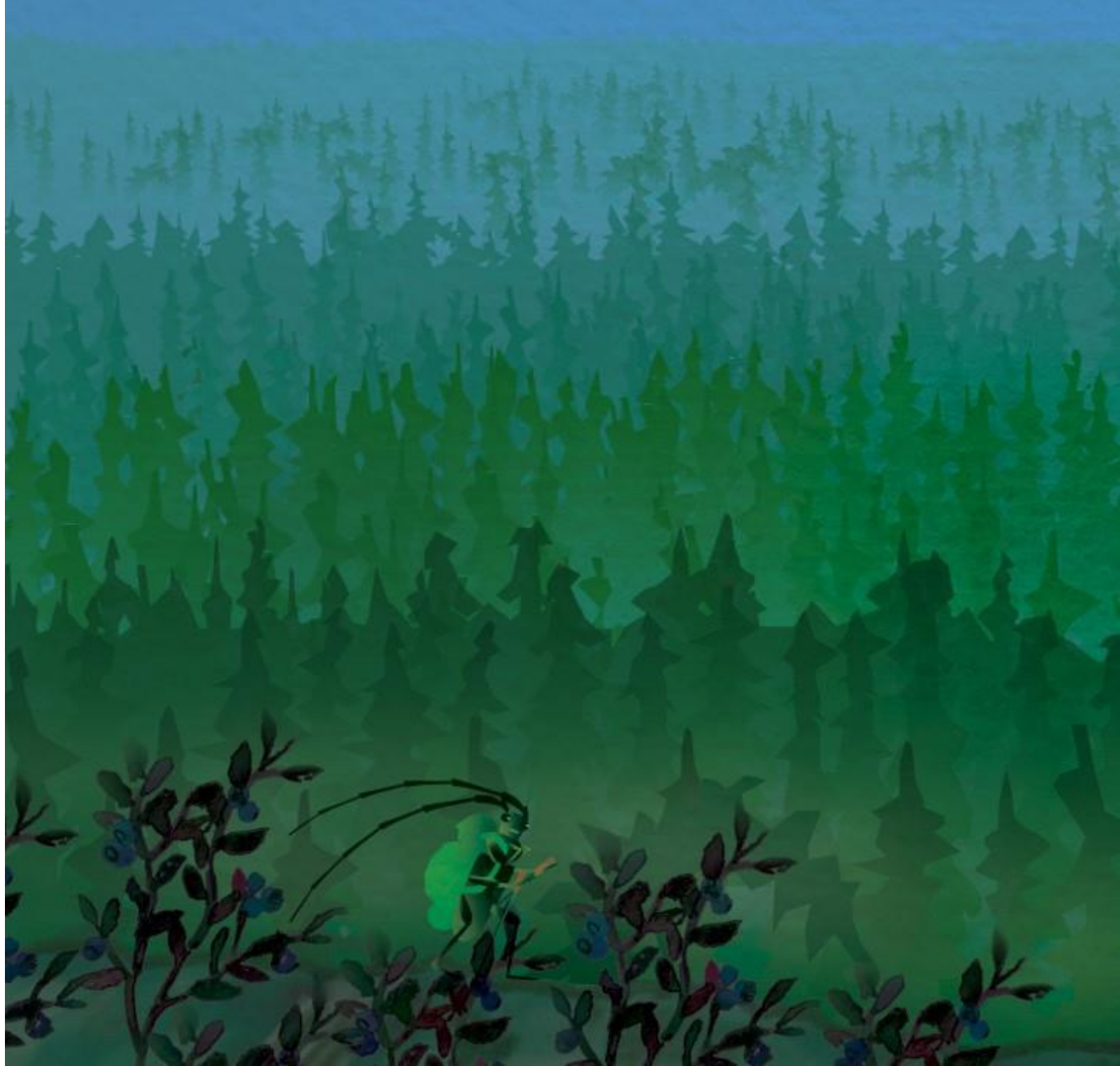


Visitor profiles

Parks & Wildlife Finland

1 October 2021

Susanne Nylund



Understanding different customer groups builds the foundation for service development

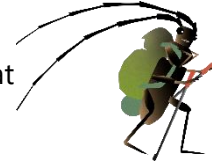
- Metsähallitus Visitor profiles are a way of examining different types of visitors, whether in national parks, nature recreational areas, commercial forests or wilderness areas.
- Visitor profiles can be used in developing hiking services and as a tool for understanding behaviour and motivations of different visitors. The tool has been used, for example, in the development of guide signs, the planning of hiking areas and the training of wilderness guides.
- Providers of hiking services form a large network, which has a common end-customer. We hope that sharing tools and insights will promote cooperation. We are happy to hear from our partners concerning how the Visitor profiles have been used and what kinds of insights have emerged in different projects.
- The Visitor profiles have been created based on a customer experience research, and a large number of experts participated in the process at Metsähallitus. Special thanks to Liisa Neuvonen and Joel Heino for their valuable perspectives and input.
- We are very grateful to all the hikers and park visitors who took part in and contributed to the numerous surveys, assignments, interviews and ideas!
- Reference instruction: Nylund, Susanne 2021: Visitor profiles. Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife Finland. Illustrator: Anu Välihalo.



ENTHUSIAST



COMFORT SEEKER



**WILDERNESS
WANDERER**



PIKNICKER



ACHIEVER



What are the profiles?

- Behavioural profiles are a tool for increasing understanding of visitors and empathy towards customers.
 - The profiles are archetypes that help you understand the behaviour, attitudes, challenges, motivation and values of different customers.
 - Profiles are based on qualitative data. People can identify themselves with different profiles depending on the time, place, and type of trip - in many cases, a relatable factor can be found in several different profiles.
 - Qualitative profiles do not replace customer segments. For example, mountain bikers form an important customer group, but each Visitor profile might include mountain bikers. Both viewpoints are necessary and complement each other.
 - Profiles help to understand different types of visitors and behaviours.
- Visitor profiles are based on the customer experience research collected during the autumn of 2020 by Parks & Wildlife Finland, Coastal and Metropolitan Area (Hiker community, interviews conducted in the field, and ethnography).

Different perspectives for customer groups

Customer segment

- Based on measurable quantitative data. The distinguishing factor might be the age group or the money used for services, for example.
- Easily measured.
- Traditionally used in marketing etc.
- Examples of Metsähallitus customer segments include cyclists, visitors travelling with children, tourists, visitors who need accessible services, and first-time visitors.

Behaviour profile

- Based on qualitative data
- Based on, for example, behaviour and motivation
- Demographic variables are removed to avoid creating stereotypes.
- Used in service design and holistic service development

Customer persona

- Not necessarily based on research or customer understanding
- Descriptions of people
- Used, for example, in software development

NOTE: Terms are often used mixed up...



How can the profiles be used?

- Ideally, profiles are a systematic tool for customer-oriented service development.
- Visitor profiles can be developed and refined for changing needs and projects throughout the organisation.
- Profiles can also be tested and validated to provide a stronger basis for decision-making.



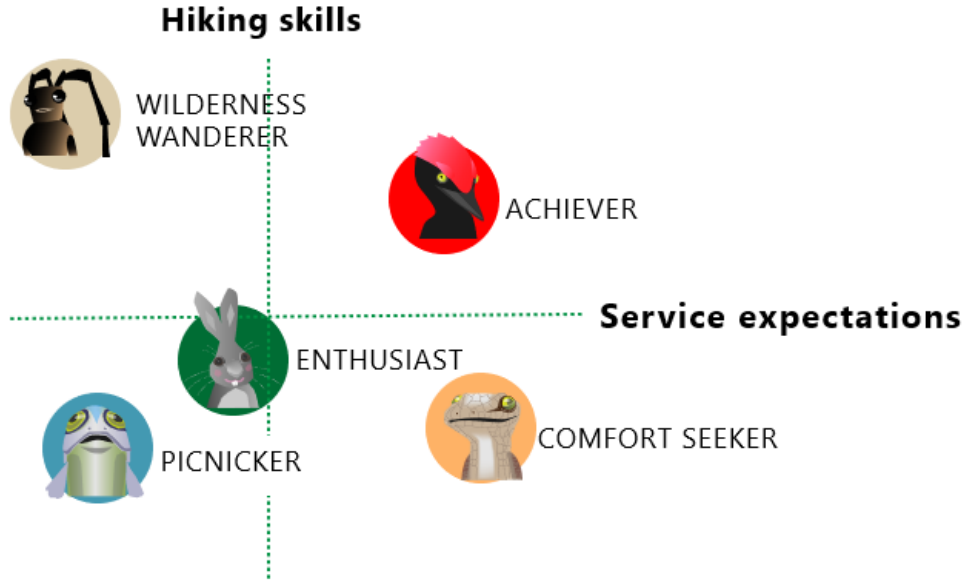
Basis for Visitor profiles

Visitor profiles are created by reviewing the aspects that distinguish user groups based on customer experience research, such as:

- the time used to prepare for the visit
- their relationship with nature
- hiking skills
- image of Metsähallitus
- frustrations and experiences during their visit
- attitude towards responsibility
- type of excursion or visit
- expectations concerning the service level of national parks.

By grouping and combining different attributes, templates are created for profiles that are complemented by customer insights. The theoretical starting point for this method is frame analysis.

Visitor profiles





"As a beginner, I don't have a community for sharing support, advice, and help. "

Enthusiast

The hiking and well-being trend has inspired the Enthusiast to go out into nature and national parks, but they have more enthusiasm than hiking skills. The Enthusiast is interested in nature and wants to do the right thing, even though the long list of rules and regulations might sometimes seem confusing and lead to an "unintentional breaking of the law".

Enthusiast



Time prepared for the trip



Sustainability



Hiking skills



Sociability



Interest in nature



Importance

For the Enthusiast, nature serves both to counterbalance a hectic everyday life and for sharing beautiful pictures in social media.

Relationship with nature

Aesthetic-romantic. Seeking experiences.

Frustrated by

Tries to follow the rules, but unclear instructions can lead them astray.

Getting lost and lack of skills are a concern. Expectations for the infrastructure of national parks are high, which can cause frustration - the Enthusiast's reference service is a campsite.

Happy with

A successful excursion, gaining skills, and increasing confidence in one's own expertise.

Needs

Encouragement, inspiration, and learning new things.

"Next goal is to spend a night outdoors."

Types of visits

Day trips or
1 overnight tent trip

Role of Metsähallitus

"What Metsähallitus?"

Customer service

Google & social media

Opportunities

Stronger Metsähallitus brand, providing nature information, and better guidance.

Phone during a visit: In the hand

"The 1.5 km to this lean-to shelter from the water collection point is too far. We hauled our gear here in a rubber boat - if we had hiked in on the duckboards, I would have ended up twisting my ankle with my backpack on."

To be determined by Metsähallitus:

How to "nudge" Enthusiasts to become influencers?



***"Services kill the vibe.
It should be rural and
one should be outside
of their comfort zone.
Less is more."***

Wilderness Wanderer

The Wilderness Wanderer treks through national parks and wilderness areas, seeking the romance of the wild, soaking up the atmosphere, and savouring nature. The Wilderness Wanderer heads out to the most remote corners of the parks away from marked trails.

Wilderness Wanderer



Time prepared for the trip



Sustainability



Hiking skills



Sociability



Interest in nature



Importance

The Wilderness Wanderer is fascinated by the peace and timelessness of nature.

Relationship with nature

Archaic - sees people as part of nature.

Frustrated by

Crowds, the transformation of national parks into "play grounds", increased cycling, and various events in the parks. Gravelled trails are annoying.

Concerns about the mass dismantling of structures in quiet places.

Happy with

Staying in a lean-to shelter alone. Using the basic infrastructure and doesn't need extra services.

Needs

Remote zones, quiet trails, and lean-to shelters also in distant areas.

Types of visits

Multi-day hikes

Role of Metsähallitus

Enabler

Customer service

Nationalparks.fi + possibly Retkikompassi

Opportunities

Providing nature information and profiling parks.

Better engagement.

Volunteer work.

Phone during a visit: Packed away in the backpack.

To be determined by Metsähallitus:

How to utilise the expertise and participation of the Wilderness Wanderers

*"I don't need much.
I head into the woods to
escape the city and relax
when I feel stress."*



"I'd like to see more marked trails in national parks and expanded opening hours for visitor centres."

Comfort Seeker

Comfort Seeker is looking for convenient and easy nature experiences. The Comfort Seeker appreciates the "ready-made" nature experience: marked trails, easily accessible information, places to grill sausages or cafes where to buy a snack.

Comfort Seeker



Time prepared for the trip



Sustainability



Hiking skills



Sociability



Interest in nature



Importance

Appreciates recreation, nature experiences and taking small breaks from their everyday life. The frequency of visits varies and they don't regularly engage in nature activities.

Relationship with nature

User. Nature offers well-being to people.

Frustrated by

Complex park-specific rules and restrictions.

Happy with

When the service level meets high expectations and the services form a seamless experience.

Needs

Clearly defined entities for excursions, personalised services, trail markings and 'high-quality' rest stops. More detailed trail profiles.

Types of visits

Day trips

Role of Metsähallitus

Service provider

Customer service

Nature Centres

Google > nationalparks.fi

Opportunities

Better destination guidance, "passive information acquisition"

High willingness to pay

Phone on an excursion: In the pocket

To be determined by Metsähallitus:

How to guide the Comfort Seeker to the services of operators?

"There's also a need for some kind of "child park", where parents could leave their children while they head out on their own hike with a trained professional and spend their own time in nature."



"It never even occurred to me that you can't make an open fire anywhere you want"

Picnicker

The Picnicker comes to the national park with a group, and the main focus of the excursion might be, for example, grilling and spending time with a group, friends or family in a peaceful place.

Picnicker



Time prepared for the trip



Sustainability



Hiking skills



Sociability



Interest in nature



Importance

National parks or nature conservation values are not foremost in the mind of the Picnicker. Even though sociability is what drives the Picnicker, they are still interested in nature. The use of shared property is seen as an opportunity.

Relationship with nature

Not very strong.

Frustrated by

The rules are annoying or not known very well.

Happy with

A relaxed nature experience on the visitor's own terms in a "cool natural forest".

Needs

Places to bring a portable grill and have a picnic. Better/larger campfire sites, etc. - fire circles for hanging out.

Types of visits

Grilling or cooking at a rest stop

Role of Metsähallitus

Provider of free services

Customer service

Not used very much

Opportunities

Park profiling, clearer rules, terrain guidance

Phone on an excursion: Along

"I assume the rules are pretty much Everyman's Rights"

To be determined by Metsähallitus:

What is OK about hanging out together with others?

How can a Picnicker's relationship with nature be strengthened?



***"There are always new
branches of hobbies
where you can get
better and try things
out!"***

Achiever

The Achiever enjoys national parks through their hobbies (e.g. birdwatching, Finnish wilderness skill competitions, mountain biking, the SwimRun event, ultra-runs, trail running events, blueberry picking competitions, etc.)

Achiever



Time prepared for the trip



Sustainability



Hiking skills



Sociability



Interest in nature



Importance

Adventure, results and performance are what drive the Achiever out into nature. They are also ways to enjoy national parks.

Relationship with nature

Natural/pragmatic, the national park is not necessarily an intrinsic value, but a place to work out and challenge yourself.

Frustrated by

Confusing rules for different modes of transport in parks. When you fail to achieve your set goals.

Happy with

A well-organised event, surpassing yourself or making a good "catch". Sense of community.

Needs

More services near national parks: accommodation, shower & sauna, restaurants and good transport connections.

Excursions

Events

Role of Metsähallitus

Enabling visitors to engage in their hobbies and achieve their goals

Customer service

nationalparks.fi + comparable groups

Opportunities

Profiling of areas.

Phone on an excursion: May be a key part of the activity

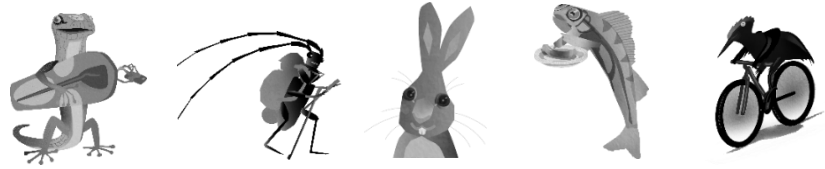
"I spend my time in nature through my orienteering, both on orienteering courses and making arrangements for them. I also enjoy mountain biking and my new hobby, trail running."

To be determined by Metsähallitus:

How to reconcile the needs of different modes of transport with nature conservation and preventing terrain wear.

How to provide clearer guidance on the rules and possibilities of different modes of transport.

Potential Hikers



Easier to motivate

Obstacles

- Lack of expertise/equipment/skills (actual or imagined)
- Not familiar with hiking areas/no knowledge of the national park concept
- Accessibility (no car/needs accessible services)
- Lack of companion

How can the threshold to get out into nature be lowered?

Difficult to motivate

Obstacles

- Indifference/ even hostile or fearful relationship with nature
- Nature is not necessarily seen as having any intrinsic value, the relationship is more exploitive
- Prior experiences negative

How to strengthen the nature relationship of "Not-quite-yet" hikers and get them off the couch

- "Potential Hikers" is a key customer group, from which an increasing number of people are moving to Visitor profiles.
- Service design and communication can influence the direction in which their enthusiasm and relationship with nature develop.
- Potential Hikers and their obstacles are important for future scenarios and forecasting.
- It's important to gain greater understanding of Potential Hikers in the future.

Customer groups in national parks

In addition to Visitor profiles, through which different "lenses" should customer groups be viewed?

Visitors with children	Cyclists	Visitors needing accessible services
Children	Activity groups	Local residents
Tourists	Partners providing services	First-time visitors
Paddlers	Dogs	Potential hikers
Photographers	?	?


Questions? Comments?

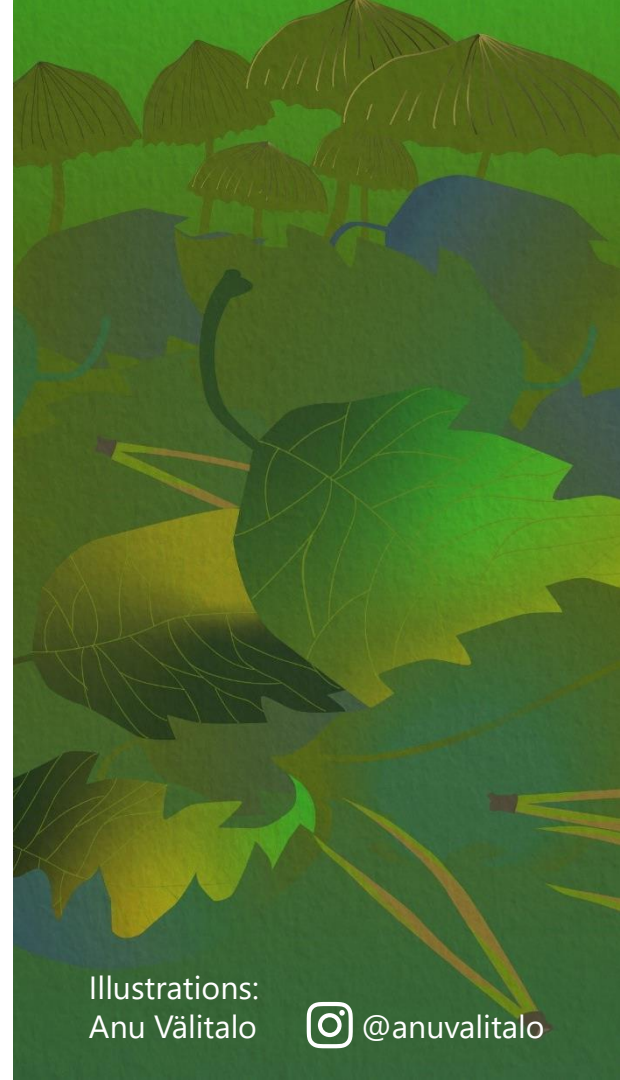
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