attractions, and thus drawing new customers and gaining their trust. Additionally, its role is to maintain good relations after the visit, which will increase the possibility of returning to the place (Dickinson et al., 2014; Palumbo et al., 2013).

3. Methodology

This section provides a step-by-step overview of the framework used in the following chapters in order to create a solid strategic plan for the NoQ start-up.

The idea for the project came from the author's experience, who saw the development opportunity for this type of a mobile application based on two main reasons. Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic that has prevailed since the beginning of 2020 is the cause of many restrictions all over the world, including, limited number of people in closed public spaces (e.g. tourist attractions). As a consequence, it has become essential to track the number of visitors on an ongoing basis, not only by managers in order to comply with dynamically changing rules, but also by tourists wishing to protect their health and safety while maintaining a fairly normal lifestyle. The second reason is the possibility of mitigating the phenomenon of overcrowding in remarkably popular sites and encouraging people to visit those less known, which may smooth the flow of tourists in a given region. This problem was very common and continued to worsen until the previous year, hence there is a risk of its returning once the pandemic ends.

Therefore, the NoQ's value proposition, that is the value it promises to deliver to its customers, is the innovation, namely the ability to travel in the smartest and easiest way, meaning not wasting time in queues, avoiding crowds, discovering new and lesser-known spots in the area, as well as intuitive fully online payments. This will contribute to more productive and efficient use of leisure time. Additionally, it will support more conscious travel in times of the pandemic by providing carrying capacity limits and the real-time number of visitors. Furthermore, the app will be a great tool for the sustainable development of tourism. This value will be achieved by limiting the use of cash and paper tickets, as well as by spreading the flow of visitors throughout the day and between flagship and less renowned tourist attractions.

Having explained the genesis and the value proposition of the project, it is necessary here to present the steps that will be taken in order to create a solid strategic plan. The first part of the dissertation, namely literature review, covers a theoretical framework in which the meaning of keywords such as tourism, smart tourism, visitor attractions and carrying capacity were identified and explained in order to unify their understanding for the reader. For this purpose, scientific materials, books and articles that support the objects of this research and provide the basis for further discussion were analysed.

Subsequently, to check the viability of this innovative idea, an external analysis will be conducted, and more precisely, the environment and market on which the implementation of the project is planned (i.e. Poland) will be carefully examined in the following chapter. This section will be divided into two parts - macro and microenvironment analysis. For the first one, the PEST planning tool will be used, which means that the four main factors – political-legal, economic, socio-cultural and

technological – will be investigated. To this end, secondary data will be gathered from the official sources available online, including primarily, reports of the OECD, the European Commission and UNWTO, as well as, statistics obtained from the Eurostat, the polish Central Statistical Office and Statista website. All these materials contain current information not older than year 2018.

Microenvironment analysis, on the other hand, will examine the environment directly related to the company and affecting its performance and activities. Therefore, 3 main components will be taken into account – clients, suppliers and competitors. The first one will identify target customers and segment them based on the previously collected and presented in the macroanalysis data. Then, it is crucial to identify the company's suppliers who are extremely important in the development process of the mobile application. Finally, the direct and indirect competition for this project will be analysed. The acquired knowledge will allow, among other things, to evaluate their good practices as well as elements that require improvement, which in turn will contribute to building a competitive advantage of the NoQ. To achieve this, the competition's websites and mobile apps will be investigated, along with two distribution channels – App Store and Google Play.

To deepen the investigation of the microenvironment, a business analysis tool created by Michael Porter in 1980, called Porter's Five Forces, will be used. This activity aims to better understand the five forces operating on the market and influencing the company's efficiency, which are the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitutes, bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers and competitive rivalry.

The fifth chapter will contain an internal analysis of the company. This part of the strategic plan aims to determine strengths and weaknesses of the project. The former can be divided into advantages for the end users, i.e. tourists, and those for businesses also known as the NoQ's suppliers.

The following section will contain the VRIO model that will evaluate the company's key resources and capabilities in four categories – their value for the business and its customers, their rarity on the market, the possibility of being imitated by the competitors, as well as, the organization of the company and its readiness to use resources' full potential. The goal is to identify those that have the greatest impact on the competitive advantage of the NoQ.

To deepen the analysis, the Value Chain tool created by Michael Porter in 1985 will be used. Its purpose is to help identify the areas of the business's operations that add value to its final product and create a competitive advantage. Accordingly, 9 categories of activities will be studied: inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales, service, firm infrastructure, human resource management, technology development and procurement.

The following Competitive Analysis chapter will summarize the research included in the previous sections of this strategic plan. For this purpose, the SWOT analysis will be implemented, in order to

compare the strengths and weaknesses of the company with the opportunities and threats arising from the external environment.

The data collected hitherto ought to be transformed into knowledge that will be applied in the practical part of the project's strategic plan. This will consist of the sections such as strategic plan's objectives, development strategy, implementation and requirements for it. The first one will define the three-stage goals of this strategic plan – short-term objectives (first 12 months), medium-term objectives (the following two years) and long-term objectives (7 years from the project implementation). In order to achieve them, specific activities and tasks will be presented along with an approximate time of their implementation.

The following chapter, entitled Development Strategy, will present the company's mission and vision, as well as its set of core values. In addition, the critical success factors will be identified along with their impact on the growth of the company's competitiveness, as well as their characteristics that contribute to meeting the customers' needs.

The last but one of the most significant sections of this strategic plan will focus on implementation policies. Therefore, a comprehensive approach will be adopted to develop a complete and in-depth strategy for the NoQ start-up. Firstly, it is important to create the marketing plan by means of Marketing Mix, and more specifically its four Ps – product, place, price and promotion. Furthermore, the organizational structure of the company will be defined, including the main positions (such as CEO) and planned departments. This paragraph will also discuss their main tasks and responsibilities.

Moreover, the implementation chapter will indicate 4 types of key resources of the enterprise which are necessary for its proper and effective operations. Human resources will introduce the ideal candidate, their character traits, skills and experience. Physical resources will define what material goods are needed to support the efficient work of employees. Intellectual resources will clarify the types of intellectual properties and how they can protect the NoQ's assets. Finally, the financial resources will explain the available sources of funds and indicate those that the company will take into account.

The last paragraph of this chapter will illustrate the twelve-month implementation plan using the Gantt Chart tool. The tasks will be briefly described and the approximate time of their execution will be given.

The final chapter of the strategic plan for the NoQ project focuses on the requirements for the aforementioned implementation policies. There will be two main areas of requirements, the first one related to the establishment of a specific type of company in Poland, and the second one with additional legal requirements.

4. Market Analysis

Poland is a country located in the central part of Europe, surrounded by the waters of the Baltic Sea to the north and seven neighbouring countries (Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Kaliningrad Oblast of Russia) (Rdzany, 2014). The importance of Poland as a tourist destination is constantly growing. Its competitiveness was highlighted by the 2019 edition of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report. In the global ranking among 110 countries from Europe and Eurasia, Poland took 42 place, which is an increase from position 47 in 2015. Poland is also in the top 20% of countries in terms of health and hygiene (access to drinking water, sanitation, health sector), as well as cultural resources and business travel (the number of UNESCO cultural World Heritage sites, stadiums, online searches of Poland's cultural resources, and international association meetings). On the other hand, Poland fares the worst when it comes to prioritizing tourism by the government (government spending, funds, and national promotion and branding), as well as creating a good business environment (legal framework, taxation, permits, competition policy) (World Economic Forum, 2019).

Despite Poland's visible low points, its potential as a tourist destination is beginning to be noticed. In 2019, the country received the "Most Distinctive Tourist Destination Award" at the Guangzhou International Travel Fair in China. In the same year, it was indicated as one of the eight directions of the future in the PRO SKY Destination 2019 report (Polska Organizacja Turystyczna, 2020).

Poland's image is also positive among foreign tourists, 90% of whom were satisfied with their visit there. Moreover, most of them consider Poland to be full of life energy, modern, healthy, and ecological. The vast majority plans an individually organized trip to Poland in the next few years, for 5 or more days. What attracts them the most to Poland are cities (71% decelerated their willingness to visit). In 2020, the most popular cities for a city break were Tricity (Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot) (21%), Zakopane (19%), Kraków (16%), Warszawa (15%), Wrocław (11%), Poznań (10%), Katowice (5%), and Łódź (3%) (Sas, 2020a). The remaining tourists attractions in which foreign visitors are interested in the most are forests and national parks (53%) and UNESCO sites (44%). Interestingly, in 2020, the Polish coast was ranked fourth for the first time. Apart from its rich historical heritage, Poland also encourages foreign visitors with its low prices (Polska Organizacja Turystyczna, 2021).

Furthermore, the country is divided into 16 voivodeships. Each of them is characterized by a different and unique tourist offer. The northern part is distinguished by its access to the Baltic Sea. In turn, the south of Poland is associated with more active recreation due to its landform in the form of mountains. Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodeships in the northeast is well known for its over 2 000 lakes. What is more, all of the 16 voivodeships offer a wide selection of natural and cultural visitor attractions, such as monuments, national parks, forests, and health resorts (Polska Organizacja Turystyczna, n.d.).

According to Kruczek (2015), the most frequently visited Polish national parks are Tatra National Park (3 million visitors annually) and Karkonoski National Park (2 million), while the most popular cave was Łokietek Cave in Ojców (over 92 000). Moreover, when it comes to the cultural heritage sites "the highest figures for visitor attendance are in iconic attractions in cities which are regarded as international centres of tourism (Warsaw, Kraków) or else in their vicinity" (Kruczek, 2015). Among castles, the most renowned is the Wawel castle, and in the case of park and palace complexes – Palace in Wilanów with 2.8 million guests. Additionally, Salt Mine in Wieliczka (monument of technology) was visited by 1.2 million tourists in 2013, the archaeological venue in Biskupin saw 166 000 people and the lighthouse in Rozewie was explored by 102 000 travellers.

However, the most numerous category of cultural tourist attractions are museums (959 at the end of 2019). The majority is located in Mazowieckie and Małopolskie voivodships. Their popularity is constantly growing. In 2012, there were 26.7 million museum visitors, and in 2019 this number increased to 40.2 million. The best known Polish museums include the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum (1.5 million in 2013), the Historical Museum of Kraków (0.94 million in 2013), the National Museum of Kraków (726 000), and the Warsaw Uprising Museum (490 000) (Kruczek, 2015; Statistics Poland, 2020a,b) (see Annex B).

4.1 Macroanalysis

4.1.1 Political-Legal Context

Polish tourism is the responsibility of the Ministry of Economic Development, Labour and Technology since November 2019. Its competences include all matters related to the industry, inter alia, the management and legal regulation. The tourism department is divided into 6 teams – International Cooperation Unit, Planning and Promotion Unit, Research and Education Team, Tourism Economy Team, Organisational & Financial Team and Legislation in Tourism Team. Furthermore, the Ministry controls the work of the Polish Tourism Organisation, established in 1999, whose tasks include primarily the promotion of Poland as a tourist destination, conducting research in this field and managing the Polish Tourist Information System (OECD, 2020).

Besides the national perspective, there is also the regional and local level of tourism management. Their tasks can be generalized into two categories: "the public sector tasks not allocated to other bodies under relevant legislation and tasks commissioned by the National Government" (OECD, 2020). On the regional level, there are associations called Regional Tourism Organisations, under which cooperation between the local government and the tourism industry is carried out. They are mainly responsible for the promotion of a given region, support for the area's development plans and collaboration with the aforementioned Polish Tourism Organisation. The local level, in turn, includes

approximately 120 local tourism organisations tasked with classifying and registering local hotels, travel agents, tour operators, and more (OECD, 2020).

In order to organise the operations and activities of all tourism stakeholders, several legal documents have been adopted. The fundamental one is the Act on Tourist Services from August 29, 1997, along with its several amendments. Polish legislation includes also the Act on Package Travel (2017), the Act establishing the Polish Tourism Organisation (1999), the Act on accommodation services and services of tour leaders and tourist guides (1997), the regulation relating to the hotel and other accommodation facilities (2004), and to the hotel classification (2010). Additionally, on August 18, 2015, the Council of Ministers approved the Tourism Development Programme until 2020. Currently, there is no such document for the upcoming years, however, there is the marketing plan for Polish tourism for 2021 adopted by the Polish Tourism Organisation (OECD, 2020; Wielki & Lykhopok, 2017).

4.1.2 Economic Context

Overall, Poland's GDP has been growing since 1990, with a few drops (in 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2016), from $ 65.9 billion in 1990 to $ 595.9 billion in 2019 (World Bank, 2021). In 2019, Polish GDP comprised 56,9% of services, 28,83% of industry, and 2,15% of agriculture (Statista, 2021c). Furthermore, the total contribution of Travel & Tourism (T&T) to GDP in Poland in 2019 amounted to 4,7%, while in Europe, and globally it was over twice as much – 9,5% and 10,3%, respectively. In terms of employment, T&T accounted for 5% of total employment (811.8 thousand jobs) in Poland in 2019. For comparison, in Europe it was 10,1% (38.5m), and at the global level, it was 334 million jobs (1 in 10 jobs) (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2020; World Travel & Tourism Council, n.d.).

In the first half of 2020, Poland experienced a sharp decline in economic activity due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The economy rebounded significantly in the third quarter, largely due to the higher household consumption and increased exports. However, the reintroduction of restrictions at the end of 2020 slowed it down again, especially in the service sector (European Commission, 2021). This was reflected, inter alia, in a decline in the contribution of T&T to European and global (-4,8%) GDP, as well as to the employment at both levels (-3.6m jobs and - 62m jobs, respectively) (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2020).

As mentioned earlier, Poland's greatest asset as a tourism destination is its cultural heritage, which is why there was an increase in public expenditure (local government and state budget) on culture and protection of national heritage by 8,2% in 2019 (PLN 11 918.1 million[1]) (Statistics Poland, 2020a). Another factor that contributes to the growing interest in Poland is its competitive prices. In the first

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[1] EUR 2 614 116 054 as of 16.08.2021

quarter of 2020, the total tourists (domestic and foreign) expenses in Poland amounted to approximately PLN 10.4 billion[2] (17% less than the same period in 2019). Additionally, same-day visitors spent 14% less than the previous year (PLN 6.6 billion[3] (Statistics Poland, 2020c). In the fourth quarter of 2020, foreign tourists' spending on goods and services acquired in Poland decreased and amounted to PLN 4.6 billion[4] (55,9% less than in 2019, and 34% less than the previous quarter). The most frequently purchased products in this period were non-food goods (57,5%), followed by other expenses (services) (15,8%), food and non-alcoholic drinks (13,3%), tobacco products (11,1%), and alcohol (2,3%) (Statistics Poland, 2021a). In turn, Polish residents spent a total of PLN 79.5 billion[5] on travel in 2019 (9,7% more than in 2018), including PLN 30.9 billion[6] on overnight trips. The average expenses (per person) for 2-4-day trips amounted to PLN 352[7], while for 5-day and longer ones it was PLN 1012[8] (Statistics Poland, 2020d).

Moreover, in 2020, there were 10 291 tourist accommodation establishments in Poland, which is by 960 (8,5%) less compared to 2019. This figure includes 3 990 hotel facilities (hotels, motels, guesthouses and others), and 6 301 other facilities (e.g. campsites). Interestingly, 2020 is the first year in which a decline in Polish accommodation establishments was recorded, this number had been growing steadily since 2011. Lastly, most of those facilities are located in the following voivodeships: Zachodniopomorskie (141 100), Pomorskie (115 700), and Małopolskie (95 500) (Statistics Poland, 2021b).

Furthermore, in 2020, the number of tourists using accommodation facilities in Poland decreased by 49,9% compared to the year before (17.9m visitors). Among them, foreigners accounted for approximately 13% (2.3m) (Statistics Poland, 2021b). Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, these figures had been growing steadily since 2010 (see Annex C). What is more, the largest number of visitors, both in 2019 and 2020, stayed in the establishments located in the Małopolskie voivodships (5.6m and 2.4m, respectively) and Mazowieckie voivodships (5.5m and 2m, respectively). The average length of stay, in 2019 and 2020, was less than 3 nights (Statistics Poland, 2020d and 2021b).

At the beginning of 2021, the number of tourists in accommodation establishments was even lower than in 2020. In total there were 213 149 tourists in January (88,3% domestic and 11,7% foreigners), and 697 443 in February (93,3% domestic and 6,7% foreigners). The most popular region was the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (40 100) (Statistics Poland, 2021c).

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[2] EUR 2 277 016 971,84 as of 16.08.2021
[3] EUR 1 445 030 680,50 as of 16.08.2021
[4] EUR 1 006 970 063,76 as of 16.08.2021
[5] EUR 17 404 540 051,95 as of 16.08.2021
[6] EUR 6 764 628 000,00 as of 16.08.2021
[7] EUR 77,07 as of 16.08.2021
[8] EUR 221,51 as of 16.08.2021

Lastly, the Polish tourist market is characterised by seasonality. The peak of the tourist season is in July and August (see Annex D). In these months in 2020, 5.9 million visitors were accommodated, which constituted 33,1% of all guests (and 25,5% in 2019). Overnight stays in the summer period accounted for 38,5% of all the nights provided in 2020, which is approximately 25% less than in 2019 (Statistics Poland, 2021b).

4.1.3 Socio-Cultural Context

In 2020, Poland welcomed 8.4 million international tourists (a -60% change over the previous year). This figure grew steadily from 2015 to 2019 (see Annex E) (UNWTO, 2021). What is more, in 2018, there were 85.9 million international arrivals, including 19 623 000 overnight visitors and 66 324 000 same-day visitors (OECD, 2020). Moreover, in 2019, there were 3 main reasons for traveling to Poland – vacation (36,2%), business (23,8%), and other personal (40%) (UNWTO, n.d.(a)).

In 2018, the majority of tourists came from the European Union countries (98%), in particular from Germany (6 704 000), Ukraine (2 038 000), the United Kingdom (919 000), Russian Federation (919 000), and Belarus (793 000) (UNWTO, 2021; OECD, 2020). In January 2021, the largest number of international tourists came from Ukraine (6 507), Germany (3 388), the Republic of Korea (1 444), and the Netherlands (1 144). Moreover, in the total number of foreign visitors using accommodation facilities in Poland in 2020, people from Germany, Ukraine and the UK prevailed (797 000, 206 000, and 186 000, respectively) (Statistics Poland, 2021b). A similar situation occurred in January 2021, when Ukraine and Germany accounted for 26,2% and 13,6%, respectively.

Surprisingly, most of the arrivals to Poland in 2019 took place by land (93,5%), followed by air (6%), and finally by water (0,5%) (UNWTO, n.d.(a)). Air transport was more important across Europe in 2018, which accounted for as much as 53%. The remaining half consisted of transport by road (40%), water (4%), and rail (3%) (UNWTO, 2020).

Foreign tourists crossing the Polish land border in the fourth quarter of 2020 were mainly residents of nearby villages located 30 or 50 km from the border (53,1% and 73,2%, respectively) (Statistics Poland, 2021a). In 2019, same-day visitors crossing the land border accounted for 75,7%. The main purpose of their trip was shopping (70,8%). Their spending on goods (78,2%) and services (21,8%) was higher than in 2018. In turn, services prevailed in the share of foreigners' expenditure at the airports (64%) (Statistics Poland, 2020e).

In the case of domestic tourism, Poles constitute as much as 80% of the total number of tourists in Poland in 2018 (Eurostat, n.d.). A year later, Poles made 75.1 million trips (one person could make more than one trip), approximately 80% of which were domestic travels (see Annex F). Moreover, the vast majority (96,1%) travel for private purposes (Statistics Poland, 2020d).

Polish tourists are made up of 49% of men and 51% of women, most of whom have higher or secondary education. In terms of age, there is no obviously dominant group (18-24 (13%), 25-34 (22%), 35-44 (23%), 45-54 (18%), 55+ (24%)). Moreover, their financial situation can be described as 'live frugally and thus have enough money for everything' (Kantar, 2019).

The Kantar consulting company distinguished 5 segments of Polish tourists - Undemanding Kowalskis (25%), Spontaneous Athletes (23%), Travel Agency Clients (20%), Free Birds (18%), and Holiday Enthusiasts (14%). They share several characteristics. Firstly, they all prefer trips to the seaside with their family in the summer season. The most frequently chosen accommodation type are guest rooms or rented apartments. During the trip, the most popular activities are walking, swimming, cycling and BBQ. Poles also like to see tourist attractions such as museums and are not afraid to spend a little more money on them. Generally, Polish people prefer to visit new places rather than those that they already know. In addition, the vast majority of tourists draw inspiration for trips and accommodation from the Internet (Kantar, 2019). Interestingly, according to the survey, 66% of Poles plan to spend their holidays only in Poland after the COVID-19 pandemic ends (Sas, 2020b).

4.1.4 Technological Context

As of January 2021, there were 4.66 billion internet users worldwide, which is 59,5% of the total population. This figure increased by 7,3% (316 million) compared to January 2020 (We Are Social, 2021). In 2019, the largest percentage of people accessing the internet was in Europe as well as in the developed countries (see Annex G and Annex H). In Poland, the percentage of households with internet access has been growing steadily since 2005 (see Annex I). In 2020, it was as much as 90,4% (OECD, 2021). The number of individuals is also increasing. In 2020, there were 87% of people who have ever used the Internet, and as many as 83% who used it in the last 3 months (91% and 87% in Europe, respectively) (Eurostat, 2021b). Furthermore, the biggest share globally belonged to people aged 25-34 (32%), followed by 35-44 (19%), and 18-24 (18%) (see Annex J).

Moreover, English, Chinese and Spanish are the most widely used languages on the Internet. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that Chinese dominate mainly in China and its high share is due to the fact that this country is the leader in the number of internet users (see Annex K).

In 2020, 72% of Poles accessed the Internet every day. Their average daily time spent was estimated at 6h 44 minutes, which is 10 minutes less compared to the global result (Eurostat, 2021c; We Are Social, 2021a & 2021b). Their main activity there was searching for information about goods and services (see Annex L). Additionally, in 2014, the majority of Poles (57%) used the internet to find travel information and organize their holidays (Statista Research Department, 2015).

Mobile devices are of great importance among devices used to access the Internet. In 2018, this method was utilized by as many as 73% of Polish residents. In addition, mobile phones were used by

60% of them, particularly in order to access the Internet outside the workplace and home (see Annex M) (Eurostat, 2021e). 3 years later, in January 2021, there were 30.08 million Polish mobile internet users, which is 94,1% of the total internet users (We Are Social, 2021b).

Furthermore, "data transmission in mobile networks has been the most dynamically developing service for several years" (Sas, 2020c). In 2019, as much as 96% of the Polish market share of mobile operating systems belonged to Android, and only 3% to iOS. In addition, the most frequently chosen operator in Poland was Orange (1/3 of the market share), which is known for its good upload speeds (Sas, 2020c).

Moreover, the global internet consumer spent on average 39 minutes a day on a desktop in 2018, while on mobile it was 3 times longer - 122 minutes. The consumption of mobile internet was projected to grow, while the desktop to decrease (Johnson, 2021e). This trend can already be noticed in the example of Poland, when in January 2021, Poles aged 16-64 spent an average of 2h 57 minutes a day using the Internet on their mobile phones. Globally, it was 42 minutes longer - 3h 39 minutes (We Are Social, 2021a & b).

What is more, in 2020, mobile users worldwide downloaded 218 billion applications, mainly from the Google Store (see Annex N) (Statista, 2021b; Statista Research Department, 2021a). In 2019, the most popular categories from this store were tools, communications and business, with tourism taking 5th place. On the other hand, in 2021, the most downloaded mobile apps from the Apple Store were games, business and education, while tourism was in 7th place (Statista Research Department, 2021b & c). Interestingly, global consumer spending on mobile applications doubled in the fourth quarter of 2020 (see Annex O).

When it comes to the technological advancement of enterprises in Poland, in 2019, as much as 96% of them had access to the Internet. The level of implementation of other high technologies in Polish companies is quite low. In 2020, 24% of businesses bought cloud computing services used over the internet. In the case of artificial intelligence, services of chatbot and robots were utilized by 2% of enterprises. Also 2% of companies analysed big data from smart devices or sensors, while 4% did it from geolocation or portable devices. Lastly, 17% of businesses in Poland used the Internet of Things (IoT) in 2020. As much as 13% of them, used sensors in order to track the movement of vehicles and/or products to offer condition-based maintenance of vehicles. Just 4% used IoT to monitor customers' activities, improve their service and provide with a personalised experience (Eurostat, 2021f - j).

4.1.5 Future Trends

Given the current circumstances, the tourism of the future will change radically in the coming years. According to Euronews (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic gives the tourism industry the opportunity to rebuild itself in a more mindful and ethical manner. Tourists will choose more sustainable and slow

travel. They will look for places away from the crowds, thus returning to nature and wilderness and spending time hiking, cycling or camping. Their goal will be to reconnect with the environment and fully absorb the destination.

Moreover, there will be a growth in the importance of authentic tourism. This type of travel will enable visitors to experience something real and connect with local communities, their culture and heritage in a more authentic, respectful and safe way. However, it will be vital to create a mutually beneficial ecosystem in which tourists will give back something positive, such as volunteering or making direct payments.

Furthermore, the pandemic has made people more health-conscious, which has resulted in an increase in health and wellness tourism. The purpose of this is to improve immunity and health, as well as to strengthen overall well-being.

Finally, as noted by the CBI (2021) "the demand for technologically manufactured personal experiences is increasing". It has risen with the development of portable devices such as tablets and smartphones and is essential at all stages of the customer journey. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the greater interest in such functions of mobile applications as voice commands or contactless payments.

4.2 Microanalysis

4.2.1 Clients

Given the characteristics of this project, the main focus ought to be on the following market segments. In terms of end-users, the project will target tech-savvy tourists who use mobile applications to make their journeys easier and more enjoyable. This facilitation will be manifested primarily in the form of online booking and payments, as well as the possibility of tracking the real-time number of visitors in a given tourist attraction in order to avoid crowds.

Furthermore, Polish residents are an essential target group due to their enormous share in the total number of tourists in Poland in 2018 (80%). Moreover, about 80% of their trips were domestic. Additionally, 66% of them stated in the survey that they will spend the next holiday after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic only in Poland. In addition, since they are considered well-educated people, they are more likely to visit and appreciate cultural sites and other tourist attractions.

Among Poles, aforementioned Free Birds highlighted by Kantar, will be the main segment due to their tendency to spend holidays in the country and a great desire to visit tourist attractions. Moreover, 45% of them are people aged 35-44, which is the second largest group globally that most often uses the Internet. They are frequent travellers (at least 3 times a year). Lastly, Free Birds organize trips themselves, therefore the mobile application can be of help to them.

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The second group of target end-users are foreign visitors. International guests were a vital part of tourism in Poland prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with the easing of restrictions and greater freedom of travel, their importance is expected to return. Moreover, 98% of visitors to Poland come from the European Union, which had the highest percentage of people accessing the Internet in 2019. The most significant countries in terms of the number of visitors are Germany, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

4.2.2 Suppliers

The main suppliers for this project are businesses defined as tourist attractions that are located in Poland. The only condition they must meet is to have a real-time visitor tracking system and the willingness to share this information in order to improve the operations of the mobile application. The examples of such sites are the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, or the National Museum in Wrocław.

In addition, it is important to cooperate with and have the support of companies specialized in developing mobile applications, namely Code Agency, ITgenerator or YarMobile.

Finally, it is important to establish cooperation with businesses that provide services directly related to the operation of the NoQ mobile application. This includes, among others, online payments that will be possible thanks to PayPal, Visa and Mastercard, as well as, map and GPS services provided by Google.

4.2.3 Competitors

The competition of the NoQ project is limited to worldwide mobile apps that operate on the Polish market and offer the same or similar products. However, during the research, no mobile application that offers visitor tracking functionality was found. Therefore, the following competition analysis focuses on the ones that provide online ticket booking to tourist attractions.

GetYourGuide has one of the most comprehensive catalogues of worldwide tourist attractions. Nevertheless, it focuses primarily on selling experiences in the form of private and guided tours, excursions, and food and beverage tastings, rather than simple admission tickets. The app provides 24/7 customer service, access to user reviews and ratings, as well as a choice of many different currencies including Polish Złoty. Interestingly, GetYourGuide offers a refund of the difference if the customer finds a lower price and a full refund in the event of cancellation 24 hours before.

Dutch Tiqets includes guided tours, sightseeing cruises, but most importantly, admission tickets to the well-known tourist attractions. However, the offer on the Polish market is very limited, there are only 9 attractions in Warsaw, 7 in Kraków, 2 in Oświęcim and Zator, and 1 in Wieliczka. As in the

case of GetYourGuide, this app has 24/7 customer service, access to ratings and reviews, a choice of currencies (including Polish Złoty), and free cancellation up to 24 hours before the visit.

Civitatis discloses great similarity in nature and functionality to GetYourGuide. The app offers first and foremost experiences such as guided tours, city sightseeing, cooking classes, other workshops, private day trips, tickets to concerts, and transfers within the city. Interestingly, the application also suggests to users possible free activities in the destination. Obviously, it includes 24/7 customer support, FAQs, and cancellation options with varying deadlines depending on the activity. However, the disadvantage of Civitatis is the narrow choice of currency and the inability to pay in Polish Złoty.

Table 1. Competition comparison

		GetYourGuide	Tiqets	Civitatis
Number of downloads (Google Store)		1 000 000+	500 000+	100 000+
Rating	App Store	3.6/5 (532 ratings)	4.7/5 (6600 ratings)	4.7/5 (272 ratings)
	Google Store	4.5/5 (20 093 ratings)	4.7/5 (5 982 ratings)	4.6/5 (3 210 ratings)
Available on		iOS/Android/website		
Price		Free		

Source: App Store (2021a-c); Google Play (2021a-c)

4.2.4 Porter's Five Forces

To better understand the NoQ company's microenvironment, as well as the competitiveness and profitability of its industry, the Porter's Five Forces analysis will be performed. Created in 1980 by Michael Porter, the business analysis tool distinguishes 5 elements, called forces, that operate in and influence the market – the threat of new entrants and substitutes, bargaining power of suppliers and buyers and competitive rivalry.

The Threat of New Entrants

The first force focuses on the opportunities and difficulties of entering the market. The easier it is for new companies to access the market, the greater the number of competitors on it, which may contribute to driving the prices down and weakening the position of an already well-established business.

The prerequisite for entering the market is the development of a mobile application, which can be quite costly. The price of its development depends on the complexity of the app, the implemented technologies and the design. It may range from several thousand euros to several hundred thousand euros. However, if these expenses are not an obstacle, then accessing the market is quite easy and

fast, as entry barriers are low and the process of designing and developing the application as well as its deployment to the online stores takes only 6 months on average.

This ease of entry translates into a huge number of apps available on the two main distribution channels, Google Play and App Store, which have over 2 million mobile applications available to download in 2021. Therefore, in order to remain scalable, the company must constantly develop its product and expand its offer. This can be done by analysing user feedback, which allows to identify and enhance the elements that need improvement. Additionally, it is important to have a good marketing strategy, which can strengthen the promotion of the mobile app on the market and distinguish the company from its competitors.

Finally, the NoQ must remember to protect its intellectual property, such as name, logo, and application design elements (for instance icons), from duplication or theft by acquiring Intellectual Property Rights in the form of trademarks, copyrights and industrial design rights.

Threat of Substitutes

The force of the threat of substitutes determines the extent to which the offered product or service can be replaced by the alternative one provided by the competitors, that meets the same customer needs.

As mentioned in the section above, the NoQ app does not have direct competitors as it provides the ability to track visitor numbers in real-time. This major feature does not exist in the other examined apps, which makes the NoQ company stand out from the competition as a market leader. However, if we omit this characteristic, the NoQ has several rivals that offer the same functionalities (e.g. online ticket purchase), examples of which are the three previously mentioned applications – GetYourGuide, Tiqets and Civitatis.

In this sector, the process of replacing a product with an alternative one is extremely easy and cheap. In order to do this, the user needs to simply uninstall one mobile application and install a new one on in its place. All the aforementioned apps are free to download, hence the customer will not bear any costs while switching to a substitute. The described situation is a high risk for the NoQ company that must be taken into account when creating its development strategy.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

The third force, the bargaining power of suppliers, examines the capability of suppliers to raise the price of raw materials and services, which can affect the final profit of the company.

As mentioned in the 'suppliers' section, the NoQ has two types of providers. The first group consists of all those suppliers who provide services directly related to the operation of the mobile application, such as Google – google maps, or Visa, Mastercard and Pay Pal – online payments. Their

services are of high quality and unique, which means that it is difficult to find alternative suppliers. Consequently, they can charge high prices for their rare products.

The second group, which can also be referred to as partners, are all tourist attractions operating in Poland. Cooperation with as many of them as possible will allow expanding the product offer with new places that can be found in the mobile application. Furthermore, those tourist sites may be divided into flagship spots and less-known attractions. The former might be difficult to attain due to their prestige and strong reputation. However, the way to reach them is to take advantage of the visitor tracking feature, which enables to organise and improve the management of the visitors' flow. The latter, in turn, can be easily attracted by offering them the possibility of the additional promotion tool.

Bargaining Power of Buyers

The Bargaining power of buyers analyses the capability of the customers to reduce the company's prices. The NoQ's business model differs from the typical one used by the majority of the companies that sell goods. The mobile application is free to download by users who can only pay a one-time fee in order to upgrade their profile to a premium. This means that the revenues from this source will be very low and insufficient to cover all costs. Therefore, the main income of the company will be the profits from commissions charged to the partners. Their percentage and other benefits for both the NoQ and the other party will be specified in the signed contract.

Competitive Rivalry

The last force, Competitive Rivalry, is strongly influenced by the ones examined above. In a nutshell, this force describes the number and strength of the existing competitors in the industry.

As it was shown in the 'competitors' section, the NoQ app has no direct rivals, however, there are several companies that partially cover its product offering. Examples of this are the previously analysed GetYourGuide, Tiqets and Civitatis. These three well-implemented businesses provide an extensive catalogue of recommendations on tourist attractions and the online ticket purchase service. Those mobile applications are very well rated with 100 000 to one million downloads, which means that their quality is high and they are greatly appreciated by their users.

Nevertheless, what distinguishes the NoQ from its rivals is its main feature, which is the ability to track the real-time number of visitors to tourist attractions. Additional characteristics and activities that will increase the company's competitive advantage in the future are great relationships with a wide range of suppliers, an extensive customer database that allows maintaining good relations with the users, and the creation of an appealing work environment that will attract and retain industry experts at the NoQ.

5. Internal Analysis

The NoQ project has numerous strengths that bring benefits to end-users (tourists) but also to tourism businesses operating in Poland and to the Polish market itself.

The main advantage for users of the app is the ability to track the real-time number of visitors, which in turn helps to avoid unpleasant crowds that contribute to a bad visitor experience. Moreover, the possibility of booking tickets allows consumers to plan their journey in advance, even before it starts. This enables to make better use of time during the trip and fully enjoy the destination. Additionally, the app's guides and recommendations of tourist attractions are the perfect source of information for an in-depth discovery of the place. The combination of these three most significant features in one application is facilitation for tourists who do not have to download several apps in order to achieve the same functionality. This is particularly important due to the change in the people's lifestyle who have become lazier and thus are looking for the simplest solutions and amenities that make their lives easier.

Another example of such a solution is the possibility of using the NoQ via a mobile phone, which has become an inseparable element of human everyday life. Consequently, continuous access to mobile devices means that the user can benefit from the application from anywhere, at any time. Furthermore, the online payment feature eliminates the need to use cash and thus struggle with the currency exchange. This is crucial in the case of the Polish market, where the official currency is country-specific Polish zloty, and not commonly used in Europe, Euro.

What is more, the NoQ is easy and fast to use. Its built-in voice command function enables simpler utilization even in the car while driving. The map of a place and the ability to search for the user's location are conducive to exploring less-known nearby tourist attractions in the destination. Lastly, 24/7 customer support provides help and solutions to any emerging problems and troubles, regardless of the time of the day.

The strengths of this project not only profit end-users in the form of tourists, they also bring many benefits to Polish tourism businesses. Now more than ever, companies need to be aware of the occupancy of the facilities and their carrying capacity limitations to ensure proper procedures as well as the safety of visitors and staff. The restrictions and rules related to the COVID-19 pandemic change dynamically, which is why it is so important to implement solutions that enable constant measurement and monitoring of tourist attractions attendance. It is also a great tool for collecting data, identifying busy periods and thus improving the seasonality issue.

Furthermore, the NoQ app is an additional means of promoting Polish visitor attractions, especially the ones that are less renowned. What's more, it also contributes to the increase in recognition of the entire country as a tourist destination in the international arena. Lastly, this

application is a step towards becoming more environmentally friendly by, among others, using the electronic version of tickets.

On the other hand, this application, like any other project, has its weaknesses and elements that need to be worked on. The main disadvantage of the NoQ is the difficulty in obtaining information from companies regarding the number of visitors. The use of too many systems by them may complicate the development of the mobile application in the originally planned manner or prevent the process from being automated. The current lack of information on this subject makes it impossible to determine the way of cooperation with the suppliers.

Moreover, the entire procedure of creating, designing and maintaining the application can be costly, therefore, the project's implementation will initially be limited only to Poland, and in subsequent phases, it will be spread to foreign markets.

In addition, the NoQ is still an unknown brand on the target market and consequently has no credibility there. In this situation, it is imperative to create an outstanding promotional campaign before launching the product on the market to overcome the lack of reputation and establish itself as a reputable travel mobile app.

The last weakness of the project is that the brand does not appeal to all of the demographics. An example of such a group are people using mobile phones to a limited extent, especially the elderly. Fortunately, the percentage of such users is very low and is constantly decreasing.

5.1 VRIO Model

To deepen the internal analysis of the NoQ company, the VRIO business analysis framework is used (see Annex P). This tool allows to evaluate the start-up's key resources and capabilities from four different perspectives, their value, rarity, imitability and organization, and thus identify those that contribute to the increase in the competitive advantage of the NoQ from the inside.

The examination of the 11 main resources made it possible to divide them into two categories – competitive parity (technology, work equipment, financial resources, as well as, marketing strategy: digital promotion and transparency) and unused competitive advantage (Intellectual Property Rights, contracts with suppliers, customer database, the NoQ app, employees and company's culture and values).

The first category includes goods and assets that are valuable to the business and its customers but are common and used by the majority of the competitors. Possessing them still allows to compete on the market, however, this process is more challenging.

The remaining resources and capabilities fall into the category of unused competitive advantage, which means that they are superior or industry-leading. It is them that contribute to the greatest extent to the business's competitive advantage and distinguish it from the rivals. However, they are

not exploited at the moment, because the NoQ start-up is not prepared to use their full potential, as it is in the first phase of its development. Nevertheless, those assets can lead to a sustainable competitive advantage in the future if the company is well prepared and organized (which is one of the aims of this strategic plan).

Furthermore, it should be remembered that not every process or resource belonging to the business must bring a competitive advantage. An illustration of it might be the legal department that is significant for the proper operation and compliance with prevailing law but is not planned to be used to compete with other companies in the same industry.

Lastly, the VRIO analysis should be carried out again in the near future considering that the NoQ's resources and their nature may, and most probably will, change over time. These that are the company's strengths at the moment might become its weaknesses, and those newly acquired can be its valuable assets.

5.2 Value Chain

The Value Chain, created in 1985 by Michael Porter, is "a set of activities that are performed by the company to design, produce, market, deliver and support its product" (Porter, 1985). Moreover, it is a great tool for analysing the internal organization of the company, its strategy and performance. In addition, the value chain makes it possible to identify areas of the business's operations that add value to the final product and thus contribute to strengthening the company's competitive advantage, which might take the form of cost reduction or, in the case of the NoQ project, increased differentiation.

Figure 1. Value Chain
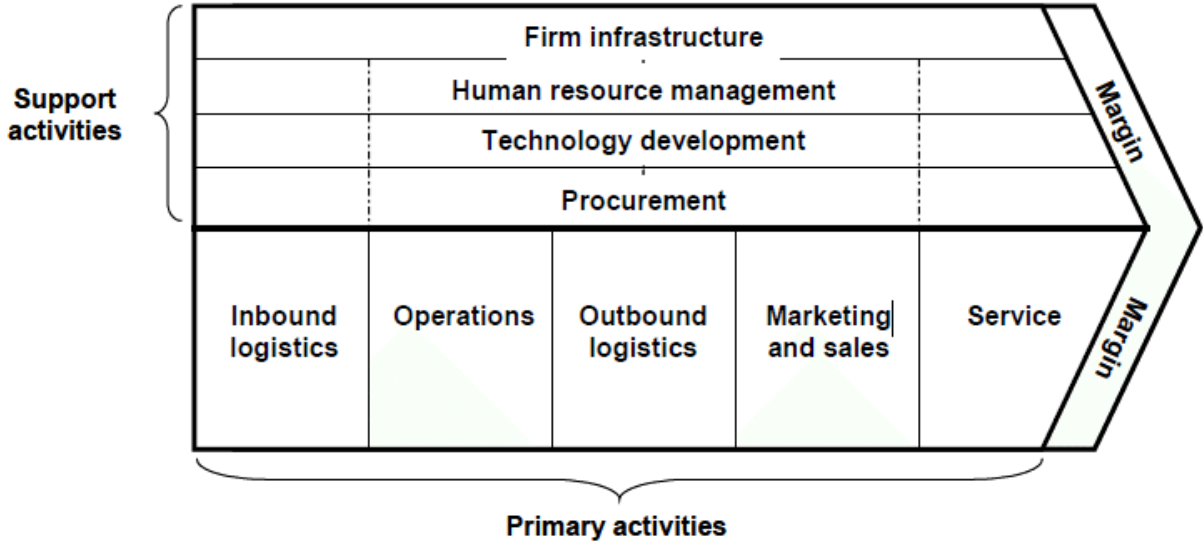
Source: Porter, M. (1958)

Porter distinguished two types of activities, primary and support activities (see *Figure 1*). The former refers to the direct creation of the product, its promotion, delivery to customers and after-sales services. The latter, on the other hand, relates to all activities supporting the primary ones, such as the organizational structure of the company and its resources.

After applying that strategy tool in this business project, we may define which of the aforementioned primary categories will add value to the NoQ's product and make it stand out in the market.

The first activity the company will give priority to is the inbound logistics. In this regard, the business will focus on acquiring and cooperating with the largest number of companies operating as tourist attractions in Poland. To deliver the most diverse product possible, partnerships will be made with both flagship sites and those less known.

Moreover, the particular attention will be given to the operation process. In terms of creating the final product, the NoQ will concentrate on interesting and up-to-date content to stay ahead of the competition. All of this will be presented in a user-friendly manner in accordance with UX/UI principles.

The last activity that will play a key role in distinguishing the NoQ from its competition will be after-sale service. This strategy is extremely important as it allows to retain existing users and build strong relationships with them. Consequently, the NoQ will offer 24/7 customer support in order to solve any occurring problem and constantly create good experiences. Furthermore, to add value to the product, it is also essential to analyse customer feedback, which can be used as a guideline to improve the mobile application and ensure its highest quality.

What is more, the Value Chain's support activities, as the name suggests, are aimed at assisting the previously described activities.

Firm infrastructure: A well-organized company is significantly more efficient and brings much better results, which is why the NoQ will consist of departments such as finance, administration and legal department. Their main purpose is to ensure the smooth operation of the enterprise, as well as, control its financial and legal situation. Each of the departments will specialise in a different field, ensuring the highest quality of product development, supplier search and after-sales service.

Human resource management: Human resources management will put an emphasis on hiring industry experts. In order to become a more attractive workplace, the NoQ will strive to create the best possible work environment, provide constant opportunities for personal and professional development, as well as, offer salaries appropriate to the experience and education. Furthermore, the company recognizes how important it is to take care of its employees as satisfied workers contribute to overall greater achievements of the company and positively represent it outside. It is vital to acquire experts in the field, as they will provide the best terms of contract with suppliers, high quality of the

mobile application, as well as a friendly atmosphere and good contact with users during after-sales service.

Technology development & procurement: Due to the fact that the NoQ is a tech company, the managers will provide the best and the latest work equipment (including computers and software) in order to operate as efficiently as possible and stay ahead of the competition. Particular emphasis will be placed on technological equipment as it is the foundation of this enterprise. This will be an important convenience in the operations process, facilitating the creation of the product, as well as ensuring better and constant contact with customers.

In conclusion, all 9 categories mentioned above are of equal importance, thus the company must ensure that these sections are constantly developed and work closely together. However, in this project, the most significant activities in creating added value are inbound logistics, operations and service. Interesting partnerships will provide a wide selection of the product offer whereas a carefully planned development of the app will guarantee its highest quality. All of these 3 activities will be assisted by support activities, as mentioned earlier.

What is more, the NoQ company's resources and capabilities, which contribute to the increase in its competitiveness, distinguished earlier thanks to the VRIO analysis framework, can be assigned to the aforementioned 9 categories of activities proposed by Porter (see the table below).

Table 2. Resources and capabilities in the Value Chain

Primary activities	Resources and capabilities
Inbound logistics	Contracts with many diverse suppliers
Operations	Intellectual Property Rights, the NoQ mobile app, employees - industry experts
Outbound logistics	Contracts with two main distribution channels (Google Play & App Store)
Marketing & sales	Customer database, Digital marketing strategy, transparency approach
Service	Customer database, 24/7 customer support service
Support activities	**Resources and capabilities**
Firm infrastructure	Great company's culture and values, transparency approach, the departments from various fields cooperating with each other
Human resource management	Industry experts, transparency approach
Technology development	Technology used in the app, latest and best work equipment
Procurement	Latest and best work equipment

Source: Prepared by the author

6. Competitive Analysis

Table 3. SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
- The possibility of avoiding the crowds - The possibility of booking tickets and planning the trip in advance - The source of information about the destination - The most important features contained in one application - Access to the mobile app from any place, at any time - A useful travel planning tool for tourists - No need to use cash - The voice command function - The location function 24/7 customer service - Easy and free to use - The mean to monitor attendance at tourist attractions - Seasonality management tool - A tool to facilitate compliance with the COVID-19 restrictions - Additional marketing and promotion tool for Polish tourist attractions and the Polish market - Environmentally friendly - Its Intellectual Property Rights - Wide customer database - Industry experts employees - Great company's culture and values	- The difficulty in obtaining information regarding the visitors' flow - Difficult to automatize and connect all different visitor tracking systems - Costly - Limited market (Poland only) - Unknown brand on the market - No credibility on the Polish Market - Lack of reputation - Brand does not appeal to all demographics
Opportunities	**Threats**
- The constantly growing importance of Poland as a tourist destination - Poland is one of the best destinations for cultural and heritage resources - The majority of domestic tourists have higher education and are more likely to appreciate cultural attractions - Growing popularity of museums in Poland - An increase in public expenditure on culture and protection of national heritage - Most of the domestic tourists plan to spend holidays after the pandemic in the country - Prevailing travel by land is a great opportunity to stop in less known and less accessible spots recommended in the app - The internet is the main source of travel information and tool to organize the trip	- The risk of the companies (suppliers) unwillingness to cooperate - The risk of a lack of visitor tracking systems at tourist attractions - Lack of process automation leading to additional work of employees - No data on visitor flow tracking systems - High technologies are not yet widely used in Polish enterprises - No prioritization of the tourism industry by the Polish government - Low level of promotion of Poland as a tourist destination - Poland is on the average place in a competitive ranking of tourist destinations - still little known and appreciated

• Continuous increase in the internet access and the time spent there • Most of the internet users come from Europe and developed countries and are between 25 and 34 years old • Growing importance of mobile phones as a means of access to the Internet • Growing importance of features such as voice commands and contactless payments • Travel apps rank high in the most downloaded apps category • Doubling of spending on mobile applications • No direct competition – no apps tracking visitors' number • Possibility to standardize the visitor flow tracking systems • COVID-19 restrictions as a limitation on the visitors number in one place and a reason for increased safety awareness • Possible rebound in tourism after the lifting of restrictions • Sustainable, more conscious and authentic traveling as a trend for the future • Contribution to job creation in tourism • Low market entry barriers that facilitate start-up	• Polish legal regulations do not create a good business environment • COVID-19 restrictions slow down the economy and tourism activities • Competitors – several well-implemented and well-known online ticket booking apps • Ease of switching to an alternative product • Low entry barriers resulting in many competitors

Source: Prepared by the author

7. Strategic Plan's Objectives

The first and foremost objective of this strategic plan is the development of the NoQ application in approximately 6 months and then its market launch. With the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential to find the perfect timing for the project implementation. That should take place together with the lifting of restrictions, as it will enable free travel while maintaining a high level of caution (e.g. limited maximum number of visitors).

Moreover, as previously shown in the SWOT analysis, developing a mobile app and starting a new business can be costly, therefore the emphasis will be on obtaining funds from external sources, such as subsidies and grants awarded by both the Polish government and the European Union, bank loans, business angels and crowdfunding. This task will begin during the application development process and the deadline for raising sufficient funding will be with the launch of the application.

What is more, it is also the time for the company to focus on settling all legal matters related to starting a new business as well as obtaining intellectual property rights, such as the trademark for the company's name and logo or industrial design rights for application design elements (e.g. icons and layouts).

The final task in the initial phase of the strategic plan is the acquisition of extremely important human resources (recruitment process) and the purchase of physical resources such as work equipment.

The other objectives of the strategic plan that follow the previously mentioned first stage of the project are broken down into short, medium and long-term goals.

The short-term objectives are those that will be achieved within one year after launching the mobile application. During these 12 months, it will be crucial to ensure that revenues exceed costs of developing the app and running the business (e.g. management and administration expenses), as well as additional costs. Hence, the NoQ must focus on attracting as many users as possible who might bring profits to the company and build the basis for further development. However, it must be borne in mind that the first year of operations will most likely not be profitable yet, that is why the external funds will still play a key role.

Furthermore, emphasis should be placed on acquiring the maximum number of suppliers whose commissions are the largest internal source of revenues in the business. This will also contribute to the diversification of the product offer, which, in turn, will make the application more interesting and attractive. This task is included in the short-term objectives, however, it ought to begin before the app is released on the market.

Additionally, it will be important to create and implement a unique and strong promotion strategy in order to overcome 3 weaknesses of the project presented in the above SWOT analysis – unknown brand in Poland, no credibility on the market and lack of reputation.

The following two years will be dedicated to the medium-term objectives. During this period, the main task will be to ensure and retain users' activity as well as provide the highest quality customer service. In order to achieve that, the focus will be on collecting and analysing users feedback through online surveys. This activity will enable the identification of the company's weaknesses, which can therefore be improved, as well as good practices that will be highlighted and continued.

It is very likely that during this period, the company will generate more profits from its product, which will allow investment in human resources and application development.

Lastly, the search for partners in the form of tourist attractions for the purpose of cooperation will be continued.

The long-term objectives can be set for 7 years from the project implementation. The goal is to maintain the profitability of the application and the positive results achieved so far. In the long run, the focus should be on continuous sustainable business development. However, one of the main objectives for the future is the gradual entry into new foreign markets, which will solve one of the company's weaknesses – limited market (see *Table 3*. SWOT analysis). The ultimate aim is global brand recognition.

For this strategic plan to be successful, it is significant to revise and update it regularly, taking into account any problems and changes that arise from both the external and internal environment.

8. Development Strategy

8.1 Mission, Vision and Values

The mission of the NoQ project is to facilitate trips planning and enable more pleasant and stress-free sightseeing for tourists from all over the world through the application available on the most convenient device while travelling - a mobile phone.

The NoQ's vision is to provide the most compelling portable and handy travel assistant in the form of a mobile application that contributes to more efficient travel as well as digital and sustainable tourism development. The ultimate goal of this project is to achieve global brand recognition and a strong position in the market.

Moreover, the NoQ's organizational culture consists of the set of values that describes the company and guides its employees in their daily activities. These core values include convenience, which is an attribute strongly desired and required by today's consumers and can be achieved through digital solutions such as the NoQ mobile app. The company also follows a customer-oriented approach, which puts the needs of the users over the needs of the business. Furthermore, the enterprise recognizes the importance of teamwork, as it brings far greater results than working alone. Therefore, the emphasis will be placed on the integration of all the employees in order to create one harmonious and supportive family along with a friendly work environment. Lastly, the NoQ believes that passionate people are more eager to learn new skills and different cultures as well as engage deeper in the product development process. Consequently, passion is a character trait that we look for and want to develop even more in our employees.

8.2 Critical Success Factor

Critical success factors are the most significant features of the organization, that determine its competitive advantage, development opportunities, as well as contribute to the greatest extent to meeting the needs and wants of customers. This project has three such factors that will focus on - innovation, human resources and supplier involvement.

The first one refers to the innovative idea of a mobile app that presents the real-time number of visitors to given tourist attractions. This innovative character is highlighted by the lack of direct competitors, as demonstrated previously in the market analysis in chapter four.

The second success factor of the NoQ company will be its human resource, and more precisely, employees with extensive knowledge, expertise, and commitment to work. This combination of character traits and abilities results in increased efficiency and high-quality products.

The final factor leading to success will be suppliers involvement. The company plans to cooperate with the vast majority of tourist attractions in Poland, which will provide an interesting product offer.

Additionally, such numerous partnerships will allow the creation of a strong network of all tourism industry stakeholders who work towards the same goal.

Table 4. Critical Success Factors

Critical Success Factor	Customer expectations	Competitive advantage
Innovative idea of the mobile application and its constant development	• An innovative idea based on the current worldwide situation, that facilitates travelling despite the dynamically changing restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic • Continuous development aimed at meeting the evolving needs of customers	• At the moment, the only such application on the market, (exclusivity on the market) • Continuous development to stay ahead of the competition
Hiring industry experts	• Ensuring high quality of the product	
Cooperation with many suppliers	• Contributes to a varied and therefore more interesting product offer	• Competitive product offer • Creates a strong network

Source: Prepared by the author

9. Implementation

9.1 Marketing Mix

9.1.1 Product

The product described in this strategic plan is the NoQ mobile application that is addressed primarily to foreign and domestic travellers who want to discover interesting tourist attractions of Poland.

The app offers three main functions. The first and fundamental is the ability to track the real-time number of visitors to a given tourist attraction. Another feature is that the NoQ works on the principles of a travel guide. Therefore, the user can find there many recommendations of both the flagship sites as well as less known and less accessible ones. Finally, if one of the proposed places is of interest to the user, the application enables easy and quick booking of tickets and thus avoiding queuing and wasting time.

The NoQ app also includes many additional functions that make its use simpler and more enjoyable. Firstly, the possibility of creating an account allows keeping user's data such as selected language or credit card number, which consequently facilitates more efficient use of the application. In addition, saved preferences and purchase history enables tailoring the offer to the interests and needs of users.

Furthermore, there is a voice command feature that makes it easy to use the app while doing other activities like driving a car. Searching the user's location makes it possible to find oneself in an unknown destination and discover nearby attractions. What is more, the customer reviews and comments section gives the opportunity to better evaluate the place and choose the most suitable one, which will leave good memories and experiences. Moreover, the tab related to COVID-19 restrictions gives an updated view of the dynamically changing situation and this, consequently, gives the opportunity to adjust travel plans to get the most out of it despite the implemented limitations. Lastly, the user can count on high-quality support regardless of the time of day thanks to the 24/7 customer service.

9.1.2 Place

In the initial phase, the activity of the mobile application will be limited to the territory of Poland, which means that it will contain information on tourist attractions operating only within this area. In addition, the headquarters of the company will be located in the capital city - Warsaw. However, due to the specific nature of this enterprise, namely online business, access to the NoQ app will be available to everyone who has a mobile phone, regardless of their country of origin. In the later stages of the project's development, it is planned to expand the market in which the application operates to the area of Europe, and ultimately to the rest of the world.

As for the distribution channel, in the first phase, the NoQ app will be available to Android users via the Google Store, and at a later stage, it will also be launched on iOS via the App Store.

9.1.3 Price

In order to generate additional revenue, the company will use the so-called Freemium business model. As the name suggests, this pricing policy is a combination of 'free' and 'premium' services provided to users. The download of the app and basic content will be available free of charge to all the customers, however, additional features can only be unlocked for a fee, which will simultaneously upgrade the user's account to the premium version (Deshwal, 2018).

NoQ Basic is a free version of the application that contains the most important and fundamental functions, including the possibility of creating a profile, purchasing tickets, tracking the real-time number of visitors and the average occupancy of tourist sites available one week in advance. Nevertheless, by selecting this option, the user must take into account and accept the appearing advertisements, which one might find irritating.

NoQ Plus, on the other hand, is available for a one-time fee. This upgraded version includes all the features available in the NoQ Basic as well as additional perks, such as a more favourable cancellation policy and special deals. This, however, will largely depend on the results of the company's negotiations and the type of partnerships concluded with external businesses. Additionally, in the premium variant, the user is able to track the average space occupancy throughout the whole year and enjoy the absence of annoying ads.

Table 5. Comparison of 2 types of access to the NoQ app

	NoQ Basic	NoQ Plus
Profile	✓	✓
Tickets purchase	✓	✓
Real-time visitor tracking	✓	✓
Average occupancy a week in advance	✓	✓
Average occupancy all year round	X	✓
Special deals	X	✓
Better cancellation policy	X	✓
Removed adds	X	✓

Source: Prepared by the author

9.1.4 Promotion

In order for the product to survive and be profitable, it needs to be well advertised both before and after its introduction to the market. Due to the specific nature of the NoQ application, its promotion must be carried out on a large scale to reach Polish as well as foreign customers. Therefore, it is planned to be held in both physical and digital context.

The strategy for the former focuses on participation in industry events such as trade fairs, exhibitions and conferences that take place in Poland as well as abroad, with particular emphasis on target countries, namely Germany, the United Kingdom and Ukraine. This activity is primarily aimed at gaining a reputation in the business environment, but also at obtaining recognition among tourists.

However, the actual priority in promoting the NoQ application is the digital environment due to the specific character of the target tech-savvy users. The strategy includes the creation of the company's website, which will contain the most important information about the product, as well as the possibility of its free download to a mobile phone.

Moreover, it is essential to set up business accounts on social media like LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, as they are some of the most powerful marketing tools nowadays. LinkedIn will focus on the professional side of the company, presenting the values and good practices of the NoQ and its employees. Additionally, the profile will be full of job and cooperation opportunities. Likewise, Twitter will be the main source of brief updates and facts about the company's activities and its partners. Facebook, will be a place for storytelling in the form of longer posts and videos. Instagram's strategy, on the other hand, will mainly aim to show impressive pictures with a very limited caption.

Another method of promoting the mobile application is advertising it through partners. Travel influencers, active on both Instagram and YouTube, will play an important role in this regard. Their content has a chance to reach exactly the group of customers that is the most significant for the brand. Moreover, their opinion as authorities has a great influence on the choice of their followers. Furthermore, it is fundamental to establish cooperation with the governmental organization, also known as the Polish Tourism Organization, whose support is invaluable for the project.

Lastly, the NoQ's marketing team ought to remember to create and maintain a good image of the business on the Internet. This can be done, inter alia, by tracking users' feedback and comments on two distribution channels, namely Google Store and App Store. Particular attention should be paid to negative statements and complaints in order to resolve them immediately. This is extremely important because failure to respond may result in customer dissatisfaction and, consequently, negative opinions and even loss of clients. Such a situation can seriously damage the company's image as word of mouth marketing is invariably the most influential form of advertising.

9.2 Key Resources

9.2.1 Company Organizational Structure

Due to the limited budget in the initial stage of the project, only the most important positions that are needed for the proper functioning of the company will be filled. This includes jobs in the field of finance, negotiation and partner acquisition, marketing, product development as well as engineers. All of them will be supervised by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who will additionally handle the remaining activities in the company, for instance the design of the app.

As the project develops and the start-up's revenue increases, the NoQ will gradually hire more and more employees to stay ahead of the competition and be able to constantly offer the highest quality product and services.

In order to organize and systematize its operations, a functional organizational structure will be adopted (see *Figure 2*). This structure divides employees based on their specific functions and skills into departments that deal with different aspect of the product. Each of them is managed independently by the so-called head of the department, who reports to the CEO or CTO (Chief Technology Officer), depending on their scope of activity. CEO and CTO are two positions with the highest level of responsibility in the company.

Figure 2. Company Organizational Chart
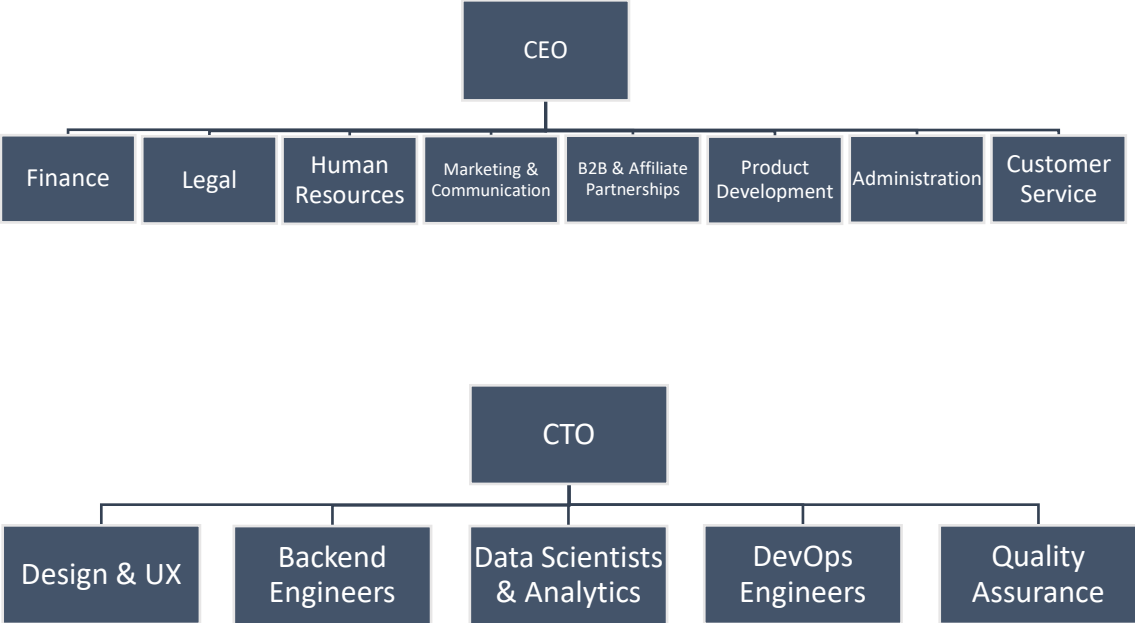
Source: Prepared by the author

The CEO is in charge of all types of operations supporting the product, as well as those ensuring the proper functioning of the business.

The Finance Department deals with the management of money inflows and outflows, as well as budget planning and realization. The Legal Department checks the compliance of companies' activities with the applicable local and European law. The Human Resources Department handles all matters related to the well-being of employees, creates a good working environment, prepares integration and provides the opportunity for personal and professional development through training and workshops. Additionally, its task is to conduct recruitment on an ongoing basis.

The goal of the Marketing & Communication Department is to create and maintain a positive image of the NoQ, spread its recognition and reach the widest possible audience through a previously planned promotional and advertising strategy. B2B & Affiliate Partnerships team focuses on acquiring partners and negotiating the best deals. They concentrate mostly on searching for new tourist attractions in order to expand the product offer, as well as, on new investors to increase the company's financial resources.

Product developers, as the name suggests, are responsible for the development of the mobile application in terms of its content in order to meet customer expectations. They research the market, come up with new ideas for improvement and ensure that the product follows the current trends.

Administration Department is the backbone of the company. It connects all departments and guarantees the smooth functioning of the business through planning, organization, control and evaluation. Lastly, customer service provides assistance to the NoQ's users, answers their questions, as well as resolves their problems and doubts. All these activities are aimed at ensuring customer satisfaction and facilitating the use of the app.

The second most important position in the company, next to the CEO, is the CTO. His/her goal is to improve the final product through technological strategies. Moreover, CTO oversees the work of departments directly related to the development of the mobile application, mainly consisting of technical teams such as Data Scientists & Analytics, Backend Engineers, DevOps Engineers, and Quality Assurance. Under his/her supervision there are also designers and UX team who take care of the creative and visual side of the NoQ.

9.2.2 Human Resources

The company's human resources are one of its most important elements. They represent it not only during working hours but also outside of them. Additionally, they have a huge impact on the organization's efficiency and achievements. Therefore, the NoQ plans to hire the most skilled and talented industry experts. Ideal candidates will be open-minded and tech-savvy people interested in travel and culture, who are eager to learn and constantly expand their knowledge and horizons.

Employees who are aware of the Polish tourist offer, as well as speak foreign languages, in particular English, will be an additional advantage. Lastly, it is important to find people who agree with and follow the aforementioned company's values and beliefs.

What is more, satisfied employees bring satisfied customers, which is why at NoQ we focus on creating the best possible environment for everyone. The consequence of this is the decision to minimize the number of staff in the first phase of the project in order to focus on a smaller group and thus provide them with the best possible working conditions as well as fair remuneration commensurate with their experience. In the beginning, the company will consist of 8 people, including the CEO, 1 person each in the field of finance, marketing and product development, 2 people in the field of partner acquisition, and 2 engineers.

9.2.3 Physical Resources

Physical resources can be described as all tangible assets belonging to the enterprise that are designed to support its day-to-day operations and help achieve its overall objectives. Due to the fact that NoQ is an online business, its main physical resources will be the office intended for the headquarters as well as its furniture (such as desks, chairs, office cabinets, etc.), and other work equipment and systems including appliances, computers, mobile phones, IT systems, and many more. It should be noted that technology is dynamically changing and evolving, which is why it is crucial to systematically replace equipment, especially in a tech company like the NoQ, to provide the latest and best work tools.

In the light of the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, and thus many restrictions and safety rules, it is essential to consider whether renting an office is necessary for the proper functioning of the business. An alternative solution is a remote work from home, which protects the health of employees while reducing maintenance and administration costs.

9.2.4 Intellectual Resources

Intellectual resources are all non-physical goods owned by the enterprise such as trademark, copyrights, knowledge, partnerships, etc. In order to preserve their rights, the business needs to officially register them with the Polish Patent Office.

Firstly, copyrights protect the form of expression of the idea, but not the idea itself. Therefore, the NoQ will own copyrights on the code of the mobile app and its graphical user interface.

Furthermore, an application for industrial design rights will provide the company with a certificate confirming the ownership of the rights to the appearance of the product, including, among others, specific layouts and/or individual icons.

The following intellectual property is a trademark. This gives the company the exclusivity of the name of the mobile app. It is usually issued for 10 years with the possibility of extension. The problem

with a trademark is its territorial scope, more precisely, it means that it cannot be granted worldwide. Therefore, the NoQ may register its name for all possible countries, but must take into account very high costs, or decide on the most important markets at the beginning and gradually add new countries as the project develops. The latter solution carries the risk of having the name registered by another enterprise beforehand (Lech, 2017).

In addition to the intangible assets described above, the NoQ will have partnerships with Polish companies providing attractions to tourists. Moreover, creating a customer database will allow us to gain and/or expand knowledge about users of mobile application and their behaviour patterns. Finally, the business will own many other intellectual resources that are difficult to define at this stage, such as talent in the organization, proprietary knowledge, brand, or its public image.

Nevertheless, the company's most significant intangible property will be its software, i.e. the NoQ mobile application. It will contain numerous fundamental technologies to run smoothly and be as attractive as possible to all users. The first and most important function allows to collect real-time visitor numbers of tourist attractions and then make this data available to end-users. Furthermore, the NoQ will be integrated with Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to locate the position of individuals, track their movement and find the locations of nearby tourist attractions. The application will be also equipped with currently trending developments such as voice commands, chatbots and online payments.

9.2.5 Financial Resources

Financial resources are funds at disposal of the company that are needed to cover the costs and expenses of the day-to-day operations of the enterprise. There are two main sources of finance – internal and external. The former comes from within the business and includes owners capital, retained profits, selling assets and revenue from the product sale. The latter, however, refers to funds from outside sources, such as bank loans, business angels, venture capital, government grants, partners, leasing and many more (BBC, 2021).

The NoQ company will use both of the aforementioned sources of funding. When setting up the business and during the first stage of its operations, the enterprise will rely on the founder's capital in the amount of PLN 45 648,38[9].

At this point, external support is also extremely important. Therefore, the NoQ is planning to take part in various competitions supporting tourism businesses. Examples of such initiatives are the innovative programs created by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) like Sustainable Development Goals Global Start-up Competition. It is a competition for start-ups wanting to generate

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[9] EUR 10 000 as of 15.08.2021

an impact in one of the seventeen sustainable development categories. The winning business gets access to technological support and top international industry stakeholders, as well as the opportunity to promote its company worldwide. The winner also gains investment opportunities in the form of access to 90+ venture capitalists and many other benefits (UNWTO, n.d.c & n.d.d).

Additional financial support will be by means of subsidies and grants awarded by both the Polish government and the European Union. An example of such aid is a one-off subsidy granted by the Polish institution called Fundusz Pracy to the unemployed people in order to start a business. The maximum amount that can be obtained is six times the average wage in Poland, which in the first quarter of 2021 was PLN 5 681,56[10]. Therefore, the founder may receive approximately PLN 34 089,36[11] at the beginning (Związek Przedsiębiorców i Pracodawców, 2018; Statistics Poland, 2021d). Nevertheless, due to the fact that many of the grant programs are limited in time, at the moment, it is difficult to list specific initiatives in which the company can participate.

In addition to non-repayable financial aid, the NoQ company can apply for repayable ones such as bank loans. An interesting program of this type is the "Pierwszy biznes - Wsparcie w starcie" ("First Business - Support in Start") developed by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and implemented by the Polish national development bank - Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego. Its purpose is to offer a low-interest loan to students and/or graduates who wish to start a new business (Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego, n.d.).

The other sources of repayable funding that the NoQ company will consider are business angels and venture capital. The former refers to private investors providing their own capital to support businesses, usually start-ups. The latter, on the other hand, is "the institutional venture capital industry companies full-time professionals who raise finance from pension funds, insurance companies, banks and other financial institutions to invest in entrepreneurial ventures" (Mason & Harrison, 1999, cited in Teker, 2016, p. 631). What distinguishes this type of financing is primarily the form of its repayment, which is revealed in the form of an equity stake in the business.

The last external source of repayable financing that will allow us to start a project is crowdfunding. The idea behind this initiative is "to fund the ventures by drawing on relatively small contributions from a relatively large number of individuals using the internet, without standard financial intermediaries" (Mollick, 2014). In return for the support, the NoQ company will offer the possibility of free use of the premium version and other unique bonuses related to the project, e.g. gadgets. For this purpose, the websites such as PolakPotrafi.pl and Wspieram.to will be taken into account.

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[10] EUR 1 244,08 as of 16.08.2021
[11] EUR 7 634, 95 as of 07.06.2021

In the further phase of the company's existence, the NoQ will focus on the internal source of financing that comes from the sale of the product, as well as its retained profit. Revenues from the mobile application itself will be divided into those from partners and those from end-users. Partners will pay a commission on bookings made through the app as well as additional fees for other benefits, e.g. if they want to be better listed or promoted. What's more, the basic version of the NoQ will have in-app advertising such as banners, interstitial ads, native advertising and/or videos for which it will charge a fee from companies interested in cooperation. On the other hand, revenues from the mobile application users will be based on one-off payments for upgrades to the premium version, as well as, from additional charges, for instance, for late cancellation.

All the aforementioned earnings will be used to cover everyday costs and possible investments. After the end of a reporting period, the remaining net income will be transferred to the so-called retained profits account and saved for the future.

In order to stay on the market, it is essential to keep track of the company's financial situation, try to ensure that the revenues always outweigh the costs and constantly obtain new sources of financing to grow and develop the business.

9.2.6 Implementation Plan

In addition to identifying the company's key resources and marketing plan, this chapter also needs to define the strategic action plan for the first 12 months. For this, a Gantt chart is used, which details the tasks, along with their approximate time frame, that must be performed in order to properly start and run the business (see *Figure 3*).

Figure 3. Implementation plan (first 12 months)

TASK	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
Design & development of the app	■	■	■	■	■	■						
Get funds	■	■	■	■	■	■						
Legal procedures	■	■	■									
Partners acquisition				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Space rental for the headquarters (optional)						■						
Equipment purchase						■	■					
Recruitment process						■	■	■	■			
Building a website					■	■	■					
Development of marketing campaigns					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Launching the app on the market							■					
First users feedbacks								■	■			

Source: Prepared by the author

The first and most important step is to design, develop and test the mobile application which is the foundation of the business. This task will take about 6 months and will be delegated to an external company or engineers previously hired by the NoQ. The decision will be made on the basis of the calculated costs in both solutions.

With the commencement of the work on the mobile application, steps should be taken in order to raise funds. The main goal of this highly important task is to obtain sufficient capital needed for current and further activities, including employees recruitment and office rental. The time to complete this task is approximately 6 months, however, it is crucial to constantly look for additional financing to develop and expand the business in the future.

The next steps, that start at the same time as the previous two, are legal procedures. This stage includes all types of legal requirements and procedures towards opening the company, as well as, registration of the intellectual properties belonging to the organization. The process is estimated to last 3 months, however, its length will depend on the speed of operations of the legal office.

In the second quarter of the year, the NoQ will focus on acquiring partners, more specifically tourist attraction businesses operating in Poland. This will initially be the responsibility of the founder, but at a later stage, it will be assigned to specialists in the field who will be employed by the company. This task does not have a specific deadline as the acquisition of partners should be carried out on a continuous basis in order to expand the product offer as well as its attractiveness.

When the development of the NoQ application is nearing completion, the acquisition of key resources ought to begin. This includes renting a space for an office/headquarters (if the COVID-19 pandemic situation allows for normal work mode), along with the purchase of furniture and equipment needed for work. The time for completing the tasks is one month and two months respectively. Moreover, it will also be the time to search for human resources. The recruitment process is scheduled for 4 months, however, it may be extended until all the most important positions are filled, including the department of negotiation and partner acquisition, marketing, product development, and finance.

The final step before the mobile application is launched on the market is to create and carry out a strong advertising campaign. In the aforementioned strategic action plan, this task does not have a specific deadline as it is significant to continue marketing activities throughout the entire life cycle of the business in order to attract new customers and partnerships. Part of the promotional plan is to create a company's website where users can learn more about the NoQ app and download it at a later stage. This action will take approximately 3 months.

During the first two months after the product is released to customers, the company will collect the first user feedbacks that will have to be analysed and used to improve the offer for the future.

Nonetheless, it should be remembered that the above-mentioned implementation plan is highly flexible and may be changed due to external, unforeseen factors.

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10. Requirements For Implementation

10.1 Company Foundation Requirements

There are 9 forms of economic activity in Poland, however, only 3 of them can be established by just one person. After a thorough analysis, it was found that a limited liability company (spółka z ograniczoną odpowiedzialnością) will be the best choice for this project. Consequently, there are several requirements that must be met before starting this type of business.

Firstly, to set up a limited liability company, a minimum share capital of PLN 5 000[12] is required. This is covered by all partners, although in the case of this project, it will be the responsibility of just one founder. Then, a notarial deed, namely a founding deed for a single-member limited liability company need to be drawn up on the basis of which the company will be established.

Moreover, the business must be officially registered in the National Court Register electronically or in a traditional paper way. During the registration, the founder has to provide some fundamental information, such as the details of the previously appointed management board members, as well as, the name of the company, which can be freely chosen, however, it must contain a term specifying the type of economic activity i.e. *spółka z ograniczoną odpowiedzialnością*, *spółka z o.o.* or *sp. z o.o.*. Therefore, the official and full name of the company in this project is NoQ Sp. z o.o.

Furthermore, registration of a company entails court fees in the amount of PLN 250[13] in the case of electronic registration or PLN 500[14] for the traditional (paper) method. The NoQ company will be registered electronically due to much lower costs. Additionally, a fee of PLN 100[15] is charged for the publication of an entry in the Court and Commercial Gazette (Monitor Sądowy i Gospodarczy) (Biznes.gov.pl, 2019 & 2021).

Finally, some supplementary data, such as the estimated number of employees and bank account details, must also be transferred to the Social Insurance Institution within 7 days from the commencement of operations, as well as to the Central Statistical Office and the tax office within 21 days from the registration of the company in the National Court Register.

10.2 Additional Legal Requirements

First of all, if we decide to outsource the development of the mobile application to an external company, at a later stage it will be necessary to sign a contract that will transfer the copyright to the NoQ. It is significant if in the future we want to hire our engineers who will modify and develop the product, as the payment for the order does not entitle us to the ownership of the app.

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[12] EUR 1 094,70 as of 16.08.2021
[13] EUR 54,74 as of 16.08.2021
[14] EUR 109,48 as of 16.08.2021
[15] EUR 21,90 as of 16.08.2021

What is more, a new business is associated with many legal requirements and regulations, such as advertising and marketing rules, returns and refunds, online sales, customer data protection and many more. Failure to meet them may result in very high fines or even imprisonment. Therefore, the NoQ decided to hire an external law firm or an independent lawyer to support the company from the legal side and ensure that all requirements are meticulously fulfilled. As the project develops, the NoQ will create a separate legal department that will take over these responsibilities.

Conclusion

The purpose of this strategic plan was to evaluate the feasibility and viability of the NoQ project, as well as to define a strategy for its implementation.

Therefore, an analysis of the market from the perspective of the macro and microenvironment was carried out. This investigation showed that despite the deteriorated economic situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is an ideal time to develop this project as it will facilitate travel in the new, more restrictive realities that have already begun. Moreover, the current circumstances have contributed to the increase in the use of mobile applications, and those related to travel and tourism are highly ranked in popularity.

Furthermore, Poland turned out to have great potential as a market for project development, despite several threats such as low government involvement in the tourism industry or the underestimated nature of Poland as a tourist destination. Its wide and ready to be exploit tourism offer, in particular its cultural and historical resources, contribute to the growing popularity of the country. What is more, low market entry barriers facilitate establishing a business, which, however, may have negative consequences in the form of increased competition in the future.

Moreover, the following internal analysis identified the weaknesses of the project that ought to be improved, as well as its strengths that will distinguish the company from the competition. The resources and capabilities that will contribute to the greatest extent to the competitive advantage of the NoQ are the intellectual property rights, contracts with suppliers, customer database, employed industry experts, and the company's culture and values. Nevertheless, the most significant resource is the start-up's main product, i.e. the mobile application, and more precisely its unique function of tracking visitors to tourist attractions in real-time.

In the more practical part of the strategic plan, short-, medium- and long-term objectives were determined along with the actions to be taken in order to achieve them. What is more, when creating an implementation plan, it was significant to consider the company's mission, vision and values as well as its critical success factors. Subsequently, the resources that the NoQ must obtain to operate properly were highlighted. These include physical resources, human resources, intellectual resources and financial resources. This section also contains an extremely important marketing strategy that has been defined on the basis of the marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion).

This strategic plan has evaluated the possible sources of funding, but it does not take into account the financial analysis that is necessary to determine the viability and profitability of the project. Therefore, a recommendation for the future is to commission a financial analysis, in accordance with this dissertation, to specialists in the field, who will be able to assess its feasibility.

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Annexes

Annex A. The NoQ layouts
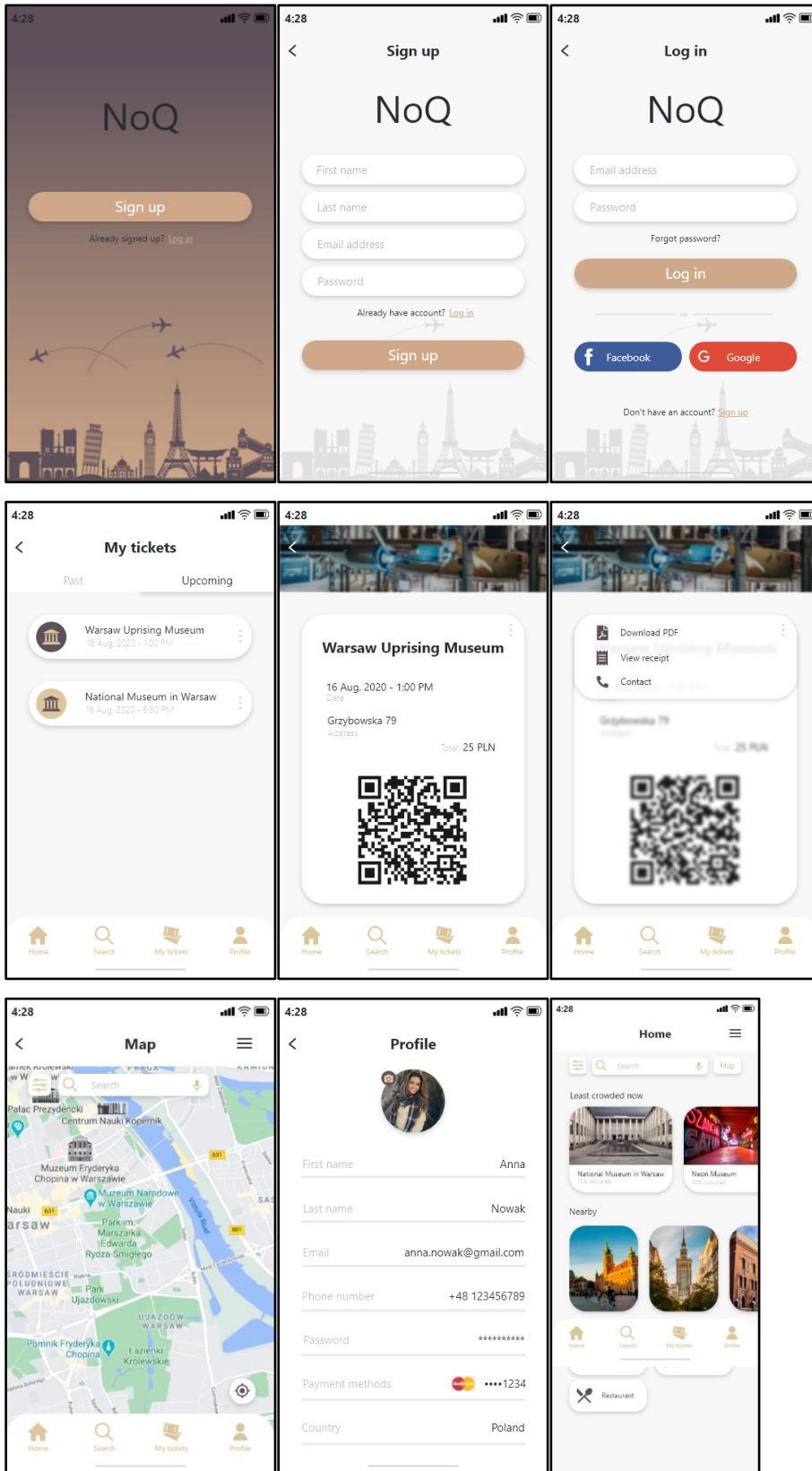
Source: Prepared by the author

Annex B. The most visited Polish tourist attractions in 2013

| Type	Name	Voivodeship	Number of visitors
National park	Tatra National Park	Małopolskie	3 million annually
	Karkonoski National Park	Dolnośląskie	2 million
	Woliński national park	Zachodnipomorskie	1.5 million
Cave	Łokietek Cave in Ojców	Małopolskie	over 92 000
	The Bear Cave in Kletno	Dolnośląskie	over 80 000
	the Dark Cave in Ojców	Małopolskie	58 000
Castle	the Wawel castle	Małopolskie	1.25 million visited the branches of the State Art Collections on Wawel Hill
	the Royal Castle in Warsaw	Mazowieckie	600 000
	The castle in Malbork	Pomorskie	418 000
	the castle in Książ	Dolnośląskie	244 000
Park and palace complexes	the Palace in Wilanów	Mazowieckie	2.8 million
	Łazienki in Warsaw	Mazowieckie	2.1 million
Monuments of technology	the Salt Mine in Wieliczka	Małopolskie	1.2 million
	The Salt Mine in Bochnia	Małopolskie	150 000
Archeological venues	Biskupin	Kujawsko-Pomorskie	over 166 000 annually
Lighthouses	The lighthouse in Rozewie	Pomorskie	102 000
	The lighthouses on the Hel peninsula	Pomorskie	54 000
Shrines	Częstochowa	Śląskie	4 million
	Kraków-Łagiewniki	Małopolskie	2 million
	Zakopane–Krzeptówki	Małopolskie	2 million
Museums	the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum	Małopolskie	1.5 million
	the Historical Museum of Krakow	Małopolskie	0.94 million
	the National Museum of Krakow	Małopolskie	726 000
	the Warsaw Uprising Museum	Mazowieckie	490 000
Skansens/open-air museums	the Museum of Civil Engineering in Sanok	Podkarpackie	130 000
	the Museum of the Kielce Village in Tokarnia	Świętokrzyskie	127 000
	the Ethnographic Park in Olsztynek	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	86 000
Shows and events	"Przystanek Woodstok" in Kostrzyń on the Oder	Lubuskie	0.5 million
	Dni Morza event in Szczecin	Zachodniopomorskie	100 000

Source: Kruczek, Z. (2015). Analysis of Visitor Attendance At Polish Tourism Attractions. *Tourism*, 25(1), 47-5

**Annex C.** Number of arrivals at tourist accommodation establishments in Poland (2010-2019)
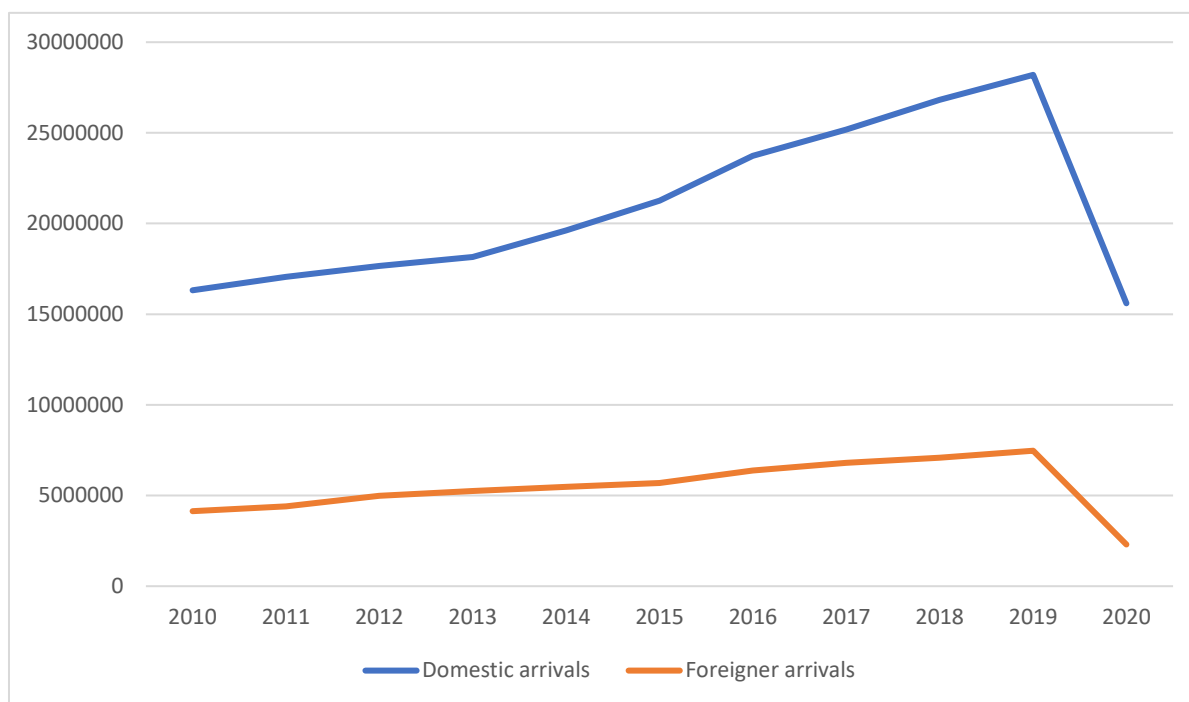
Source: Eurostat (2021a). *Arrivals at tourist accommodation establishments*. [online] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tour_occ_arnat/default/table?lang=en [Accessed: 27.04.2021].

**Annex D.** Monthly arrivals in tourist accommodation in Poland (2018 - 2020)
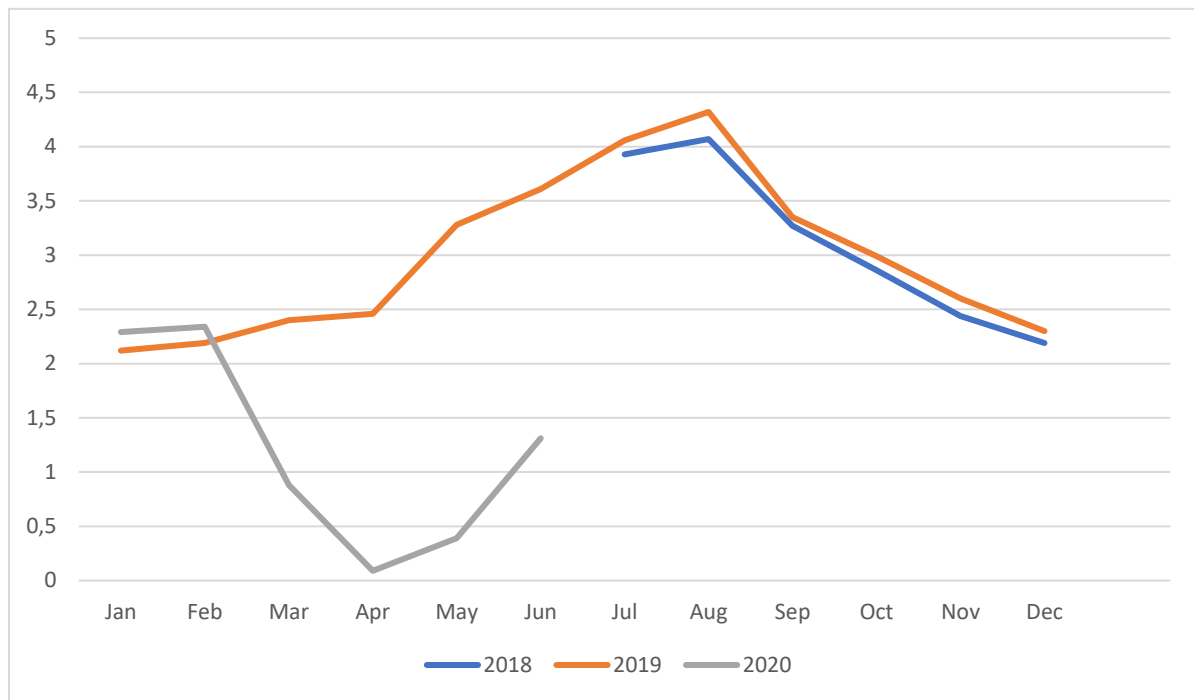
Source: Statista Research Department (2020). *Number of monthly arrivals in tourist accommodation in Poland from July 2018 to June 2020*. [online] Statista. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1131071/number-of-monthly-arrivals-short-stay-accommodation-in-poland/ [Accessed: 27.04.2021].

Annex E. International tourist arrivals (in million) (2015-2020)
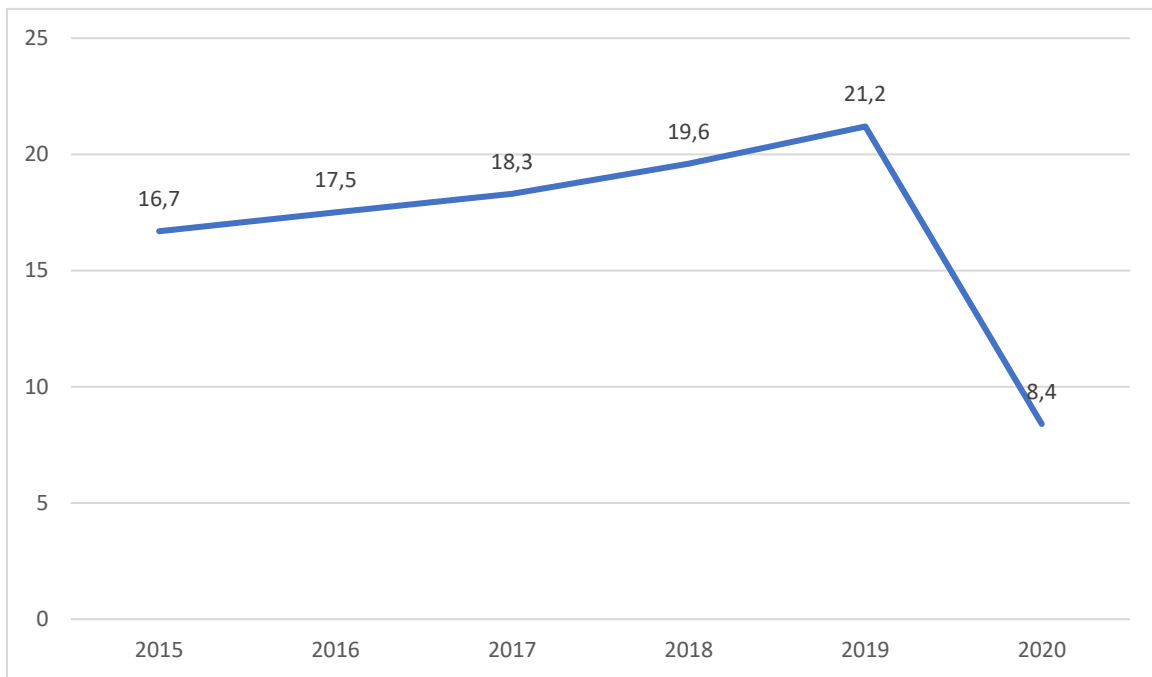
Source: UNWTO (2021). *UNWTO Global Tourism Dashboard. Country Profile – Inbound*. [online] Available at: https://www.unwto.org/country-profile-inbound-tourism [Accessed: 28.04.2021].

Annex F. Domestic trips in Poland in 2019 (in million)
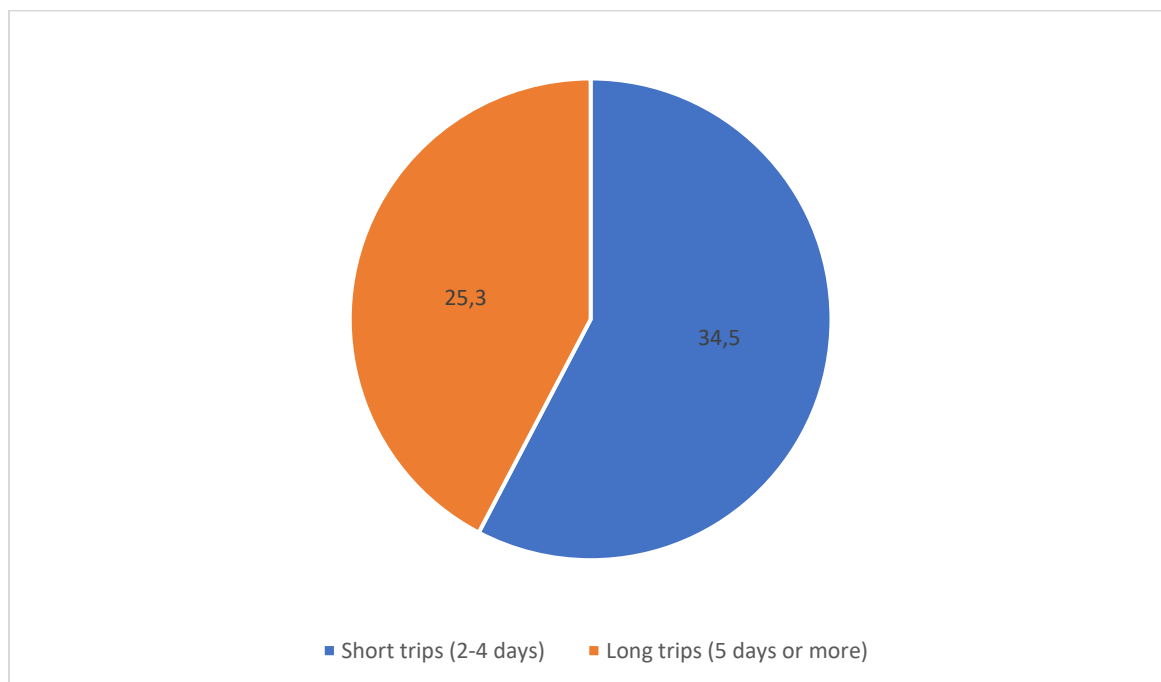
Source: Statistics Poland (2020d). *Tourism in 2019*. [online] Available at: https://stat.gov.pl/en/topics/culture-tourism-sport/tourism/tourism-in-2019,1,17.html [Accessed: 26.04.2021].

Annex G. Global access to the internet (2005 – 2019), by market maturity
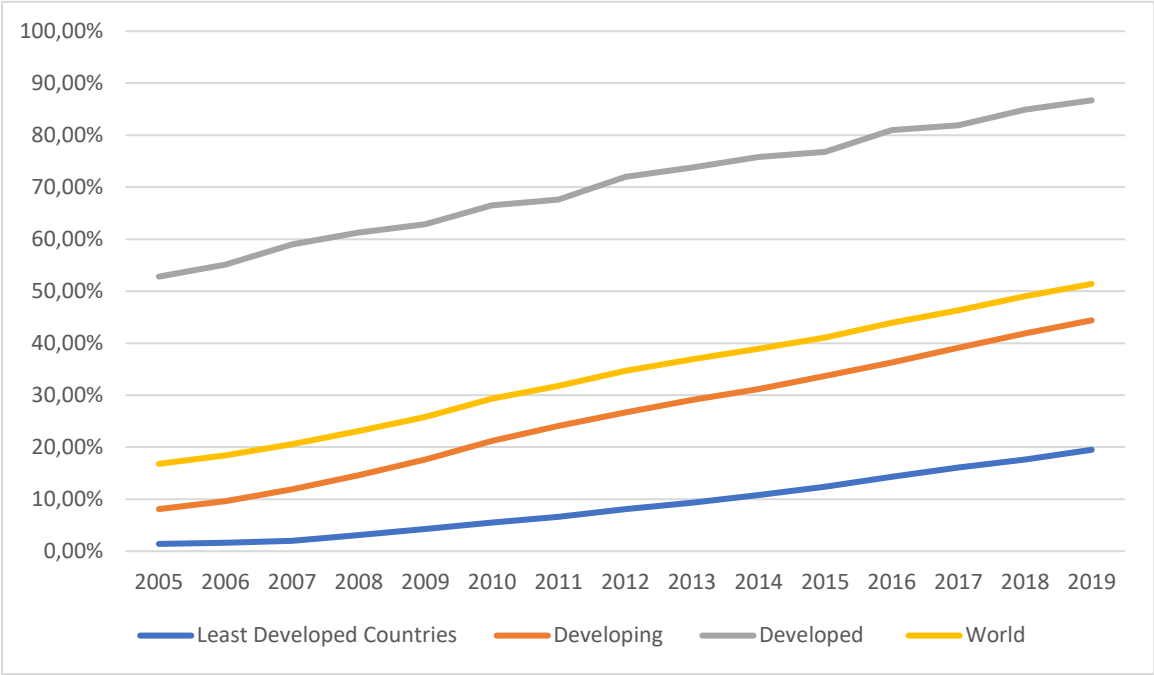
Source: Johnson, J. (2021b). *Percentage of global population accessing the internet from 2005 to 2019, by market maturity*. [online] Statista. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/209096/share-of-internet-users-in-the-total-world-population-since-2006/ [Accessed: 02.05.2021].

Annex H. Percentage of the global internet users in 2019, by region
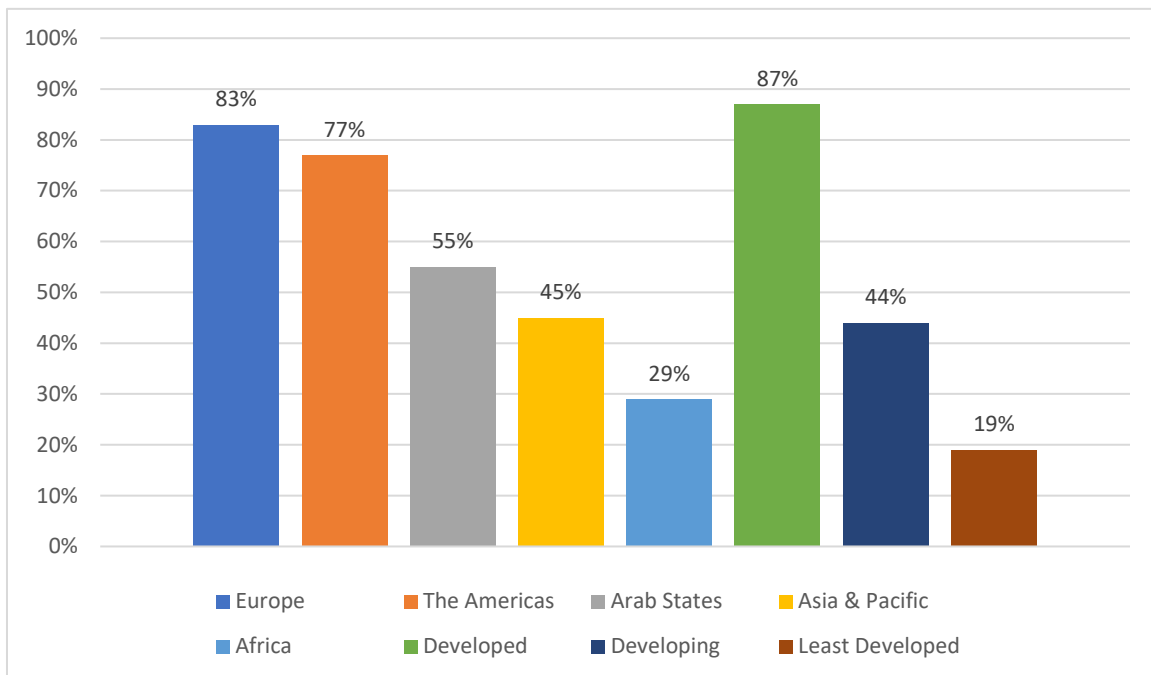
Source: Johnson J. (2021c). *Percentage of individuals using the internet worldwide in 2019, by region*. [online] Statista. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/333879/individuals-using-the-internet-worldwide-region/ [Accessed: 02.05.2021].

**Annex I.** Percentage of households with internet access in Poland (2005-2020)
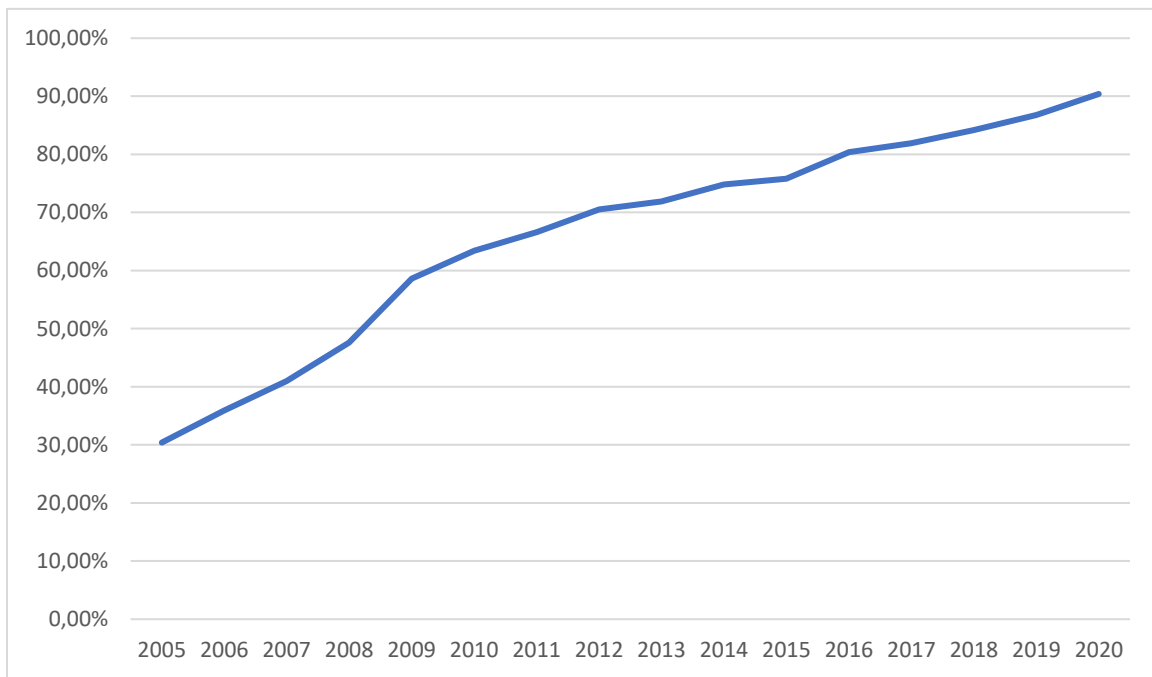
Source: OECD (2021). *Internet access*. [online] Available at: https://data.oecd.org/ict/internet-access.htm
[Accessed: 02.05.2021].

Annex J. Internet users worldwide in 2019, by age
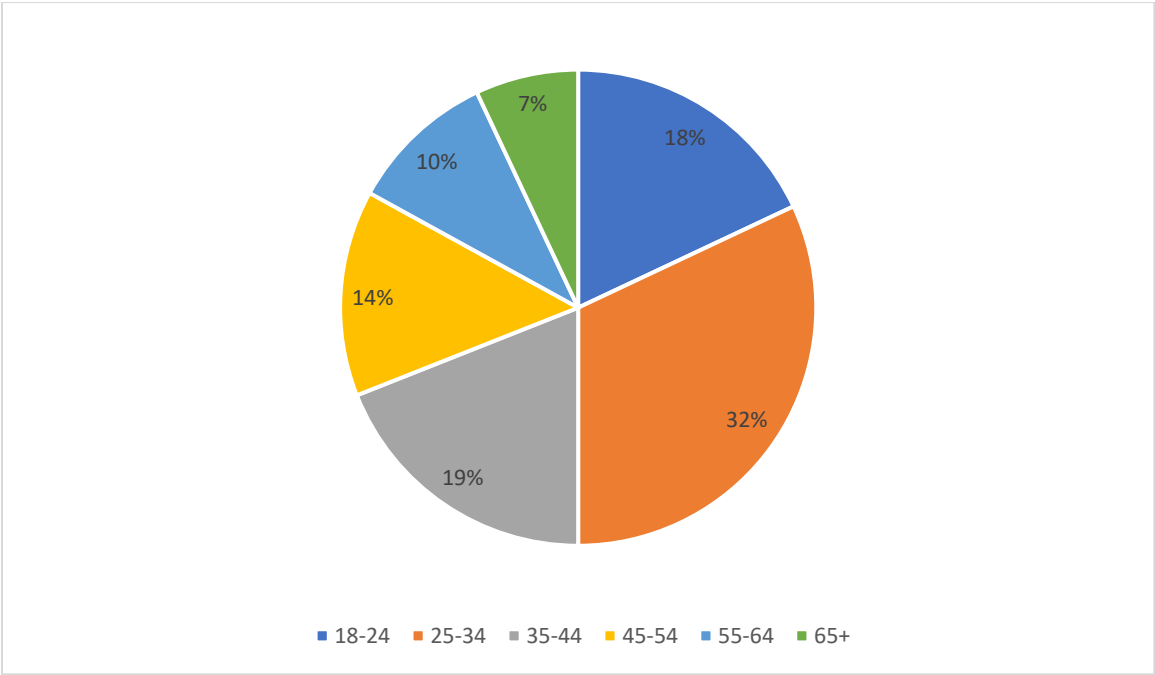
Source: Johnson, J. (2021a). *Distribution of internet users worldwide as of 2019, by age group*. [online] Statista.

Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/272365/age-distribution-of-internet-users-worldwide/

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Annex K. Languages used on the internet (January 2020)
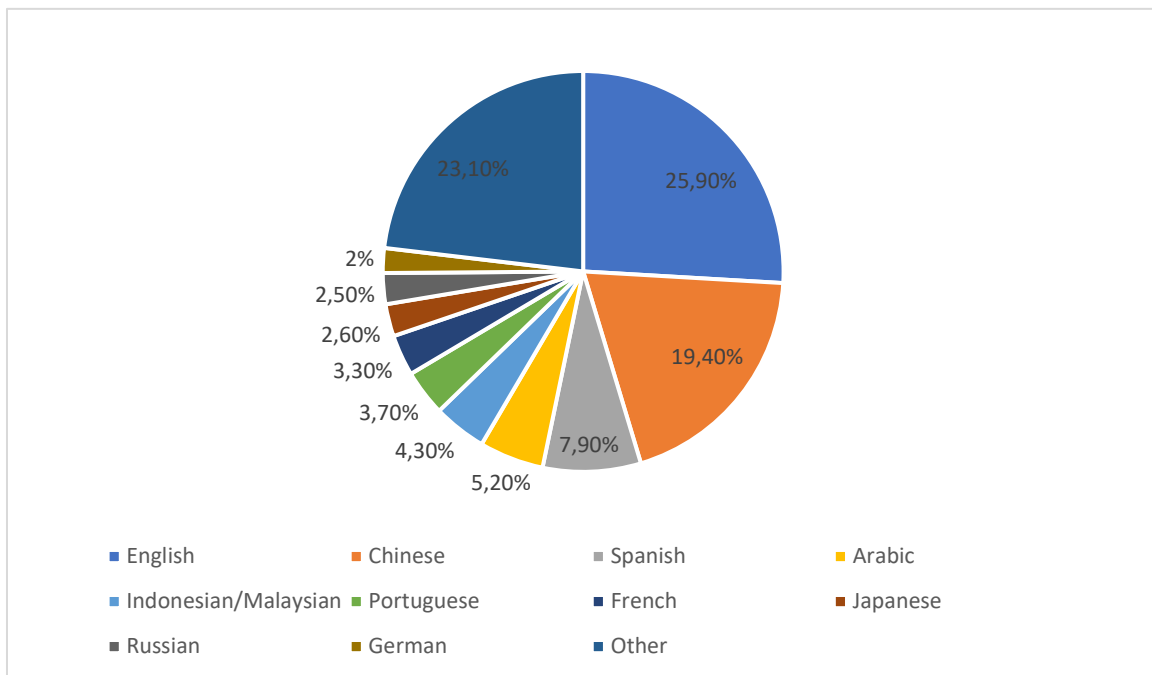
Source: Johnson, J. (2021d). *Most common languages used on the internet as of January 2020, by share of internet users*. [online] Statista. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/262946/share-of-the-most-common-languages-on-the-internet/ [Accessed: 02.05.2021].
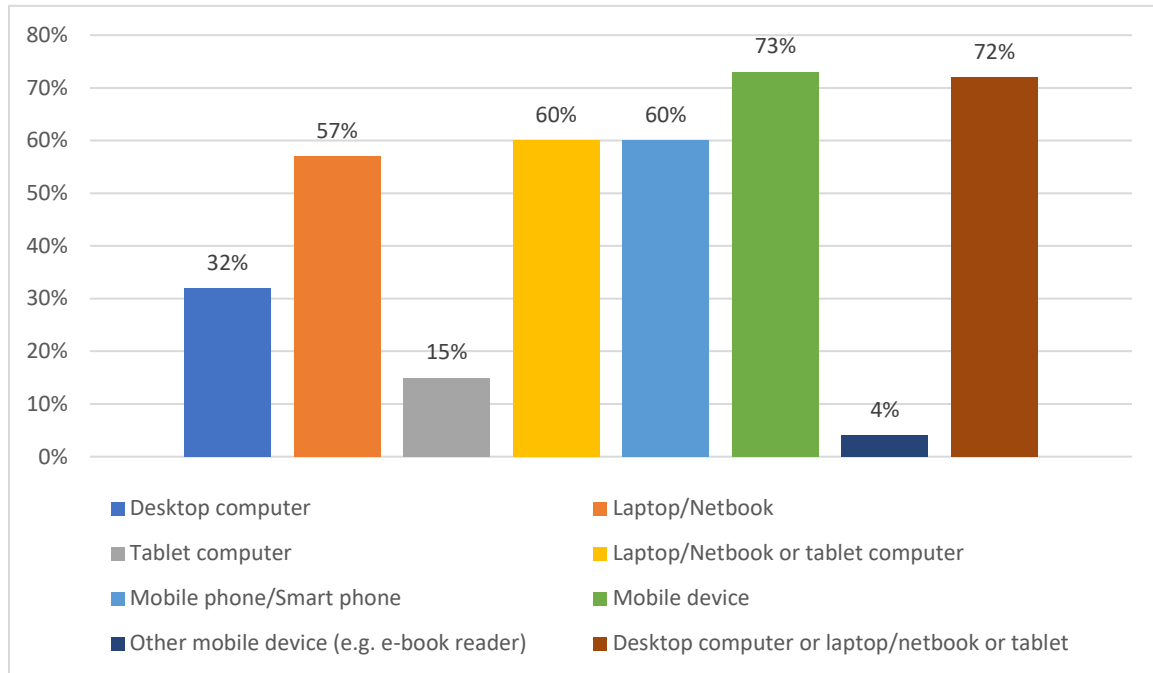
Annex L. Internet activities in Poland in 2020 (% of individuals)
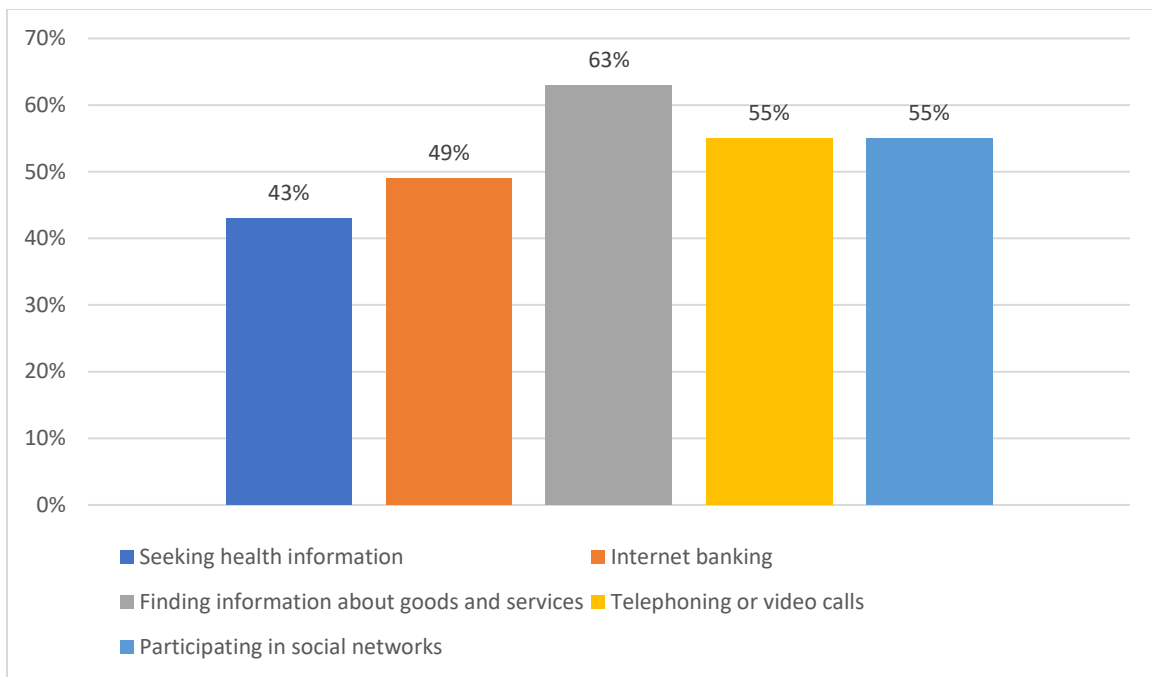
Source: Eurostat (2021d). *Individuals - internet activities*. [online] Available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/isoc_ci_ac_i/default/table?lang=en [Accessed:
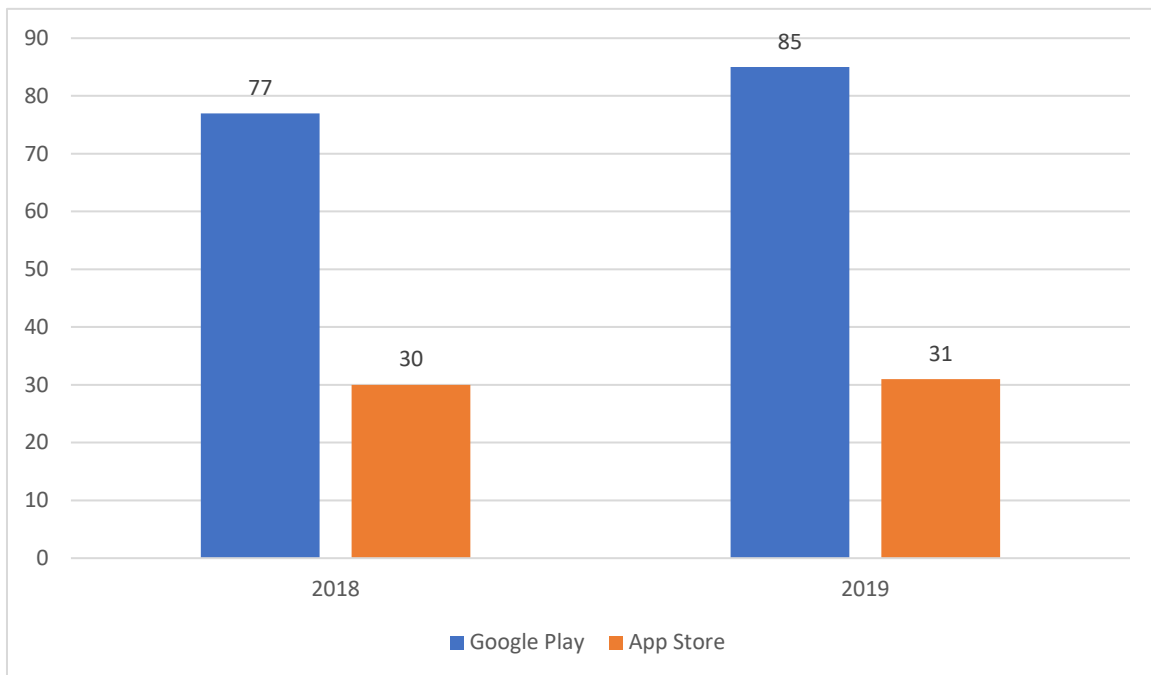
02.05.2021].

Annex M. Devices used to access the internet in Poland in 2018

Source: Eurostat (2021e). *Individuals - devices used to access the internet*. [online] Available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ISOC_CI_DEV_I__custom_811023/default/table?lang=e
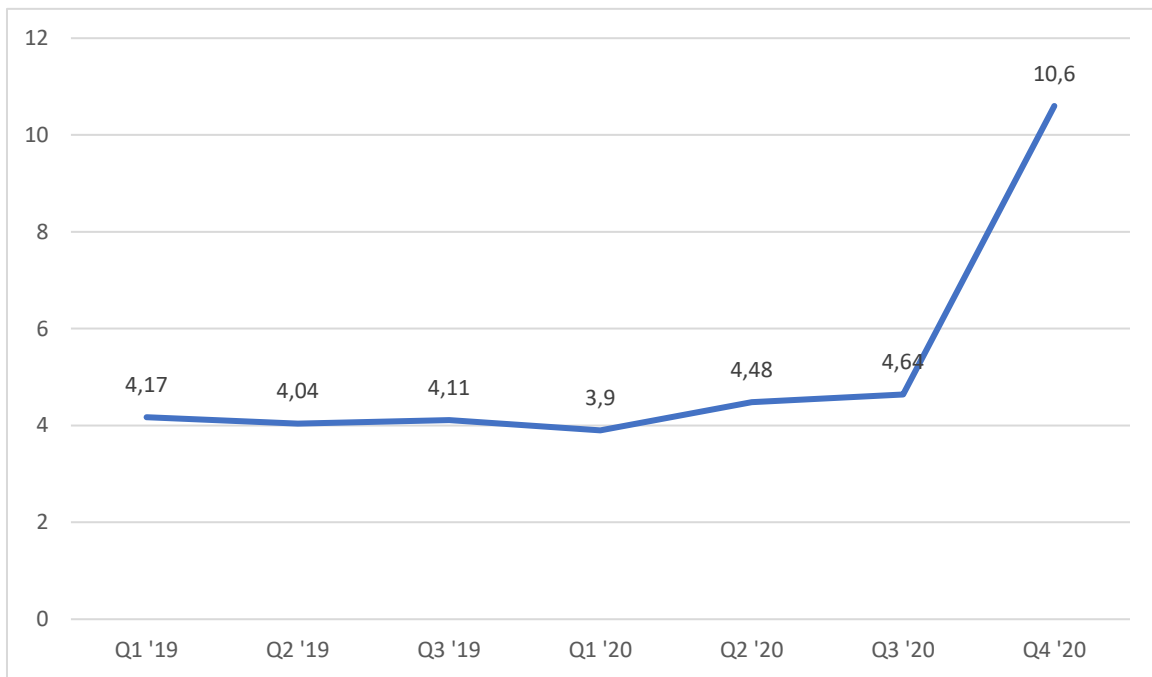
n [Accessed: 02.05.2021].

Annex N. Downloads of mobile applications worldwide (2018 - 2019), by store (in billions)

Source: Statista Research Department (2021a). *Mobile app downloads worldwide from 2018 to 2024, by store*.
[online] Statista. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1010716/apple-app-store-google-play-app-downloads-forecast/ [Accessed: 03.05.2021].

Annex O. Average consumer spend on mobile apps per smartphone (2019-2020) (in U.S. dollars)

Source: Statista Research Department (2021d). *Average consumer spend on mobile apps per smartphone as of 4th quarter 2020.* [online] Statista. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/289909/mobile-app-spend-on-per-user-mobile-apps-quarter/ [Accessed: 03.05.2021].

Annex P. VRIO analysis

Resources/ Capabilities	Valuable	Rare	Inimitable	Organized	
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) (Copyrights, Industrial Design Rights, trademarks)	YES, extremely valuable especially for a tech company like the NoQ	YES, IPR are rare and cannot be copied by competitors	YES, The risk of imitation is high, but the company's name or app design (layers, icons) cannot be copied as they are protected by law. That is why they will never be exactly the same	The NoQ does not have the resources yet as this strategic plan is the first step in creating the NoQ start-up. However, it is being prepared to be able to fully exploit those resources and capabilities	Unused competitive advantage (Can provide a sustainable competitive advantage in the future)
Contracts with suppliers	YES, It is the fundamental element of the app for its proper operation	YES, the contracts and terms of the partnership are personalized and exclusive for the NoQ company	YES, Can be imitated by competitors, but their terms and conditions will vary		Unused competitive advantage (Can provide a sustainable competitive advantage in the future)
Customer database	YES, It gives access to existing customers and the ability to maintain relationships with them	YES, the data is available only to the company and its employees	Yes, It can't be easily imitated by competitors, it takes time to collect all the data and it will not be exactly the same		Unused competitive advantage (Can provide a sustainable competitive advantage in the future)
Software – the NoQ app	YES, it is a fundamental	YES,	YES, The idea can be easily		Unused competitive advantage

	product of the company	the company has exclusivity on this	imitated, but the app design will be protected by the intellectual property rights		(Can provide a sustainable competitive advantage in the future)
The technology used in the app (e.g. GPS, voice command, chatbots, online payments)	YES, An integral part of the app, which makes it more user-friendly and attractive	NO, These technologies are continuously becoming more popular and more accessible	NO, They can be easily imitated by competitors but their development requires a lot of capital and industry experts (engineers)		Competitive parity
Latest and best work equipment (e.g. computers, programs)	YES, It facilitates the work for employees	NO, They are readily available for purchase	NO, They can be easily imitated but require a lot of capital		Competitive parity
Employees - Industry experts	YES, They add value to the company and develop high-quality products	YES, The ideal candidate sought by the NoQ has specific character traits, skills, interests and background, which means that their number on the market is very limited	YES, It can't be easily imitated by competitors, but they can offer the employees jobs. That is why it is crucial to provide the best working environment and constantly meet their needs.		Unused competitive advantage (Can provide a sustainable competitive advantage in the future)

Financial resources	YES, They are vital to cover costs and expenses and to invest in the future	NO, There are many sources of funds	NO, They are easily accessible to everyone		Competitive parity
Marketing strategy: Digital promotion	YES, It is currently one of the most powerful marketing tools and one of the most accurate ways to communicate with target tech-savvy customers	NO, It is a highly popular promotion tool used by the majority of companies	NO, Can be easily imitated by competitors		Competitive parity
Marketing strategy: Transparency	YES, It is an attractor for customers to show them the true face of the company, and that there is nothing to hide (positive public perception)	NO, Most companies nowadays try to be transparent	NO, This approach can be easily imitated		Competitive parity
Great company's culture and values	YES, It is an attractor and reason to stay for highly qualified employees, as well as for customers if the values are truly	YES, It is an exclusive and personalized set of values and culture, but each one separately is not unique and rare	YES, It can be imitated by competitors but not easy as it takes time to implement those values in the company and		Unused competitive advantage (Can provide a sustainable competitive advantage in the future)

	respected and coincide with their beliefs		convince employees to truly respect them		

Source: Prepared by the author