



University of Twente
Enschede - The Netherlands

Service Quality Improvement

at the Netherlands - Thai Chamber of Commerce

Bachelor Thesis Rob Slot

Industrial Engineering & Management

Committee:

M.Sc. S.J. Maathuis, University of Twente

Prof. Dr. Ir. E.J. de Bruijn, University of Twente

B. Cesar, Netherlands - Thai Chamber of Commerce

Management Summary

The Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC) is a private, non-governmental organization founded to expand and facilitate trade for its members, which are mostly Dutch companies doing business in Thailand. As of February 2007 the NTCC has 179 members. Although the number of members has been increasing for the past six years the NTCC has its concerns. Thailand is becoming less attractive for companies and member involvement in NTCC services seems declining. So members must be satisfied and the NTCC needs to stay attractive to potential new members in order to grow. Members and potential members together form the client pool. Therefore the central problem definition in this research is formulated as follows: *For the NTCC it is unclear what the critical issues are to satisfy its clients.* The focus of this research lies heavily on the NTCC members, this has resulted in the following main research question:

Which service improvements will lead to better member satisfaction for the NTCC

The NTCC is a pure service organization and in service quality evaluation two models are dominant: the 'gap model' using the SERVQUAL evaluation tool and the performance-evaluation matrix. The first model compares member expectations with their perception of services and draws conclusions per clustered bundle of services and reveals five possible problem areas when dissatisfaction occurs. The second model measures the importance of a service and the members' perception of this service and plots these variables in a matrix, drawing conclusions per individual service attribute.

With the use of a questionnaire, a survey of activities of other foreign chambers of commerce and personal observations data was gathered. It can be concluded that overall the NTCC is doing reasonably good. But some services demand improvement. These services and the presented solutions are depicted in the following matrix:

Solution	Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying NTCC service demanding improvement	Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand. Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand. The bowling tournament	Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments. Provide specific information on member demands	Provide trade statistics Provide trade statistics	Helping members with general information about doing business in Thailand. Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand. Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand. Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand. Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand. Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking
Provide a full overview of all NTCC services	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Design a "did you know" section in the magazine commerce with NTCC services		X	X	X			X	X		
Provide a more professional newsletter update										X
Develop a starter's kit					X					
Manage expectations regarding the contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	X									
Jointly participate in trade missions and matchmaking activities, but be clear about what the NTCC can offer				X						
Discontinue with organizing the bowling tournament							X			

Matrix 1: Matrix of services to improve (x-axis) and possible improvement solutions (Y-axis). X depicts the services positively affected by the improvement solution

The improvements are mainly focused on a better management of expectations and an improvement of communications. The NTCC should be clearer about what it offers and to which extent certain services are provided.

Also guidelines for the implementation of the chosen improvement solutions have been formulated.

Finally it is interesting that there are two main models in service quality measurement and active debate is going on about which model is favorable or if it does not matter. In this research some consistencies (similar services were pointed out for improvement) and inconsistencies (overall judgement) have come up and therefore this research balances in the middle in the debate on service quality measurement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Bachelor Thesis

The bachelor thesis is in principle the final part in completing the bachelor degree in Industrial Engineering & Management at the University of Twente. The thesis consists of a research project in which skills learned during courses in the degree are used in order to research a practical and real problem. The outcome of the research project is this report, in which an actual practical issue is analyzed using literature.

The research project was carried out from February 2007 till June 2007. First preparations were made in The Netherlands, and the actual research was carried out in Thailand. The research was carried out at the Netherlands - Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC), based in Bangkok.

1.2 The NTCC: a service organization

The Netherlands - Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC) was founded in 1992 by Dutch businessmen. The NTCC was set up as an organization which would look after the interests of its members according to trade related aspects between Thailand and The Netherlands. The NTCC is thus a private, non-government organization, this in contrast to the Dutch Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands (Kamer van Koophandel). It is a fully self-funded membership organization, which provides several services to its members. In return the members pay a yearly fee to the NTCC. Members are Dutch companies doing business in Thailand, Dutch individuals working for Thai or other foreign companies and Dutch individuals who run an entrepreneurial business. The NTCC has 179 members as of February 2007.

Because of Thai law, it is prohibited for Chambers of Commerce to represent multiple countries (except for a few very small countries such as Luxembourg). The Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (Beluthai) is a very small one though. That is why the NTCC is paid a yearly fee to perform the general management of the Beluthai. So practically the NTCC and Beluthai are run by the same management and from the same office, but legally they are two different entities. For the NTCC this has the implication that most activities organized are joint activities with the Beluthai, and thus a larger population is reached. Beluthai has 70 members as of February 2007.

The Board of Directors of the NTCC, consisting of 16 board members as of February 2007, is responsible for the operations of the NTCC, and has appointed an executive director who performs the general management and administration of the chamber. In the NTCC office, located in centre of the business district of Bangkok, currently five people are working. This includes the executive director, the secretary, two trainees and a coffee and maintenance woman.

Formally, the NTCC's objective is to provide information and services concerning trade, commerce, industry, finance and investment in Thailand as well as in the Netherlands to its members. To expand and facilitate trade between the two countries the NTCC provides several services. The NTCC represents Dutch business interests in relation to the government of Thailand, Thai opinion leaders and decision makers, to other Chambers of Commerce, and to the media in Thailand.

Most of the NTCC's effort is in helping its members doing business by offering different services. Current services include organizing networking events, organizing member-company visits, organizing seminars and luncheons with guest speakers, providing information about the dynamic Thai business laws, and providing new investors to Thailand with useful information and advice.

A pure service organization is distinguishable with five major characteristics (Daft, 1998). These are:

1. Simultaneous production and consumption
2. Customized output
3. Service receiver participation
4. Intangible output
5. Labor intensive

For all events organized by the NTCC, production and consumption take place simultaneously, and the events are intangible and labor intensive. The other services provided by the NTCC almost all have these same characteristics. The only exceptions are the quarterly published magazine, and the bi-yearly published handbook. These provided services are produced before they are consumed, have a standard outlook but different contents though and are tangible products. They are on the other hand created with the participation of the members, and are quite labor intensive. Summarizing these characteristics, the NTCC can be described best as a pure service organization. This concept is important in the rest of this research because service organizations need to be addressed in a different way as manufacturing or intermediate organizations.

1.3 The NTCC and its environment

Companies have a large need for information, especially those that engage in international business. In this light it is interesting to understand what these companies and individuals within these companies need, where they get it, and what the function of the NTCC is. In general, there are two types of international companies (companies that participate in cross-border business activities); companies that are already established in their target country, and companies that are not yet established in their target country but are in the strategic planning stage of their international business activities. The first one has already selected its foreign market and has started building its business and needs to stay up to date on developments and has the need to develop its competences abroad. The latter form needs initial information regarding the selection of their foreign market and how to set up a business in this target market. The information needs of these companies vary greatly (see also section 3.2), and the sources where they get their information vary greatly as well. For companies it is not always clear which information they need, what the best source for this required information is and how to reach this source. This presents one a major challenge for companies operating in international business.

The NTCC serves companies of both types. There is a typical situation that occurs often in the case of the NTCC. Companies that have chosen Thailand and were aided by the NTCC in setting up their business and (of course) became a member. Once a member, the (after some time established) company often stays a member for several years, in which usage of NTCC services declines and companies try and tend to find their own way of acquiring information in their target country: Thailand. This is one of the main reasons why participation and involvement in NTCC events and the usage of services declines over the years and members take a more passive attitude towards the NTCC. This can be a justified and good decision; once established some better sources become available and needs change over time. On the contrary it can lead to missed opportunities, especially in the field of staying up to date on political and legal developments and networking opportunities. So the NTCC serves companies of both types, but the vast majority of its members are established companies in Thailand. This must be kept in mind because these are the members the NTCC has to satisfy. On the other hand the NTCC must provide information for the companies which are in the screening process of foreign markets and are not yet established in Thailand in order to attract potential new members.

There are different types of Trade Promoting Organizations (TPO's), they can be profit- or non profit oriented, they can be based in the home country, the destination country or globally. Different TPO's

have different means of promoting trade, different authority, and different resources. The NTCC is there for Dutch companies and individuals doing business in Thailand or Thai companies doing business with The Netherlands or business with Dutch companies in Thailand. The NTCC is a private organization based in Thailand. Other trade promoting organizations which serve the same population are:

Trade Promoting Organization	Public or private	Based in
EVD (Export Promotion & Information Service), agency of the Dutch Ministry of Economic affairs	Public	The Netherlands
Fenedex (Federation for Netherlands Export)	Private	The Netherlands
Netherlands Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC sister organization)	Private	The Netherlands
Netherlands Chamber of Commerce (KvK)	Public	The Netherlands
NCH (Dutch council for trade promotion)	Private	The Netherlands
Thai Ministry of Commerce	Public	Thailand
Department of Export Promotion	Public	Thailand
Board of Investment	Public	Thailand
International Chamber of Commerce	Private	Thailand
Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce	Private	Thailand
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands	Public	Thailand
Independent consulting firms	Private	Both countries

Table 1: Trade Promoting Organizations serving the same population as the NTCC (de Mortanges & van Gent, 1990; multiple websites)

In the line of this research it is important to understand that there are multiple other TPO's that, like the NTCC, help companies with their business in Thailand. It goes too far to examine all TPO's mentioned, but when solutions are formulated it must be kept in mind that double work is unnecessary, and if another TPO is already offers a certain service, it may be unnecessary for the NTCC to offer this service as well. For example if an outcome of the research would be that companies desire more information in the *initial screening phase*, it may not be recommended to the NTCC that more services in this area should be created, because other organizations already address this need. An outcome like this would more suggest that the NTCC should be clearer in what it offers and where companies can go for this type of information. Also because time and resources for companies that require the information are limited, and the web of all these TPO's has proven to be un-transparent and companies do not exactly know where to get what information. The NTCC interacts with many of the stated TPO's, some in more close contact than others, but better communications and linkages may be a possible outcome in these cases.

Chapter 2: Problem Definition and Research Approach

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the main problem of this research will be formulated. First the reasons in undertaking this research project are considered and the research background will be defined. Second, from this research background a problem layout will be extracted. Third, the different phases of the research will be presented and research questions will be formulated. Fourth, the strategy for tackling the main problem and answering the research questions will be formulated. The research approach will consist of a methodology which will be used throughout the research. A detailed approach for each phase will be given and choices will be argued. Finally requirements and restrictions will be given, to clearly identify which subjects will be included, and which will be excluded from this research

2.2 Research background

Though the common understanding at the NTCC (the executive director as well as the annual general meeting (AGM)) is that the NTCC is performing quite well, there are some comments from members. There are members who state that the NTCC is doing a great job, and some members are rather dissatisfied with events organized. Initial feedback (informal feedback during events from members) shows member needs for more and more adequately organized services and events. The initial feedback is very diverse, varying from organizing more NTCC-only events to organizing more events in cooperation with other foreign chambers of commerce. And from organizing more formal and business related events, to organizing more informal and social-oriented events.

Because initial feedback is so diverse and it is not yet determined which events add the most value to which member population, structure is needed and a thorough research is desired.

Some events are attended very well, and attract a lot of member attention. In these cases not even all interested members can attend because of capacity reasons. At some other events the attendance is below NTCC expectations and the question rises if these events should still be organized.

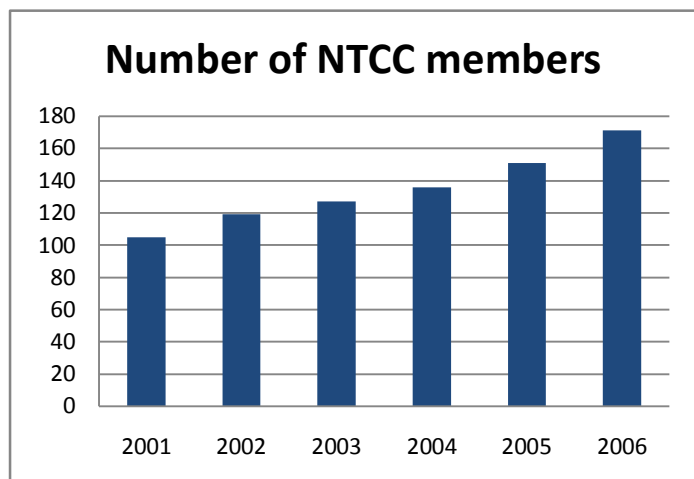


Figure 1: Number of NTCC memberships throughout the years (NTCC member directory)

Though the number of memberships increased from 105 in 2001 to 179 in February 2007, the number of memberships of the NTCC is always a concern. Annually about 15% of the members cancel their membership for various reasons. The current political and economical environment in Thailand is not very favorable to foreign investors. Last year for example a military coup removed the prime minister from office changing the entire regime. Also possible amendments to the foreign business act (the law regulating foreign ownership of companies operating in Thailand) were proposed in 2007 causing major uncertainty for foreign companies. With a high level of uncertainty for current foreign investors and potential investors in Thailand the future of the NTCC is also uncertain. Because if a lot of companies decide to move away from Thailand and the number of memberships decreases substantially, the NTCC will have a hard time to effectively promote trade between Thailand and The Netherlands. On the other hand in unstable environments companies tend to have a greater information need, which would

provide an opportunity for the NTCC to attract members who normally would not use the NTCC for information provision.

2.3 Central problem definition

The NTCC wants to satisfy its current members in the best way it can, and help them doing business in Thailand, which is why the organization was founded. The NTCC obviously does not want a decreasing amount of memberships. In order to organize events and provide services the NTCC needs a solid backbone: a substantial amount of members. Also, more members would implicate more networking opportunities for the members. Therefore, the NTCC desires a growth in the number of memberships.

There are two things the NTCC has to do to improve the number of memberships. The first is to keep as much of the current members as possible, so the NTCC has to be as attractive as possible and thus members need to be satisfied. Secondly, the NTCC has to recruit new members. To recruit new members the NTCC has to be as attractive as possible to new members, and it has to actively recruit new potential members. In this research the recruitment process is excluded. Two target groups are distinguished: members and potential members. Potential members are companies or individuals who match the criteria of NTCC members, are not members yet, but can be in the future. This can for example be a Dutch company already established in Thailand which is not a member at the moment, but also a company that may move to Thailand in the future and potentially become a member when it does so. Together members and potential new members form the pool of clients.

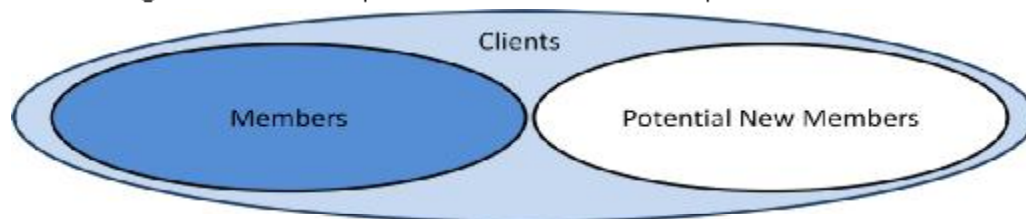


Figure 2: Client structure

In the ideal situation this research would address the entire client pool. There are great difficulties with the group of potential new members though. First of all the potential members are largely unknown and therefore they can not be asked to participate in this research. The NTCC knows some potential new members, on which the recruitment process is focused. But asking these potentials to participate in the research may trouble the recruitment process itself. And of course in reality the pool of potential members is way larger than the NTCC recruitment short list. Secondly it is possible that non-members have different needs than members. Furthermore the potential members are very diverse entities. The current member population of the NTCC is already very broad and the needs of the current members vary greatly, so it's more than likely that potential members are very diverse. Because of these problems in addressing the potential new members the research will focus on the current members, they are known, can be measured and must be satisfied. This does not implicate fully that non-members are excluded from the research. There will be some comments on the improvement of the attractiveness of the NTCC to potential new members.

From the initial feedback there is some assumed member dissatisfaction with the current events and/or services. Some events are under attended, for others interest overwhelms capacity. Another problem thus is that the NTCC has to know better what its members want, in order to organize events and services more effectively. Following this background of this research, the central problem definition becomes clear:

For the NTCC it is unclear what the critical issues are to satisfy its members

2.4 Research phases

Before continuing with the research questions, a general overview of the research methodology is given, including the different research phases, which will be followed in order to address the central problem definition.

In this research, an existing methodology is used as a guideline to tackle the main problem: "De Algemeen Bedrijfskundige Probleemaanpak (TSM Business School, nd.)", which is a general approach for problem definition and solving and consists of seven basic phases. These phases are: Problem identification, Formulation of the problem approach, Problem analysis, Formulating possible solutions, Choice amongst the alternatives, Implementation and Evaluation. For this research the phase in which alternative solutions are formulated and the phase in which a decision amongst these alternatives is made have been combined.

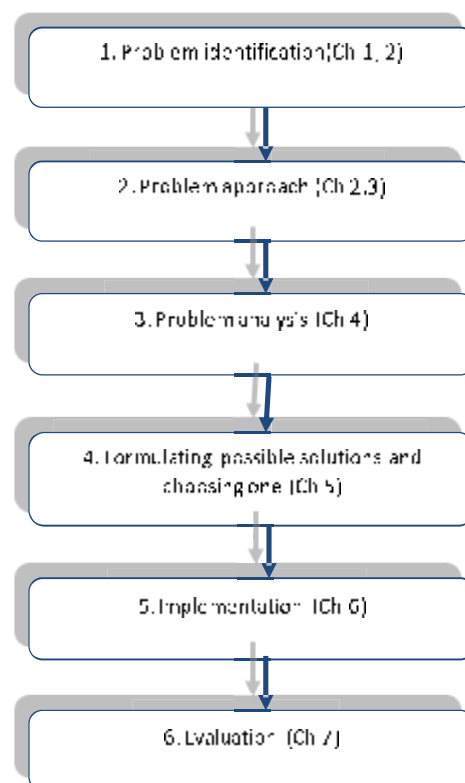


Figure 3: The six phases of the Algemeen Bedrijfskundige Probleemaanpak (TSM Business School, nd.)

2.5 Research questions

In order to address the stated problem definition the main research question will be formulated. Also sub-questions related to each of the research phases are given. The approach in how to answer these research questions will be addressed in section 2.6. As stated the research focuses on the current members, but because the NTCC wants to enhance its attractiveness to potential new members as well, a sub-question will be dedicated to this aspect as well. The main research question is formulated as follows:

Which service improvements will lead to better satisfaction for the NTCC members?

In order to address the central problem definition and to answer the main research question the following sub-questions are formulated per research phase:

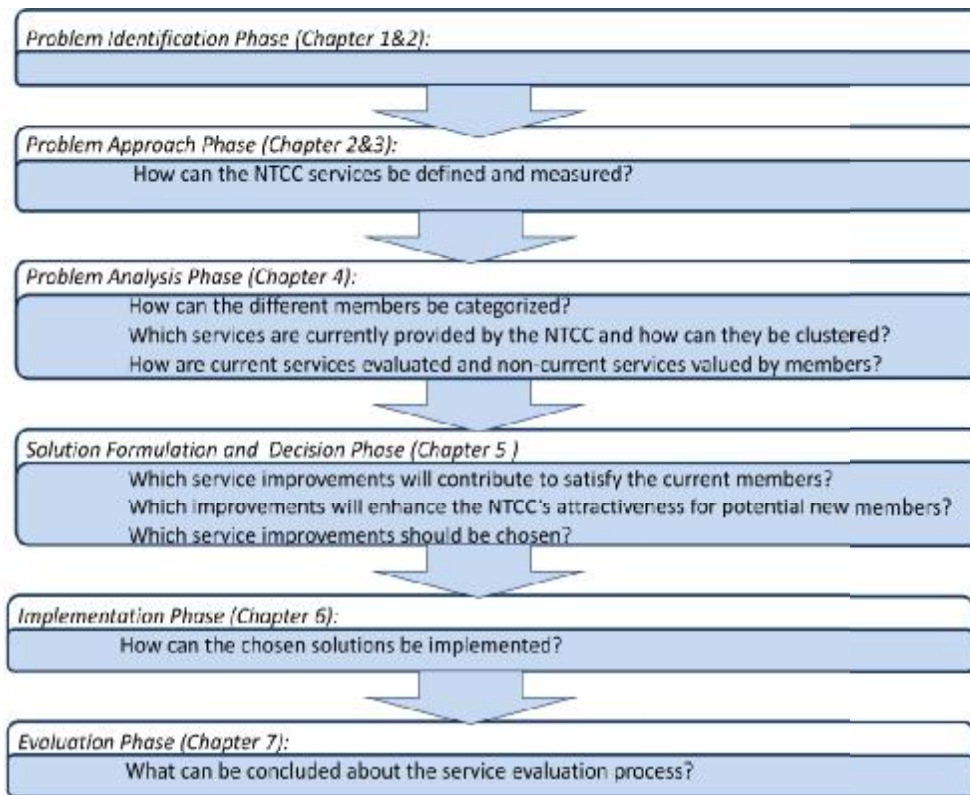


Figure 4: Research questions per phase

The outcome of the research will be a set of recommendations to the NTCC on how to implement the solutions, and provide an adequate answer to the main research question. Now that the problem identification phase is completed and research questions have been formulated the research approach will be outlined in the next section.

2.6 Research approach

Below per research phase it will be described what will be done and how it will be done. The research questions formulated in section 2.5 are linked to the different phases.

2.6.1 Problem identification phase

The first thing addressed in this research is the reason why this research is executed. A clear problem definition was given, and the main research question was formulated. Answering this question will help to address the central problem definition. The problem definition and research background have been noticed by the principal and by myself while I was formulating the problem definition, this has been done in the previous section.

2.6.2 Problem approach phase

In this section the strategy in tackling the main problem and answering the research questions is outlined. Also the means of acquiring the needed information and the applied literature are described in this phase. The research question *how can the NTCC services be defined and measured* will be answered in this section. For a more detailed description of the literature used in this section as well as the rest of this research please see chapter 3.

As described in section 1.2, the NTCC can be described as a pure service organization. Because of the intangible nature of services, the quality can not be measured in an easy way and thus member satisfaction is less easy to determine. For example for a tangible product like a light bulb its quality can be measured in aspects like life expectancy, amount of light produced and power consumption. For a service like a consultancy advice quality is much harder to measure. The impact of the advice is hard to determine, comparison with alternatives is impossible and an advice has no tangible features whatsoever. In this section it will become clear how services at the NTCC will be addressed and how their quality is made quantifiable and measurable.

2.6.2.1 Service quality

What becomes clear when the extended debates on the concept of service quality are studied is that in service quality evaluation two main dominant models arise. These models are generally addressed as the "gap" model, using the SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985; 1988) method, and a more simple method that compares the perception and the relative importance of a service attribute (for example Carman (1990), Koelemeijer (1991), Fick & Ritchie (1991) and McDougall & Levesque (1992)). The "gap" model identifies seven discrepancies in service delivery. The most interesting discrepancy is the one between the perceived service and the expected service by the service user. A widely accepted definition of service quality in this light is: the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations. The SERVQUAL method addresses this service gap, and measures service quality in this way. Others (Lambert & Sharma (1990)) define service quality as the performance on an individual service attribute, compared to its relative importance. The performance evaluation method (Hung, Y.H., Huang, M.L. & Chen, K.S., 2003) uses a matrix to evaluate individual service attributes on this criterion. Both methods use questionnaires to get feedback.

According to Schmidt and Strickland (1998) there are five key elements in addressing service quality: client expectations, perceptions of the service experience, the level of importance, the level of satisfaction and the priorities for improvement. These elements return in their altered SERVQUAL method and the performance evaluation matrix.

2.6.2.2 Considerations and use of the models

Main implication of these two models is that three measurable variables play a critical role: expectations, perceptions and importance.

As mentioned earlier on, an active debate amongst researchers about the measurement of service quality is going on. Some researchers believe in SERVQUAL, some believe in methods like the performance evaluation matrix, and some say it does not matter. This last group believes either that for every research another (customized) method could work, or that expectation and perception are terms that are interchangeable with the terms importance and satisfaction. And thus that the models are actually describing exactly the same but in different words (Hudson et al., 2004).

In this research both methods will be used. The SERVQUAL method is the dominant model used in service organizations, and this can not be ignored. It has the advantage that members are asked to compare their perceptions about the chambers current services, and compare this with what a member would expect from a foreign chamber of commerce. Advantages of this method are that current services are evaluated and services the NTCC currently does not provide will be rated as well, and possible additional services will become clear. The gap analysis will provide fields of clustered services, which can give interesting insights for the NTCC. For example if it becomes clear that the NTCC lacks service quality in the area of its tangible products, this can indicate a general area for improvement, and the NTCC may have to devote more resources to its tangible products.

One of the main critics on SERVQUAL is the fact that it does not address the importance of a single service very properly. For most service providers, the importance of a service attribute is more relevant than an expected level of an attribute. This is underlined by NTCC's executive director who stated that he is only interested in what the members find important. A nice example is that the competence of a surgeon is more important than obtaining a high service quality rating on the art hanging on the hospital wall. And since satisfaction is about doing best what matters most to service receivers, it is essential that it is measured which service attributes matter most (Hill, nd.). This will be done with the performance evaluation matrix. Advantage of this method is that key services for improvement, and areas where the NTCC could devote fewer resources to will become clear.

Besides addressing the services of the NTCC, using both methods will also provide an insight in how comparable and/or combinable they are. Though this research covers only has a small population and is not as thorough as academic researches focused on the comparison of the two models, it may contribute to one of the hypothesis on the comparability of the two models. A possible threat of using both models may be that they generate inconsistent outcomes. Therefore the organization of the questionnaire as well as the interpretation of the results should be handled with caution.

2.6.2.3 Using the SERVQUAL method and the Perception Importance model

In this section a short description and comparison of the both models is given in order to give a greater insight in how these models contribute to the definition and measurement of services at the NTCC.

The first important difference is the definition of service quality that both models use. The SERVQUAL method defines service quality as the extent to which a service meets members' expectations. So SERVQUAL measures the expectations a member has on a service attribute, and compares this with the perception of delivered service. From this the level of member satisfaction is determined ($Satisfaction = Perception - Expectation$), in which dissatisfaction will lead to a negative 'gap' score.

Several service attributes are clustered together in dimensions (which are formed by service attributes with similar characteristics), and the relative importance of a dimension will indicate priority areas for service improvement. So SERVQUAL uses three different variables: expectations, perceptions and importance. The steps towards the priorities for improvement can be summarized in the following figure:

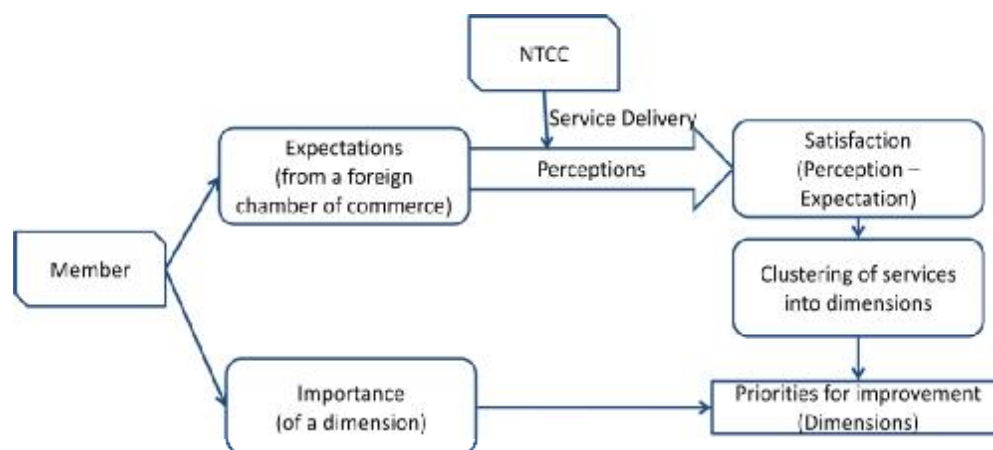


Figure 5: The SERVQUAL method steps. Based on Parasuraman et al. (1985; 1988) and Shahin (nd.)

As a result of the SERVQUAL method, service gap scores for several dimensions will be determined. To eventually improve these service dimensions, the underlying reasons for the gap scores will have to

be found. This will be done by evaluating the services which form this dimension and evaluating possible gaps 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the model of Shahin (nd.) (see also section 3.4), which are identified as functions of the way in which service is delivered. For example when members are dissatisfied with a certain service, it can be possible that the service quality has to be improved in order to fix service gap 5. Another possibility is that expectations have not been managed correctly and that members do not know what the NTCC does (gap 4) or that the NTCC does not know what members expect from it (gap 1).

Another, more simple method is the perception - importance model, my favorite example of this is the performance evaluation matrix (Hung et al, 2003). The authors of this matrix, Lambert & Sharma (1990), use a different definition of service quality. They define service quality as the performance on an individual service attribute, compared to its relative importance. The performance evaluation matrix focuses on individual service attributes by plotting the attributes in a matrix, with on the horizontal axis the performance of the NTCC on the service and on the vertical axis the services' relative importance. Performance here is measured as a members' perception of the service attribute (Hung et al., 2003). Advantage of this method is that it can quickly identify a single service deliveries' need for improvement or (when performance is very high and the service is unimportant) can propose a withdrawal of resources from this service. The steps which will have to be taken to get to the improvements can be summarized in the following figure, the simple character of this widely used model can easily be distinguished:

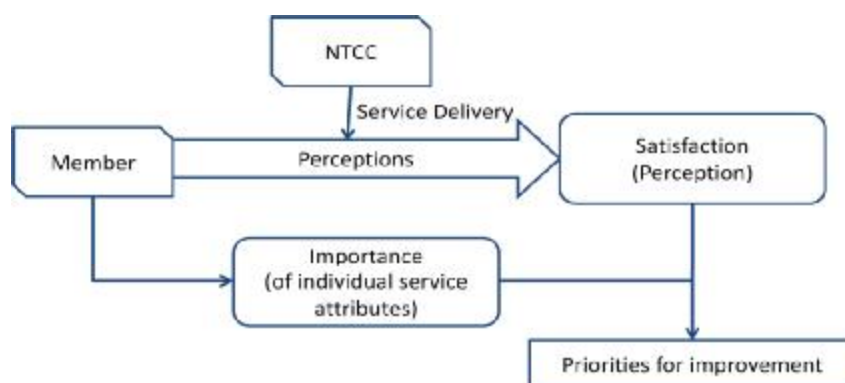


Figure 6: The performance evaluation steps. Based on Lambert & Sharma (1990) and Hung et al. (2003)

So in using both models several attributes will have to be measured. In order to determine member satisfaction using the SERVQUAL method the expectations and perceptions on all current services will have to be measured. But this does not cover the entire area of member satisfaction. Members may have expectations on services the NTCC currently does not provide. When members expect the NTCC to organize a particular service and the NTCC does not, this may occur in member dissatisfaction and therefore these expectations will have to be measured as well. To establish a reliable list of possible services a member would expect from the NTCC a survey of activities amongst similar organizations will be used. The attributes that should be measured, the means of measuring and the relationships between the attributes can be summarized in the following figure:

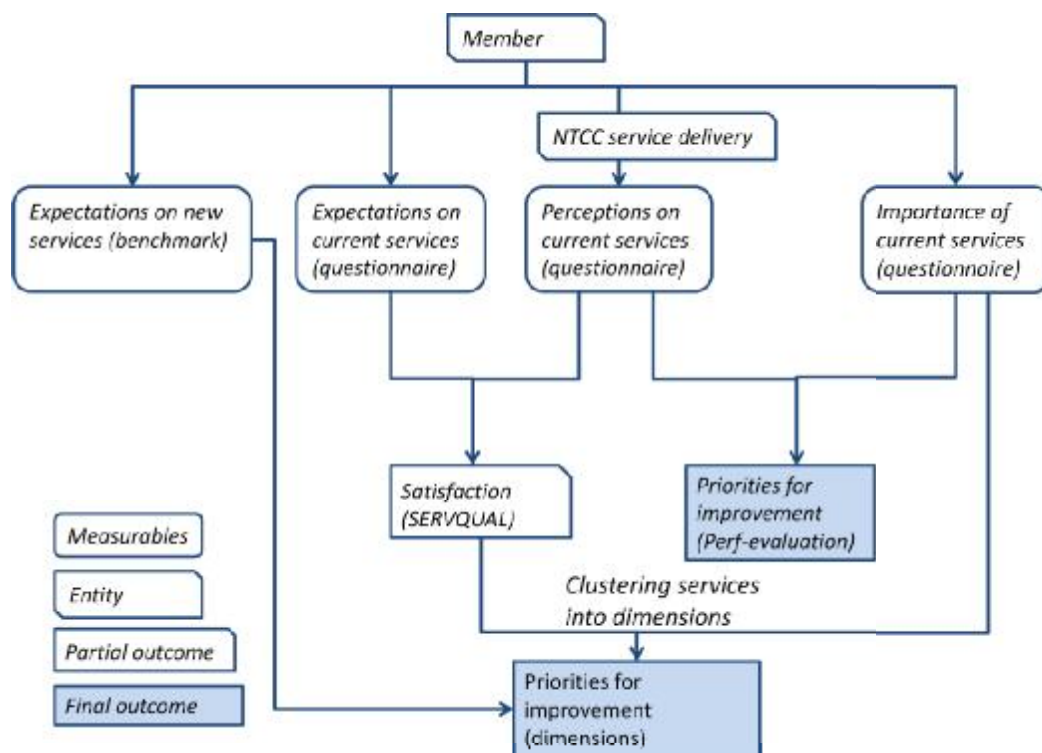


Figure 7: Overview of measurable and outcomes in the SERVQUAL and performance-evaluation methods

2.6.3 Problem analysis phase

Now that the problem approach has become clear and the aspects to be analyzed are defined the strategy for answering the research questions that belong to the problem analysis phase will be outlined. The NTCC has a very diverse member population, so in order to draw conclusions later on this composition has to be understood. Therefore a categorization amongst the NTCC members will be made. And obviously before the two models can be applied, it has to become clear which services the NTCC currently provides and which services may be interesting to provide in the future. To obtain an overview of the current services my personal observations will be used, and by using a survey of activities amongst other chambers new services will come forth. Once the current services have been mapped, dimensions for the SERVQUAL method will have to be formed. This will be done using the literature written on SERVQUAL and an analysis of the current service package. In order to answer the third research question for this phase: *How are current services evaluated and non current services valued by members* a questionnaire distributed amongst all members will be used. The results will be analyzed with the use of both the SERVQUAL method as well as the performance-evaluation matrix.

2.6.4 Solution formulation and decision phase

In this phase solutions that address the central problem definition will be presented. First solutions that will enhance the satisfaction will be presented; these can be derived from the service evaluation phase. Secondly, solutions that will enhance the attractiveness for potential new members will be presented. These solutions are based on the simple needs analysis in this chapter, literature review and findings that were obtained by talking to both members as well as non members. After these improvements have been formulated, criteria (including the resource constraint) will be developed on which the formulated improvements will be evaluated. After the evaluation, a choice is made for one or more alternatives in order to answer the main research question. This phase will be presented in chapter 5.

2.6.5 Implementation phase

After the improvements have been chosen an advice to the NTCC is given. This advice contains the guidelines for the implementation of the chosen solutions will be presented. The implementation guidelines will be presented in chapter 6.

2.6.6 Evaluation phase

In chapter 7 conclusions are drawn regarding the research process. Interesting findings that surfaced will be presented as well as the academic value of this research.

2.7 Requirements and restrictions

In this section it will become clear what will be included, and what will be excluded in this research.

This research is aimed primarily at the Netherlands -Thai Chamber of Commerce, not the Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce. Though, some implications of this duality may affect this research.

The outcome of the research, viz. the given recommendations ~~should be feasible in the NTCC's~~ budget. This means that for the given solutions no substantial investments can be done.

As mentioned in section 2.3 the recruitment process is excluded from this research. This because the NTCC is already putting a lot of effort in this process, and from past experiences no real shortcomings in this process were experienced.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter research questions were formulated from the central problem definition. A problem approach was formulated and it became clear how the services at the NTCC should be addressed. Two models were presented, both models define service quality differently. SERVQUAL defines service quality as the extent to which a service meets customers' ~~needs or expectations~~, while the performance-evaluation matrix defines service quality as the performance on an individual service attribute, compared to its relative importance. It became clear that through the use of a survey of activities, a questionnaire and observations at the NTCC the required information for answering the main research question will be obtained.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the theoretical framework will be provided, used in order to answer the research questions stated in chapter 2. Theories will be described, in the further research these theories will be addressed more thoroughly and will be applied to research the actual matter. An overview of the applied literature is given per research phase and definitions are underlined.

3.2 Theories used for the problem identification phase

The service organization. Basic organizational theory distinct prototypical manufacturing technologies, prototypical service technologies and intermediates (Daft, 1998). A pure service organization is distinguishable with five major characteristics. Service organizations are known for the *simultaneous production and consumption* of their goods. The service is established through interaction between service provider and service receiver, this also means that service receivers tend to receive a *customized output* and that *service receivers participate* in the production process. The fourth characteristic is the one most widely used, namely the *intangible output* of a service organization. A service is abstract and often consists of information or knowledge; this also implies the *labor intensive* nature of a service.

Information needs in international business. In international business, literature points toward two different types of information needs (Czinkota, 1991): macro information, providing mostly knowledge about different environments; and micro information, providing details about markets, activities within those markets, and the changes taking place in them. Companies that are in the screening process of foreign markets, have different information needs in each screening stage. Ball & McCulloch (2006) distinguish six screening phases in selecting a foreign market with typical information needs: basic needs, economic and financial forces, political and legal forces, socio-cultural forces, competitive forces and specific information needs in the final selection process. At the beginning of the screening process resources in the home country are mainly used, whereas at the end of the process resources in the destination country have the upper hand.

These large information needs vary greatly; from very general and country specific information, to very specific and industry- or company specific needs. Companies get their information from different sources, varying from the internet, practices, journals, fellow entrepreneurs, governments, their foreign network, chambers of commerce, branch associations, banks and private consultants and students. Because there are so many information needs and because they vary so greatly, there is no unanimous information need distinguishable. And because there are so many sources and many sources have potential overlaps in information, also no unanimous information source for a specific information need exists. Though most sources try to be clear about which information they provide.

Trade promoting organizations. Companies invest in foreign countries for different reasons. But they succeed in international markets because of their competitive competence, which is largely based on their level of knowledge and skill they bring to their international marketing activities (Serinhaus & Rosson, 1990). So companies desire to utilize and improve their knowledge and skills in these activities.

Trade promoting organizations can be useful in helping companies to fully use their potential and help them improving their knowledge and skills. For the utilization of skills and knowledge acquisition, Voerman, Wedeland and Zwart (1998) underline this statement by concluding that there exists a positive correlation between export market information gathering and export market performance.

So large part of the role of trade promoting organizations is in helping companies to succeed internationally. Mainly trade promoting organizations can be categorized into export and import promoting organizations. Trade promoting organizations can be public or private. Public organizations are governments and government departments such as a national chamber of commerce. Private organizations can be industry associations or chambers of commerce (Serinhaus & Rosson, 1990).

Overall the approach which is described in the Syllabus 'Algemene Bedrijfskundige Probleemaanpak' (TSM Business School, nd.) will be used as a guideline. The original approach contains 6 phases, viz. Problem identification, Formulation of the problem approach, Problem analysis, Formulating possible solutions and choosing one, Implementation, Advice. For a better application to the stated problem the problem analysis phase has been split up into two sub-phases; define and service evaluation. The exact application of this approach is described in chapter two.

3.3 Theories used for the problem approach phase

Service quality. Service quality is a concept which is debated actively in research literature because of the difficulties in both defining it and measuring it with no overall consensus emerging on either (Schmidt & Strickland, 1998). A lot has been published on how to address service quality and different definitions are used by various researchers in how to address and define service quality. Lewis and Mitchell (1990), Dotchin and Oakland (1994), Asubonteng et al. (1996) and Wisniewski and Donnelly (1996) define service quality as: the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations. While Lambert & Sharma (1990) define service quality as the performance on an individual service attribute, compared to its relative importance. In the light of this research the word customer is addressed the same as member. In this research the term service attributes refers to the different services the NTCC offers. A service attribute for example is the providence of specific information on member demand.

What becomes clear is that in service quality evaluation two main dominant models arise. These models are generally addressed as the "gap" model, mainly using the SERVQUAL method, and a method that compares the perception and the relative importance of a service attribute (differently named by different researchers).

3.4 Theories used for analysis phase

The "Gap" Model. The difficulty with the definition of service quality is that service quality, unlike product quality, is more abstract and elusive, because of features unique to services: intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity (Parusuraman et al, 1985) and perishability (Kasper & Lemmink, 1989) and is therefore difficult to measure. Pioneers in the area of addressing service organizations and the discipline of service marketing were Zeithaml and Levitt (1990). They state that if expectations are greater than perceived quality of the service, customer dissatisfaction occurs. Satisfaction is achieved when the quality of service received parallels or exceeds their

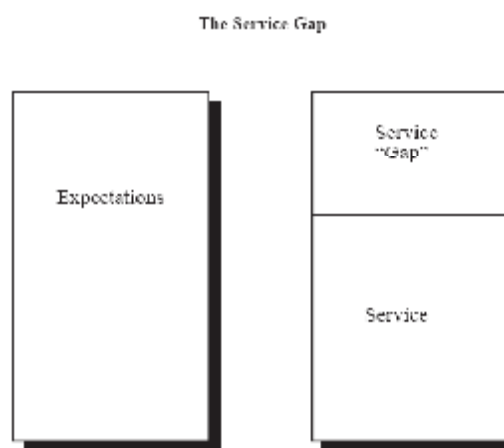


Figure 8: The Service Gap (Schmidt & Strickland, 1998)

expectations. Member satisfaction thus is defined as: providing sufficient service quality (Shahin, nd.).

To address the measurement of service quality Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) have developed their model of service quality gaps, which was later extended by Shahin (n.d). The model uses seven 'gaps' in the service quality concept, describing seven key discrepancies or gaps relating to managerial perceptions of service quality, and tasks associated with service delivery to customers. The "gap" model describes the following seven gaps in service quality:

- Gap 1: Customers' expectations versus management perceptions
- Gap 2: Management perceptions versus service specifications
- Gap 3: Service specifications versus service delivery
- Gap 4: Service delivery versus external communication
- Gap 5: The discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of the service
- Gap 6: The discrepancy between customer expectations and employees' perceptions
- Gap 7: The discrepancy between employee's perceptions and management perceptions

These gaps are the effect of different factors, displayed in the following figure:

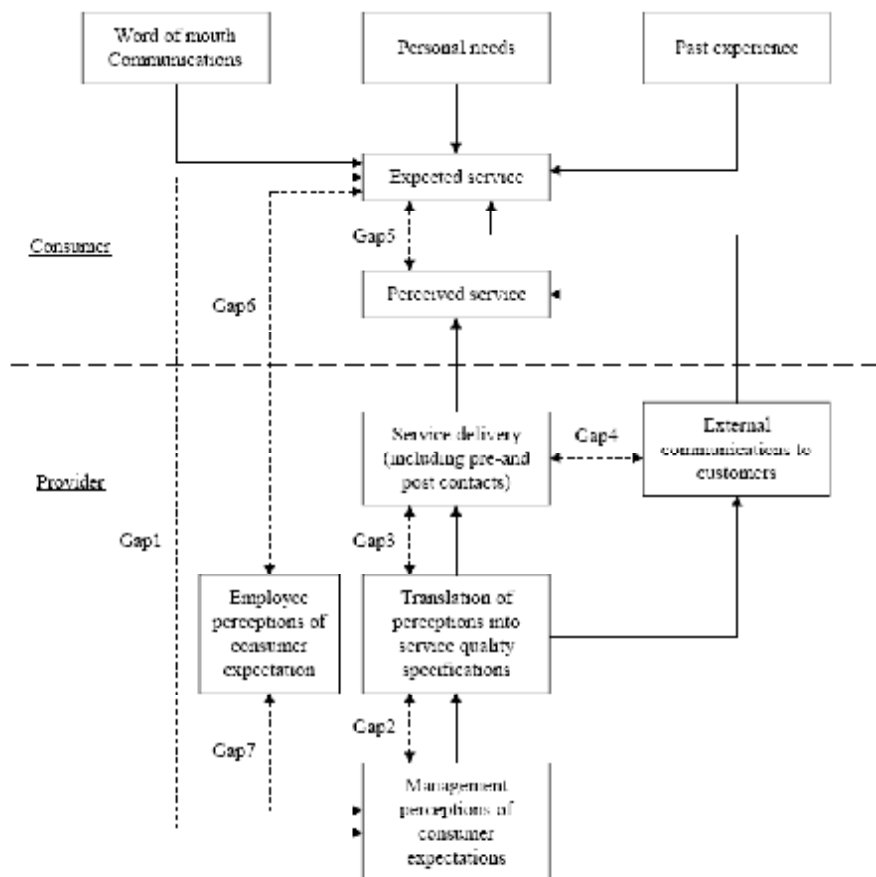


Figure 9: Model of service quality gaps (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Curry, 1999; Luk and Layton, 2002)

The gaps 1 till 4, 6 and 7 are identified as functions of the way in which service is delivered. Gap 5 pertains to the service receiver (member) and is considered to be the measure of service quality by the SERVQUAL method. The remaining gaps can be addressed when improvements in the service delivery will have to be made.

The NTCC is a very small organization. Viewing the internal processes from managements' perception towards employee perception is therefore being considered as insignificant and will not be discussed in this research. Therefore the gaps 1, 6 and 7 will be merged into one single service gap: Gap 1: The discrepancy between member expectations and NTCC's perceptions.

Addressing service quality measurement using SERVQUAL. The SERVQUAL method (Shahin, nd.) was designed to evaluate gap 5 of the gap model. It does so by measuring the expected service by the member as well as the perceived service by the member. In reaching full member satisfaction it was defined that member expectations should be met. Dissatisfaction arises when the actual service lacks quality, and the perception of the member does not reach the same level as its expectation. The difference between the perceived service and the expected service is referred to as the "service gap", indicating an area for improvement. The larger the gap, the more dissatisfied a member is. Individual "gap" scores are clustered into several dimensions, resulting in possible areas for improvement. Originally ten dimensions were found, later narrowing these down to five dimensions: Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy and Responsiveness. Many studies found that the dimensions should be changed to fit specific organizations in specific sectors. For example Galloway (1994), Howcroft (1993), Beach & Burns (1995), Bolton & Drew (1991) and Hudson et al. (2004) changed their SERVQUAL dimensions. This because much of a dimensions score is determined by the industry the service provider is in and the types of services that are provided. The original dimensions were created in order to examine an entire service experience, broken down into the different dimensions. These dimension are more like a general attitude influencing all services, instead of addressing single service attributes. Several researchers have used different dimensions than the original five, because in different service industries and in different kinds of research, different issues are addressed. For example Hudson, Hudson and Miller (2004) used 13 dimensions to determine gap scores for separate services and service aspects.

Expectations as well as perceptions in the SERVQUAL method are measured using a seven point likert scale questionnaire. In which members will be asked to what extent they expect a certain service attribute from an organization such as the objective of the research. And their perception of that attribute of the organization which is the object of the research.

An active debate amongst researchers about the measurement of service quality is going on. And although widely used, there are heavy critics on the SERVQUAL method. The most important one is that the relative importance of a service attribute is not addressed properly, and these critics suggest a method that compares the perception and the relative importance of a service attribute. In chapter 3 the considerations regarding the two main models will be further explained.

The performance evaluation matrix. In literature a variety of models are described which address also the importance of a certain service to a member. Importance is recognized by many authors, for example Carman (1990), Koelemeijer (1991), Fick & Ritchie (1991) and McDougall & Levesque (1992), as relevant for the measuring of perceived service quality, and the relationship between importance and performance attributes is causal (Deng et al., 2006). Known under names such as the quality improvement priority matrix, importance-satisfaction matrix, importance-performance analysis, strategic improvement matrix, service improvement matrix and performance evaluation matrix this method compares the quality, perception or level of satisfaction with its relative importance. In this the attributes like quality, perception and satisfaction are interchangeable, but different methods use different terms.

In the performance evaluation matrix, developed by Lambert & Sharma (1990), all service attributes of a service organization are addressed by plotting them into a graph. Using a seven point likert scale questionnaire, for every service attribute importance and performance scores are determined.

Importance is addressed to as the relative importance of a certain service attribute to a particular member, performance hence the perceptions as used in the SERVQUAL method. The performance evaluation matrix was developed in order to provide managers with information on service quality, and information to rank priorities for improvement. Service quality in this model is addressed as performing better on a service attribute than its relative importance. Services that are plotted below the diagonal line in figure 10 are considered to be of sufficient quality. The matrix is divided into nine cells, where the bottom-left cell [1,1]~[3,3] reflects service attributes that are very unimportant to members, and the organization performs very bad. Because the attributes in this cell are so unimportant, direct improvement is not necessary. Services that are highly important to a member, and an organization that performs bad (top left cell [1,5]~[3,7]), are considered to be priorities for improvement. An organization that performs very well on an attribute that is considered to be unimportant (bottom right cell [5,1]~[7,3]) should reconsider this service. It could allocate less resources to this service attribute (performance will decrease) and use these resources where it matters more (the priorities for improvement). So the general thought behind the matrix is a trend towards the diagonal line.

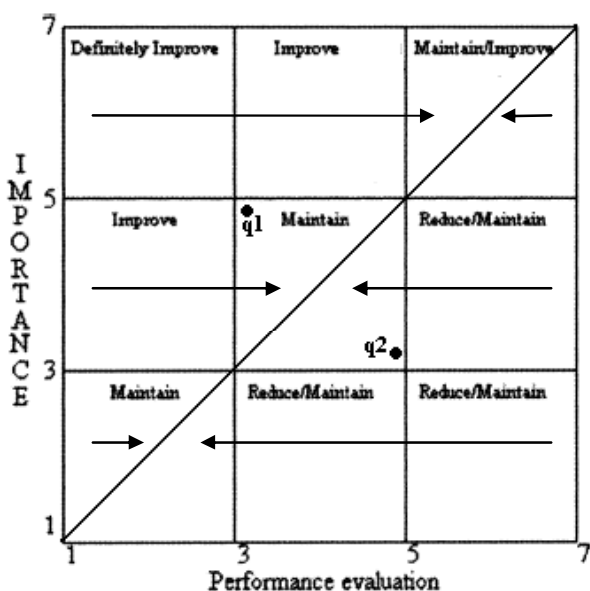


Figure 10: Performance Evaluation Matrix , Lambert&Sharma (1990)

A weakness of the model is considered to be the fact that the improvement strategies are incomplete, and caution is necessary when analyzing the results. For example, points q1 and q2 are located in the same cell, but q1 needs heavy improvement, while q2 does not need any improvement action. This problem can be compensated when researchers keep the trend towards the diagonal line in mind.

The Questionnaire. A crucial part of good research design concerns making sure that the questionnaire design addresses the needs of the research (Burgess, 2001). Scheuren (2004) states that the manner in which a question is asked can greatly affect the results of a survey. With these difficulties in measuring services it is extremely important that the used

questionnaire will provide adequate results. To produce adequate results, participation should be as large as possible and questions must not be misinterpreted by respondents. To increase participation it should take very little effort to fill in the questionnaire and respondents should be motivated by the questionnaire. Respondents are motivated when they see it as interesting, of value, short, clearly thought through, and well presented. The larger the number of questions, the less participation will be. But the shorter the questionnaire, the less one can ask and the less data will be gathered. It is therefore critical to ask the right questions and make a well balanced trade-off between the number of questions and the required participation (Burgess, 2001). Furthermore in designing a questionnaire it is important instructions are crystal clear, separate sections for expectations, perceptions and importance criteria will be used, respondents should be asked for perceptions before importance, statements should be positively biased, and numerical scales are preferred. How this knowledge is transferred into the actual questionnaire please see section 4.2

3.5 Other research phases

For the solution formulation and decision phase, the implementation phase and the evaluation phase no substantial additional theories have been used. This is because the decision amongst alternative solutions is relatively easy, and no tools like a multi criteria analysis are necessary for this decision. The implementation guidelines have been formulated upon my personal experience at the NTCC.

Chapter 4: Problem Analysis

4.1 Introduction

After it was determined how NTCC services should be addressed and measured, in this chapter the current services will be evaluated. The questions: *How can the different members be categorized? Which services are currently provided by the NTCC and how can they be clustered? and How are current services evaluated and non-current services valued by members?* will be answered in this chapter. First the conditions in which the actual measurement will take place will be considered and the survey of activities of other foreign chambers which will be used to measure the expectations for the SERVQUAL method will be presented. Members will be categorized, all services will be summarized, after which the different dimensions for the SERVQUAL analysis will be extracted. With the help of the two models outlined in chapter 2 and 3, the current services will then be evaluated. Also, some additional findings will be presented.

4.2 The actual measurement

Using the two models, a number of variables has to be measured. Both models use scales of 1 to 7 to quantify their attributes, and both models use questionnaires in order to get responses. So a questionnaire was sent out to all 170 members in which they were asked to rate the attributes both models desire. To make sure the questionnaire will not become too long (which will result in less participation), and questions will not be misinterpreted, the way questions will be asked has to be sophisticated. For the "gap" model expectations and perceptions of the service attributes will have to be measured, as well as importance scores for the dimensions. While for the performance evaluation matrix performance and relative importance will have to be measured. These importance scores can be averaged per dimension for the SERVQUAL analysis as well. Performance can be addressed by the same question that addresses perception (Hung et al, 2003) so less questions need to be asked, because the perceived quality of a service reflects organizations' performance. So the questionnaire will address three attributes: expectations, perceptions and importance. The way these questions are asked is critical in order to get the desired form of responses. In the questionnaire expectations are addressed to as services that members expect from a foreign chamber of commerce like the NTCC. Perceptions are addressed to as the way members value a certain service, in terms of quality and needs fulfillment. Importance is addressed as the importance of a service to the member and the likelihood the member will participate. The way these questions are asked are extracted from surveys used by Nelson and Nelson (1995), Parushurman et al. (1988), Strickland (1998) and Hudson et al. (2004). The following questions were formulated regarding the expectations, perceptions and importance:

- Expectations:* In my opinion a foreign chamber of commerce should provide the following events/ additional services with high quality (scale 1-7)
- Perceptions:* How do you value the following events organized by the NTCC? (scale 1-7)
How do you value the following services/ products provided by the NTCC?(scale 1-7)
- Importance:* How important are the following NTCC events to you/ your company? (scale of 1-7)
How important are the following NTCC services to you/ your company? (scale 1-7)

Finally, a few additional questions will be asked which give members the opportunity to provide personal feedback and to address a general feeling towards organizing more or less services in the future. To increase participation, the questionnaire will be an easy to use on-line application, which will take a maximum of ten minutes to fill out. The entire questionnaire can be found in appendix 1.

A survey of activities was executed amongst eight other foreign chambers of commerce in Thailand. The American Chamber of Commerce was excluded, because of their different size and committee structure they can provide services a relatively small chamber such as the NTCC can never provide. In this survey of activities, only the services provided by the different foreign chambers of commerce were determined, not how they organize the services. The NTCC provides a limited amount of services, and together with the services provided by others a large and reliable list of possible chamber services was created. By using this survey of activities, in an easy way several possible additional services were found. The expectations section of the questionnaire will address current NTCC services and services that others provide but the NTCC does not.

Many foreign chambers (including the NTCC) distinguish mainly two important categories of services: information providence and networking. What becomes clear from the survey of activities is that especially the German and Italian chambers organize their services differently. While most other chambers focus on providing information and network opportunities, these chambers focus on the provision of documents and certain services for their members. Furthermore the size of a chamber also reflects its capabilities. For example the French and the British chambers provide resource demanding services like trade missions and more extensive matchmaking. In the following table the results of the survey of activities are displayed:

FOREIGN CHAMBERS Service	French	German	Canadian	Italian	Australian	Danish	Swiss	British	NTCC
Information providing									
Basic info about investing in thailand									
business directory/ yearbook access									
helping companies with contacts									
Business Advice									
Market research									
Contacts with Thai Government									
Matchmaking									
Info on demand (financial/ shareholder analysis etc.)									
Providing trade statistics									
News flashes									
Starter information									
Website									
JFCCT contacts									
Job webboard									
Networking									
breakfast									
luncheons									
cultural									
events (golf, gala etc)									
Fairs/ Exhibitions									
trade missions									
company visits									
Other									
Translation services									
Magazine									
Seminars/ workshops									
Charity services									
Lobbying									
Equipment rental at chamber (board room, projector etc)									
Address finding service									
Mitigation & Arbitration Services									
Commercial Registration & Bank Credit Checking									
Direct mailing services									
Subcommittees									
Arrangement of appointments with Thai companies, or government agencies in Thailand as well as home country									
Provide secretarial service									
Provide interpretal service									
Organize seminars/ conference on request for a member									
Give training courses									

Table 2: Survey of activities provided by foreign chambers of commerce in Thailand Service is provided by foreign chamber of commerce

4.3 Member categorization

Different members have different expectations, and will rate the importance of the different services differently. A small company may be less interested in trade statistics or special CFO luncheons, but care more about information of how to start a business in Thailand or in finding a business partner. Therefore in this research a distinction between different members will be made. This distinction is based on the two different kinds of NTCC membership, there is the ordinary, corporate membership but there also exists an associate, individual form of membership. The corporate membership is most common and includes multinational and SME companies; the fee is 19.795 Baht (around 440 Euro's) per year. The individual membership was designed specifically for individual entrepreneurs, individuals who work for a foreign-non-Dutch company and other individuals who are interested in NTCC services. The yearly fee of the corporate membership can be a threshold for individuals who are very interested in what the NTCC has to offer, but do not use the NTCC services very often (for various reasons; not living in Thailand, company is already a member of another foreign chamber of commerce and is not willing to pay for another corporate membership, etc.). Therefore the individual membership is more than 50% cheaper (8560 Baht, around 190 euro's) but grants no voting rights at the annual general meeting. There are 120 corporate members (70%), and 50 individual members (30%). Between the corporate members no further distinction will be made, because there are too many characteristics for these companies to make a distinction and research outcomes will not be representative.

4.4 Current services and their dimensions

Formally, the NTCC's objective is to provide information and services concerning trade, commerce, industry, finance and investment in Thailand as well as in the Netherlands to its members. It does so by organizing different events and providing several services. In this section an overview of all NTCC services is given. A more detailed description of the NTCC services can be found in appendix 2. With the current services defined, they will be categorized into several dimensions, after which the SERVQUAL method will be applied. The original model of Parasuraman et al. (1988) uses dimensions aiming at the perceptions of service receivers and their general attitude towards these services. As mentioned in chapters 2 and 3, the dimensions in this research will be formed by clustering the services according to the way the services are organized in order to understand what kind of services the members value.

A lot of NTCC's services are (networking) events organized for the members. The first distinction that thus can be made is to categorize the events together. The events serve mainly the same purpose (providing networking opportunities), need participation in order to be successful, and are aimed at the entire member population at once.

The second service that is provided very often and where much effort is being put in is the provision of information. Information can go to members or non-members and can be aimed at a large target group (the entire member population) or at one particular member.

In helping a member to find a business partner, providing certain information on demand, promoting a member's interest with other members and in helping members to fill job vacancies the member is aided solely by the NTCC. This one on one help is in the day to day business at the NTCC also a major task, and these services will be categorized with each other.

Furthermore the NTCC produces a few products (tangibles). The magazine and the handbook are distributed amongst all members. Also the website is categorized with the tangibles. Of course all tangibles are used to provide information, but they serve other purposes as well; such as advertising and exposure for the NTCC.

The final dimension addresses NTCC's task to establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobby for its members interests. This service can not be categorized with any other one, and forms its own dimension. The following 5 dimensions are formed to distinguish different service types: Events, Information providence, individually helping a member, Products/ tangibles and Contact with government/ lobbying. All services currently provided by the NTCC and the dimension they belong to can be summarized in the following table:

Dimension	Services
Events	NTCC luncheons
	NTCC cocktails
	The yearly golf tournament
	The yearly bowling tournament
	Seminars/ Workshops
	Member company visits
	The yearly award dinner
	The 15th anniversary gala
	Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ The Netherlands Embassy
	Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or Law).
Information providence	Providing members with business directories
	Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand
	Provide trade statistics
	Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments
Individually helping a member	Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking
	Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand
	Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis or legal documents)
	Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies
	Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber members
Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying	Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying
Products/ tangibles	Commerce magazine
	The NTCC website
	The bi-yearly NTCC handbook with membership directory

Table 3: All NTCC services grouped into their dimensions

4.5 Current service evaluation

Now that the NTCC services have formed dimensions both methods can be applied. The questionnaire was used to research all NTCC service attributes, and had a response rate of 55 out of 170 members (32%). The entire questionnaire can be found in appendix 1. Within a limited population of only 170 members, a very high response rate is required in order to state significant conclusions. Though it is not valid to state statistically significant conclusions, the opinion of these 55 members still has great value and can provide relevant information.

4.5.1 Current service evaluation using SERVQUAL

For each service attribute the expectations and perceptions scores were measured. Gap scores are determined by subtracting the expectation score from the perception score. After the individual gap

scores for each service attribute are determined, the dimension gap scores will be determined. A dimension gap score is the average of all service attribute gap scores belonging to that particular dimension. Finally the importance of a dimension is taken into account; the dimension importance is the average of all service attribute importance scores belonging to that dimension. Dimension importance scores are then normalized and will be multiplied by the dimensions' gap score, finally resulting in the normalized gap score.

In this section a thorough evaluation will be made, a full overview of all service attributes and their gap scores can be found in appendix 3. The distinction amongst members leads to four different outcome figures. The outcomes for all the respondents of the questionnaire, the individual members who responded to the questionnaire, the corporate members which responded to the questionnaire and the outcome figures labeled as 'all members'. This latter type will be used for the general data analysis and is calculated by multiplying the individual score by 30% and the corporate score by 70%. In this way, the individual members responding to the questionnaire represent the entire individual member population (30%) and the corporate members responding represent the entire corporate member population (70%).

In the following table the weighed gap scores per dimension are summarized.

Dimension	Normalized Gap Score for all members
Events	-0.20
Individually helping a member	-0.28
Information providence	-0.68
Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying	-1.42
Products/ tangibles	-0.06
Average	-0.53

Table 4: Overview of the normalized Gap Scores

First and most significant conclusion is that with an average gap score of -0.53 the NTCC members overall are a little dissatisfied with NTCC's services. The dimensions "Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying" and "Information providence" are the ones the NTCC is underperforming most, and indicate areas for improvement. With an average expectations level of 5.32 and an average perceptions score of 4.96 (resulting in the -0.36 gap score) it can be concluded that members have relatively high expectations of NTCC's services. And though the perceived value is lacking, members value the NTCC services quite high (a 4.96 score on a scale of 1 to 7). Also no service attribute scored lower than a 4, which would from just a perceptions' point of view imply that all services can be considered as sufficient to good quality.

Though the average gap score of -0.53 is not alarmingly high, it may be misinterpreted. In the questionnaire there was only one question (out of 23) in the dimension "Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying", with the highest gap score of -1.31 and a relative importance of 22%, dragging the average downwards. Over all attributes measured, the average gap score is -0.36, which is higher than the normalized score of -0.53. Before the questionnaire was issued the understanding at the NTCC was that establishing/ strengthening contacts with the Thai government and lobbying is a minor task, and therefore not more questions about this dimension were asked. Apparently, members do expect in a high extent that a chamber like the NTCC strengthens its contacts with the Thai government. From the gap analysis, this would form a priority for improvement.

There are difficulties in interpreting the gap scores because of the lack of context. The scores can not be compared to scores in other researches because of two reasons. There is no existing public research in the same industry available, so a comparison with others is impossible. The public

available data in other industries can not be easily interpreted. When comparing gap scores of the NTCC with gap scores in another research the conditions in that research are unknown and differences in scores can not be compared. When comparing NTCC gap scores with gap scores in other researches (for example Parusuraman et al. (1988)) my best guess is that scores of -1.00 and worse will demand serious attention. Therefore I stated earlier that an average normalized gap score of -0.53 is not alarmingly high. While of course a negative gap score by definition demands attention.

The attributes with the worst gap scores (larger than -0.50) for each dimension are summarized in the following table. The Gap scores are broken down as well in gap scores calculated from individual members and from corporate members.

Dimension:	Attributes demanding most attention:	Expectation	Perception	Gap	Gap Ind.	Gap Corp.
Events	NTCC luncheons	6.13	5.61	-0.52	-0.54	-0.51
	NTCC cocktails	6.13	5.62	-0.51	-0.50	-0.51
	The golf tournament	5.28	4.76	-0.52	-0.92	-0.35
Individually helping a member	Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	5.58	4.61	-0.97	-0.88	-1.00
Information providence	Trade statistics	5.29	4.42	-0.86	-0.25	-1.13
	General information about doing business in Thailand	6.01	5.18	-0.83	-0.58	-0.94
	Business directories	5.85	5.28	-0.56	-0.035	-0.65
Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying	Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying	6.08	4.77	-1.31	-1.33	-1.29

Table 5: Overview of service attributes with worst gap scores

Below the service attributes with scores below -0.5 will be discussed more in depth regarding gap 5: *The discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of the service*. In the improvement phase of chapter 5 improvements regarding these gap 5 evaluations will be proposed, as well as improvements regarding the other service gaps 1 till 4.

Most significant gap scores.

The most significant gap scores are *contact with the Thai government/ lobbying* and *Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking*. The largest member dissatisfaction is caused by NTCC's contacts with the Thai government and lobbying (gap score -1.31, normalized gap score of -1.42). Recently the NTCC has been very active with the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in providing the Thai government with feedback regarding proposed amendments to the foreign business act, a law which determines how foreign companies are addressed legally. Furthermore the magazine is sent out to Thai government bodies, such as the Bank of Thailand, The Board of Investment, The Ministry of Commerce and the Thai Chamber of Commerce. The NTCC's president is one of the members of the constitution drafting committee and the NTCC is always in very close contact with the Netherlands Embassy. That is as far as the political influence of the NTCC goes and (partially due to its size) the chamber has no prospective of improving this aspect. So in enhancing member satisfaction, in chapter five improvements regarding other service gaps will be formulated.

The respondents expect a foreign chamber to help a member to make a match, i.e. find a suitable business partner to a higher extent than the NTCC does at the moment. Currently, the NTCC primarily does matchmaking through the provision of networking opportunities and linking companies it already knows to each other. The real matchmaking is done by the members itself. The French

Chamber of Commerce (FrancoThai) for example handles matchmaking requests. A member comes in with its need specifications for a business partner and the chamber starts their research. This consultancy work is done by the FrancoThai itself and contains finding new companies and researching these companies and eventually setting up a meeting. This service is time consuming and costly, but the larger FrancoThai has more members and thus more members willing to pay for this service and more employees who can perform this matchmaking. From the way the NTCC is organized it is not feasible to provide more service in the area of matchmaking.

Other negative gap scores.

The NTCC luncheons and cocktails both have a very high expectation levels, which are not fully met. It must be noted that the gap scores of these attributes are both very near -0.50 and the perception rate is good (with 5.61 and 5.62 on a scale of 1 till 7). Because the events dimension is not a priority for improvement, the luncheons and cocktails will not be addressed as direct improvement priorities.

The bad gap score of the golf tournament is for a substantial part due to the opinion of the individual members. From the importance section it also becomes clear that individual members find this event less important than the corporate members. This is quite logical, because larger companies (the corporate members) can benefit from this event much more than individual members. Large companies can send an entire team, can benefit more from sponsoring, and within a large company more people often are interested to join. Probably most important is that larger companies can benefit more from the networking opportunities during the golf tournament. Individual members prefer other (cheaper and more direct) channels for their networking. From the analysis it becomes clear that no direct improvements regarding the golf tournament will have to be made. This because the golf tournament is mainly organized for corporate members (while still inviting the individual members who are interested) and their gap score is better than -0.50, and because the existence of the golf tournament is important for the finance of the NTCC.

The NTCC annually publishes Thai trade statistics in its magazine and yearbook. Especially the corporate members' perception of this service is a bit low. It is logical that larger companies have higher expectations of this service than the individual members, find it more important, and are more critical on the providence of trade statistics, all resulting in the negative impact of the corporate members on this attribute. Regarding to service gap 5, it can be possible that members want more trade statistics, better quality, or both. There is easy access to more trade statistics at other TPO's, such as the World Bank or the Department of Economic and Commercial affairs at the Netherlands Embassy in Bangkok, all of substantial quality, so it would not cost the NTCC much effort to provide more trade statistics or bridging other service gaps so members will be satisfied in getting their information elsewhere. In chapter 5 alternatives regarding this service attribute will be formulated and chosen.

The provision of general information about doing business in Thailand is concentrated at new members, and small companies (individual members). Larger and established companies do not really need this service, but for newcomers it is essential. The NTCC provides this service by giving personalized advice to people who make an appointment and providing them with some contacts as well. Members highly expect a quality service in this area, and the gap score of -0.83 implies that members are dissatisfied with this service. Business directories are used by members in search of a third party, and are used in providing general information as well as matchmaking. The fact that these two services result in member dissatisfaction, effects also in the negative gap score for the providence of business directories. Initiatives to improve the provision of information to new members and small companies will be formulated in chapter 5.

A notable finding from the gap analysis is that the expectations for the different dimensions of the members and NTCC are not consistent. The same thing is the case with relative importance of the dimensions. The following table shows this:

Dimension	Expectations		Importance		
	Member score	Member ranking	Member score	Member ranking	NTCC Ranking ^a
Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying	6.08	1	5.18	1	5
Information providence	5.76	2	4.95	3	1
Products/ tangibles	5.67	3	5.08	2	3
Events	5.02	4	4.50	4	2
Individually helping a member	4.81	5	4.11	5	3

Table 6: Expectations and importance scores for NTCC members and the NTCC itself

Especially the rankings on "Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying" and "Events" are very inconsistent. The NTCC currently puts way more effort in organizing events, then in contacts with the Thai government, as the NTCC sees this more as a task for the department of economic and commercial affairs of the Netherlands Embassy in Bangkok. It must be noted that the average score on this aspect is differentiated from one single question in the questionnaire, and therefore it is not possible to draw hard conclusions. For the events dimension the numbers are somewhat distorted as well. The more informal events (such as member company visits and the bowling and golf tournament) are valued relatively unimportant and members do not expect a foreign chamber to organize these events in a large extent. While the networking events (such as luncheons, dinners and cocktails) are very important and members expect a foreign chamber in a high extent to organize these events. In chapter 5 improvements for the service attributes stated will be formulated and chosen, but first the second method for improving service quality will be used.

4.5.2 Current service evaluation using the performance evaluation matrix

The performance evaluation matrix ranks services in nine cells, drawing a preliminary conclusion. After which on a case by case basis the individual services could be evaluated to find out why they appear in the particular cell and if anything should be changed. Besides categorizing service attributes, the core of the performance evaluation matrix is the trade-off between organizational performance and relative importance of the services. A diagonal line through the graph of figure 11 gives a better insight into this trade-off. The further a service from this main diagonal line into the bottom right, the more it should be considered to devote less resources to this service. The further to the top left, the higher the priority for improvement. The current NTCC service attributes for all members (so 30%*score individual members + 70%* score corporate members) are depicted in table 7 and the performance evaluation matrix (figure 11). The performance evaluation matrix has nine cells, the four different colors in table 7 refer to these cells. For example the service attribute *establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying* is depicted in cell [3,5],[5,7] and is therefore colored white. For a better overview of which services are represented by which dots in the matrix please see appendix 4.

^a Ranking is based on the opinion of NTCC's executive director

Table 7: Perception and Importance scores calculated for all members

ALL MEMBERS	NR	PERCEPTION	IMPORTANCE
Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments	1	5,56	5,67
NTCC luncheons	2	5,61	5,34
Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ the embassy	3	5,31	5,35
Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	4	4,77	5,18
The bi yearly NTCC handbook with membership directory	5	5,67	5,19
Commence magazine	6	5,56	5,06
NTCC cocktails	7	5,62	5,00
The NTCC website	8	5,00	4,98
Providing members with business directories	9	5,28	4,93
The yearly award dinner	10	5,56	4,95
The 15th anniversary gala	11	5,30	4,73
Seminars/ Workshops	12	4,65	4,64
Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	13	4,61	4,65
Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber members	14	4,37	4,52
Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or Law)	15	4,71	4,27
Provide trade statistics	16	4,42	4,42
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand	17	4,90	4,10
Member company visits	18	4,71	4,06
Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis or legal documents)	19	3,96	3,67
Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies	20	4,19	3,35
The yearly golf tournament	21	4,76	3,47
The yearly bowling tournament	22	4,04	2,78

Improve [3,5], [5,7]
Maintain/improve [5,5], [7,7]
Maintain [3,3], [5,5]
Reduce/ maintain [3,1],[5,3] and [5,3], [7,5]

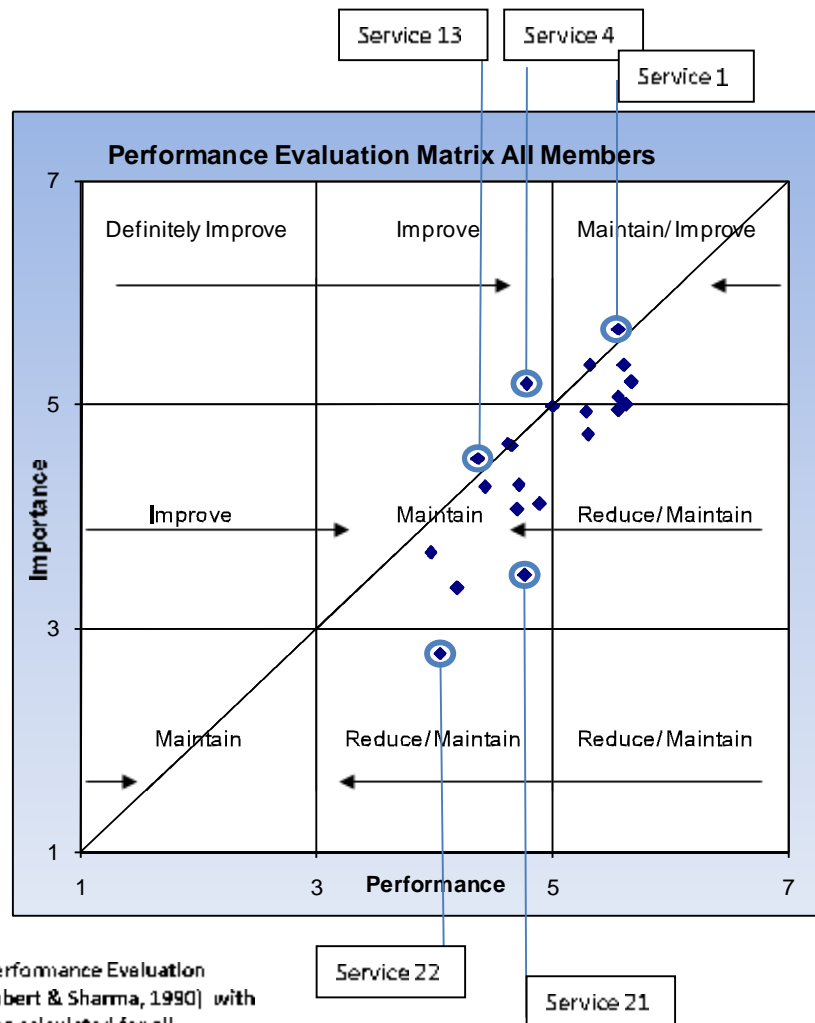


Figure 11: Performance Evaluation Matrix (Lambert & Sharma, 1990) with NTCC services calculated for all members

Most significant findings.

The first thing that becomes clear is that the service attributes are located quite well near the diagonal line. This means the NTCC is organizing services to quite the right extent in which members find these services important. The overall performance exceeds the overall importance, because services attributes are more concentrated towards the right bottom than the upper left. An average performance of 4.95 and an average importance of 4.55 underline this statement. This also means that overall, member satisfaction is reached. 11 out of 22 services are in the center "maintain" cell, where the model suggests to maintain the current service level. 5 out of 22 services are in the "reduce/ maintain" cells. These services shall either be maintained on the current level, or should be reduced. Reduced can mean that less resources can be devoted to providing the service, or that the service should be provided less often. 5 services are in the "maintain/improve" cell, these services shall at least be maintained at the current level, and on a case by case basis it should be determined if the service should be improved. One service shall be improved.

What becomes clear from figure 11 is that on service attributes 21 and 22 (the bowling and golf tournament) the NTCC performs very well, but these services are relatively unimportant to the respondents. The golf tournament has been discussed in section 4.4 and shall be continued for various reasons. The bowling tournament though, lacks participation. The bowling tournament is organized mainly for line-managers and other employees of member companies, instead of for the members' usual representative (frequently the CEO or other higher management). But it appears that these people are not the target group of the chamber, and members find this event very unimportant. Therefore, the NTCC can better devote its resources to services which are more important for its members.

Service 4 (establishing/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying) is the largest priority for improvement. This is also what the SERVQUAL method pointed out. Furthermore it can be seen that service 13 (helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking) and 1 (keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments) are underperforming. These services demand special attention, especially because service 1 is the single most important service to NTCC's members. Service 13 has come forth in the SERVQUAL analysis as well and has been explained in section 4.5.1.

The NTCC keeps members up to date through its magazine and by e-mail newsletters. The magazine receives lots of attention and is valued well in the research. These newsletters are send as frequently as the director believes it is necessary. In turbulent times even multiple newsletters per week are being sent out, while in quite times no substantial news can be communicated. These newsletters have the lay-out of an e-mail but the quality of the information is perceived as good by some informal feedback during events.

Other findings.

Services 18, 20, 17, and 19 (member company visits, helping jobseekers and companies with vacancies, giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand, and providing specific information on member demand) are also well below the main diagonal line. The NTCC can consider to devote fewer resources to these services, so it can focus more on services which are more important to their members. Regarding service attributes 18, 20, 17 and 19 it can be noted that members expect a foreign chamber of commerce like the NTCC to organize these services (with expectation scores between 4 and 5), so scrapping them does not seem appropriate.

Member company visits are organized about twice a year, are valued quite well and are good for the exposure of the NTCC. It does not take much effort to organize them, because the hosting company performs most of the organizing aspects and the NTCC only has jointly to decide about the program and to perform communications. So devoting less attention or organizing less company visits is hardly impossible without scrapping these events.

Helping jobseekers or helping companies with vacancies is not a formal task of the chamber and does not occur very often. Sometimes a member or non-member can be helped in this situation through the network of the chamber. Because it is a very uncommon service and a very unsubstantial amount of effort is being put into this, this service shall not be changed.

By giving members personalized advice the NTCC can prove its value directly to a member, this service is mostly offered to relatively new- or potential members. Many members have not directly experienced this service often, and therefore opinions about perception and importance vary greatly (this service aspect has the highest standard deviations: 1,82 and 2,09); members that have experienced the service find it important and highly value it. From my personal observation members can really benefit from this consultancy aspect, and I believe that the service should at least be continued in its current way. Overall importance may rise when more members make use of this service aspect.

The providence of specific information on member demand occurs very little. A member can ask the NTCC to perform some research at a certain price that has be paid, for example a financial- or shareholder analysis can be done or a member. This service is relatively new and possesses the same characteristics as the consultancy advice. Therefore I believe that the service should at least be continued in its current way and overall importance may rise when more members make use of this service aspect.

4.6 Evaluation of other desired services

In the SERVQUAL method not only current services were evaluated. Members were also asked if they would expect a foreign chamber to provide services other chambers do at the moment. Out of the 30 services evaluated, the NTCC currently provides 18 (60%). Out of the 15 services members expect most from a foreign chamber, the NTCC provides 14 (94%).

Eight other chambers were included in the survey of activities and four services scored an expectations rate of higher than four; trade missions (4.92), trade fairs/ exhibitions (4.69), arrangement of appointments with Thai companies or government agencies (4.59) and doing some charity (4.31). With members expecting these kinds of services from a foreign chamber, providing them in the near future is to be considered in chapter 5.

4.7 Additional findings

The NTCC has a diverse member population. It has been stated earlier that members' backgrounds vary from huge multinational companies through various SME's to sole proprietorships and individuals. But also from manufacturing companies, pure service organizations, importers and exporters to semi-government organizations. This diversity is reflected by a high standard deviation

on the questions asked in the questionnaire, an average^b standard deviation of 1.57 was measured on the scale of 1 to 7).

The response rate on the questionnaire was 55 out of 170 (32,4%), with two double counts^c the respondents are divided into 34 corporate members and 23 individual members responding. With 120 corporate members (70%) and only 50 individual members (30%) listed this means the response rate for corporate members was at 28%, and individual members' response rate was at 46%. It can be concluded that individual members overall feel slightly more involved with the NTCC.

Members are not fully aware of all services the NTCC provides, and do not know exactly what to expect from the NTCC. On the statement "I know exactly what the NTCC does and what I can expect from the NTCC", members agreed (with a 4.75 score out of 7) but not very convincingly. This is also one of the reasons why usage of the NTCC services declines over time. Members do not want fewer activities, even if this implies that quality will go up. Members want at least the amount of activities currently organized, as can be concluded by the score (3.47 on a 1 to 7 scale) on the statement "The NTCC should put more effort on fewer activities (So less activities but more quality)".

In the day to day business of the NTCC it became clear that the chamber:

- Puts most effort in:
 - o Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments
 - o Networking events (luncheons, dinners, cocktails)
 - o Other events (bowling tournament, football match, social activities)
 - o The magazine and the handbook with membership directory
 - o Personal contact with its members and giving members personalized advice
- Puts less effort in:
 - o Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying
 - o The website
- Offers more jointly organized networking events with other foreign chambers of commerce than in previous years
- Has a website that is outdated and not fully functional

4.8 Conclusions

First the conclusions from the SERVQUAL method and the performance- evaluation matrix will be outlined separately, after which one general conclusion is drawn combining and comparing both models.

23 services were distinguished, divided in five SERVQUAL dimensions "events" (10), "individually helping a member" (5), "information providence" (4), "contact with the Thai government/ lobbying" (1) and "products/ tangibles" (3). SERVQUAL pointed out that members are a little dissatisfied, and least satisfied with the dimensions "information providence" and "contact with the Thai government/ lobbying". Addressing these two dimensions, SERVQUAL points out four services that are considered to be improved in these dimensions: "contact with the Thai government/ lobbying", "trade statistics",

^b $1.57 = (\text{st dev exp} * \text{av. \# of resp on exp} + \text{st dev perc} * \text{av. \# of resp on perc} + \text{st dev imp} * \text{av. \# of resp on imp}) / (\text{av. \# of resp on exp} + \text{av. \# of resp on perc} + \text{av. \# of resp on imp}) = (1.49 * 52.83 + 1.51 * 33.83 + 1.72 * 42.45) / 129.11 = 1.57$

^c Two members did not fill in their individual or corporate nature and were counted both as individual as well as corporate members

“general information about doing business in Thailand” and “business directories”. Another service that should be considered for improvement is “helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking”. The members and NTCC have different views of what one would expect from a foreign chamber of commerce.

The performance/ evaluation matrix points out that overall, members are satisfied and the NTCC performs quite well. Largest member dissatisfaction occurs with “contact with the Thai government/ lobbying”. Services that will have to be organized differently are in order to satisfy the members or to move towards the diagonal line in the matrix are: “keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments”, “promoting members’ products/ services with other chamber members”, “giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand”, “provide specific information on member demand”. Due to its unimportance it should be reconsidered to organize the bowling tournament. Improvements for the stated services will be formulated in chapter 5. The following table summarizes the most important findings from both methods:

COMPARISON	SERVQUAL (perceptions – expectations)	Performance-Evaluation Matrix (perceptions – importance)
Overall judgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are dissatisfied • 4 out of 22 services marked as satisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members are satisfied ▪ 17 out of 22 services marked satisfactory
Service attributes requiring most improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying • Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking • Provide trade statistics • General information about doing business in Thailand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments • Contact with the Thai government/ lobbying • Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking
Potential required additional services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trade missions • trade fairs/ exhibitions • arrangement of appointments with Thai companies or government agencies • doing some charity 	
Potential withdrawal of resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The golf tournament ▪ The bowling tournament • Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies

Table 8: Comparison between the SERVQUAL method and the Performance-Evaluation Matrix

What can be learned from table 8 is that both models come to different overall conclusions. According to the performance evaluation matrix members are satisfied, while SERVQUAL points to general dissatisfaction. There can be two explanations for this: it is in the measurement or it is in the method. The questionnaire was designed with caution, but the fact that people were asked for both expectations as well as importance may have caused larger differences between these scores. Researchers comparing the two methods (Hudson et al. 2004) used different groups within the same population and therefore did have this potential problem.

The second explanation would be that the methods differ. Personally I believe there are fundamental differences between the methods. The SERVQUAL model seems stricter by using expectations which I think people would value higher than the importance variable. The way of asking for members' expectations in the questionnaire underlines this. Therefore this research does not fully agree with the statement of Hudson et al. (2004) that the models are interchangeable and generally come to the same conclusion.

Both models strive for the same goal: to come to priorities for improvements, both models seem pretty consistent on which services will have to be improved. So there may be a difference in the absolute conclusions of both methods, but in a relative way this difference is not that substantial because they highlight more or less the same services which require improvement.

What also comes forth are the advantages of both models, the SERVQUAL comes up with a list of potential required additional services and the Performance-Evaluation Matrix comes up with services that are over-performing and where possibly fewer resources can be devoted to. More on the evaluation and the use of the two models can be found in chapter 7.

Of course the sample of this research is not statistically significant in order to state if the models differ.

Chapter 5: Improvements

5.1 Introduction

Now that it has become clear which services have to be addressed in order to enhance member satisfaction, in this chapter improvements will be proposed. The attractiveness to potential new members will also be discussed and improvements to enhance this attractiveness will be proposed. Finally a choice amongst the improvements will be made.

5.2 Improvements that will enhance member satisfaction

As formulated in chapter 4, the following services are selected for improvement:

- A) Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying
- B) Provide trade statistics
- C) Providing members with business directories
- D) Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking
- E) Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand.
- F) The bowling tournament
- G) Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand
- H) Provide specific information on member demand
- I) Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments

Another very important feature that will have to be improved is the lack of understanding between the members and the NTCC. Members do not know exactly what the NTCC can do for them. This is probably also one of the reasons why usage of the NTCC services declines over time. Most of the issues the NTCC has, have to do with the aspect of communication. These aspects return in gap's 1 and 4 of the gap model:

- Gap 1: The discrepancy between member expectations and NTCC's perceptions.
- Gap 4: Service delivery versus external communication

What now follows is a list of possible improvements affecting the stated services:

Provide a full overview of all NTCC services.

Some members have never experienced certain services or do not know that the NTCC organizes these services. Because of this, their participation and involvement declines over time and the effect of these services will be less. This overview will clarify for the members what the NTCC does and can do for them in the future. In this research all current services were mapped and briefly described (see also appendix 1), this can be used as a starting point. The overview must be easy accessible and must reach all members. First of all it has to be put on the website, because currently no in depth-information about the NTCC is given on the website. Second it has to be included in the yearly handbook with business directories which is distributed amongst all members. Third, every new member should get a hardcopy of this overview. In recruiting new members this overview (which can typically be just a printed A4 paper which looks classy) can be used as well. In this way for example members will know better where to get trade statistics and that the NTCC has many business directories at its disposal which are accessible for members

Design a "did you know" section in the magazine commerce with NTCC services.

The NTCC can use half a page to one page per magazine for describing its services. Each issue another service is described, explained and highlighted. Especially services which are not used that often can be highlighted with descriptions and stories about members who have used this service. This will

typically work for services like "Providing specific information on member demand" and "giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand". Also other possible information sources that are in close contact with the NTCC or specific member requests can be used for this section.

Provide a more professional newsletter update.

The NTCC already provides frequent news-updates to its members via e-mail. These news-updates are well received regarding the high scores and also some informal member feedback. But this is the single most important service for the chamber so it should devote more time to this. In creating a more professional lay-out and standard format the quality of the information providence experience may rise. I believe it is best to continue distributing the newsletters via e-mail. Information travels fast and this is a direct form of contact.

Develop a starter's kit.

The Dutch government started an initiative some years ago for starting entrepreneurs with a starter kit, containing all sorts of information for starting entrepreneurs in the Netherlands. The NTCC can develop the same kit for new businesses in Thailand with all kinds of practical information. The starter kit would contain information regarding which procedures one has to follow to set up a business in Thailand, legal information regarding organization forms, Cultural aspects etc.

Manage expectations regarding the contacts with the Thai government and lobbying.

As stated in chapter 4, the NTCC has little influence in the political unstable Thailand and it should be clear about this. By expressing that the NTCC is very small and maybe will hear faster about developments, but cannot really lobby for its members. Through the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand and the European Chamber of Commerce pressure is being put on the Thai government and some lobbying is done, but this is done from an overall business perspective and not directly from the perspective of the NTCC members. The NTCC should manage the expectations. This can again be done through information providence on the website, the yearly handbook, by expressing it in a newsletter (with topics on political and economical developments) and to new members.

Jointly participate in trade missions and matchmaking activities, but be clear about what the NTCC can offer.

As mentioned earlier in helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking the NTCC does not have the resources to perform a full research for a member. What the NTCC can do though is actively participate in activities organized by others. For example the Department of Economic and Commercial affairs of the Netherlands Embassy recently organized a matchmaking activity for companies aiming at the northern region of Thailand. By co-organizing events like these the NTCC will not have to make to much effort, but can provide more opportunities for its members. Furthermore, the NTCC should be clear about what it can and what it can not provide.

Discontinue with organizing the bowling tournament.

Members value this event as unimportant, participation is declining and the target group of middle managers and other employees is not that interested in participating, so the bowling tournament shall not be organized anymore. This will help improve the professional image the NTCC wants to carry out, and free up resources which can be used to organize other events or implement other improvements stated.

The improvements and the services they effect can be summarized in the following matrix:

	Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand	Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	Providing members with business directories	Provide trade statistics	Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand	Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments	Provide specific information on member demand	The bowling tournament
Provide a full overview of all NTCC services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Design a "did you know" section in the magazine commerce with NTCC services		X	X	X			X	X	
Provide a more professional newsletter update									X
Develop a starter's kit						X			
Manage expectations regarding the contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	X								
Jointly participate in trade missions and matchmaking activities, but be clear about what the NTCC can offer				X					
Discontinue with organizing the bowling tournament								X	

Table 9: Matrix of services to improve (x-axis) and possible improvement solutions (Y-axis). X depicts the services positively affected by the improvement solution

5.3 Improvements that will enhance NTCC's attractiveness

In chapter 1 it was described that companies that there are two kinds of companies organizing international business activities with Thailand. The ones that are not yet established in Thailand but are considering to do so and the companies that are already in business in Thailand. In order to attract more members the NTCC needs to provide services relevant for both types of companies and needs to be visible and accessible for both types of companies. This research has not focused on the exact information needs of companies, but it was concluded that these needs vary greatly and that the access to this information is often un-transparent. Especially companies that are new to Thailand, but established companies as well, will have difficulties accessing determining what the right information is and accessing the right information through the un-transparent web of trade promoting organizations. The exact recruitment strategy of the chamber was excluded from this research, but one of the aims is to enhance the NTCC's attractiveness in order to attract more new members.

In this research some issues aroused which influence the attractiveness and visibility. So it is critical that the NTCC maximizes its visibility so potential members can find the NTCC, from this point the services provided, the quality of these services and the recruitment take over. In order to enhance the visibility, the NTCC can benefit from some of the improvements stated in section 5.2. For example the more professional website where a visitor can easily distinct what the NTCC can do for him or her. Also the starter kit may be a positive factor in the attractiveness to potential new members who are not yet established in Thailand.

To enhance visibility even more, a research amongst other TPO's can be done. In this research it will become clear which TPO's provide links to the NTCC and provide positive word of mouth

communications about the NTCC. The chamber can then exploit this knowledge and strive for more linkages from other TPO's.

The attractiveness of the services of the NTCC itself has proven to be quite all right. From the research it was concluded that the NTCC organizes services to quite the right extent in which members find these services important. Because potential members are of the same kind as current members once were the attractiveness of the NTCC is a derivative of current service quality. The improvements of section 5.2 are all aimed at this aspect.

5.4 Potential new services.

From the analysis it became clear that four services were to be considered to organize. For the organization of trade missions and trade fairs the NTCC is just too small and lacks the appropriate connections in the Netherlands. But when such events are being organized the NTCC can actively support the organization and help its members. The NTCC has strong connections with the Netherlands' embassy and is very likely to be contacted when a trade mission to Thailand is organized. So the NTCC is not capable of organizing trade missions or trade fairs, but when the opportunity is provided for a trade mission it would be in the interest of the NTCC and its members to actively participate.

Regarding the arrangement of appointments with Thai companies or government agencies, this service has to be thought through more deeply. The NTCC has some connections and knows the way things are often handled in Thailand, but on the other hand can lack the necessary capabilities that are necessary.

With the rise of social corporate responsibility members would find it appropriate if the NTCC would do some charity. At the moment a small Thai village project is sponsored, so this research outcome is already in place.

5.5 Selection of improvements

There are not many criteria which a solution should meet in order to be chosen to be implemented. The following criteria were developed in cooperation with the principal:

1. The improvement must enhance member satisfaction or enhance the NTCC's attractiveness to potential new members
2. No substantial financial resources may be devoted to the proposed improvements
3. The improvement is easy to implement
4. There is a strong valid argument to devote substantial time of NTCC personnel to the proposed improvements

Selection criteria 1 and 2 are qualifiers, this means that if an improvement does not match both these criteria it should not be chosen. Criteria 3 and 4 are normal criteria; when an improvement matches one of these criteria it will definitely be chosen. When an improvement matches criteria 1, 2 and 3 the improvement is marked as a *quick win*. It serves its purpose, is easy to implement and costs little. When an improvement matches criteria 1, 2 and 4 it will still be chosen, provided that the time the improvement will consume to implement outweighs the potential gain on criterion 1. This shall be determined on a case-by-case basis, these improvements fall into the *win* category. When an improvement only matches criteria 1 and 2 the improvement will not be chosen at the moment. These improvements fall into the *lose* category. Maybe in the future the NTCC can afford this or these improvements, but at the moment the time and difficulty in implementing the improvement do not outweigh the potential gains. What now follows is a short overview of the improvements and the criteria.

Proposed Improvement	Matching Criteria	Category
Provide a full overview of all NTCC services	1,2,3	Quick Win
Design a "did you know" section in the magazine commerce with NTCC services	1,2,3	Quick Win
Provide a more professional newsletter update	1,2,3	Quick Win
Develop a starter's kit	1,2,4	Win
Manage expectations regarding the contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	1,2,3	Quick Win
Jointly participate in trade missions and matchmaking activities, but be clear about what the NTCC can offer	1,2,4	Win
Discontinue with organizing the bowling tournament	1,2,3	Quick Win

Table 10: Overview of improvement solutions and criteria on which they are selected

The *Quick Wins* shall be implemented first. Regarding the *wins* the following trade-offs are made:

Develop a starter's kit.

The development of a starter kit would aid new companies to Thailand. This can be a very good service to attract potential new members and be of better service to them (which will enhance satisfaction). It is time-consuming though to produce such a kit. The necessary information is available, but comes from various sources and some of them are in Thai. I would propose that this improvement does not have priority, but when time- or money is available it should be developed. A trainee for example would be a relatively cheap option to develop large part of the starter kit.

Jointly participate in trade missions and matchmaking activities, but be clear about what the NTCC can offer.

This improvement is quite a broad one. When jointly organizing trade missions or matchmaking activities it depends on NTCC's involvement in how time consuming it is. Therefore I would suggest to stay very alert through all networks the NTCC has and then determine on a case-by-case basis if, and if how, to participate in such events.

Chapter 6: Implementations

In this chapter some brief implementation guidelines will be given. These are recommendations the NTCC can use when the proposed improvements are being implemented. First implementation guidelines for the so-called *quick wins* will be presented. After implementation guidelines for the other *wins* will be given.

6.1 Implementation guidelines for the *quick wins*

For the following four quick wins that were selected in chapter 5 brief implementation guidelines will be given:

- A) In order to provide a full overview of all NTCC services there are some steps that will have to be taken:
- B) Design a "did you know" section in the magazine commerce with NTCC services
- C) Manage expectations regarding the contacts with the Thai government and lobbying
- D) Discontinue with organizing the bowling tournament
- E) Provide a more professional newsletter update

Regarding implementations A and B the following steps will have to be taken:

- Develop a list of all services the NTCC can provide together with examples and maybe even some pictures. The list in appendix 1 can be used as a starting point. All current services have been mapped and briefly described, for some services further elaboration and examples are required. For example the provision of a financial analysis to a member, the brief description shall be extended with references from members who have used this service and examples of what the NTCC exactly does.
- A layout-idea for the website will have to be developed. I would propose that the overview of services shall be placed under the 'about us' header. To create extra attention for the new feature on the website a banner on the main page can be placed. The website Developer Scandmedia shall be contacted to place the content on the website. This will all take very little effort.
- When the next yearbook is published, some pages will have to be filled with the services overview.
- The NTCC can design some simple folders. These can be used in the member recruitment process and can be given to members and guests during events. These folders will contain some information about the NTCC and a brief overview of what it does. These folders can be printed easily and cheap.
- Every quarter one of the services which is not very popular shall be highlighted in the magazine. It has to be explained what the service is, give a few examples with some pictures or a small interview with a member who has recently used this service.

Regarding implementation C the following steps will have to be taken:

- The NTCC has to be realistic in what it can provide. Statements on the website regarding the ability to lobby and promote company interests directly with Thai government bodies shall be removed.
- In managing expectations it is all about communication. The NTCC has to communicate clearly what it can, and what it can not. In newsletter updates on political issues the NTCC can communicate what it can offer and what it can not, also sections in the magazine and the website can be used as combinations with implementations A and B.

Regarding implementation D the following step will have to be taken:

- Discontinue with organizing the bowling tournament. Do not send out invitations and most members will hardly miss this event.

Regarding implementation E the following step will have to be taken:

- Since this improvement would aid the single most important service the NTCC offers to its members a more professional newsletter update would definitely be worthwhile to consider. It is hard to determine though what the impact of a more professional looking newsletter would be. The newsletter is likely to have two important characteristics which contribute to its quality: the quality of the contents and the lay-out. The quality of the contents is hard to improve due to time restrictions. But now that the NTCC knows that this service is the most important one it can devote some more time to it, which would definitely contribute to the NTCC goal of devoting most resources to services members find most important. In the same format devoting more time to the contents of the newsletter update would be a quick win. Also a standard lay-out should be developed which would enhance the recognition of the newsletter by members. I believe this is very easy to implement with some basic features returning in every newsletter and a similar lay-out for every newsletter.

6.2 Implementation guidelines for the *wins*

The *wins* will take more time to implement than the *quick wins*, but as augmented in chapter 5, are worthwhile to implement.

For the following two *wins* that were selected in chapter 5 brief implementation guidelines will be given:

F) Develop a starter's kit

G) Jointly participate in trade missions and matchmaking activities, but be clear about what the NTCC can offer

During my time at the NTCC I have already worked on the starter kit. The idea for a starter kit existed already for a longer period of time and after the confirmation from the research that members highly expect the NTCC to provide general information about doing business in Thailand it was decided to start working on this already. Also because this is a service that newcomers to Thailand (potential new members) are likely to appreciate. The starter kit is not finished yet. The contents have been determined (it goes a bit to deep to outline the entire contents but subjects like how to set up a company, investment incentives, legal information, ownership of land and company, work permits, visa, registration etc. were covered), all necessary information is available at the NTCC, contacts with lawyers and consultants are established and about one third of the contents has been written. A new trainee will continue this project and the starter kit shall be ready soon.

Regarding implementation G the following steps will have to be taken:

- The NTCC should stay alert on potential trade missions to Thailand through contacts at for example the Netherlands embassy. When one is likely to be organized the NTCC should be actively involved
- As stated, the NTCC does not have the resources to fully facilitate matchmaking activities. The NTCC though should be more alert on possible interesting matchmaking activities from other entities (for example other foreign chambers of commerce) and jointly organize networking events with these other entities

Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations

In this chapter briefly the conclusions of this research will be drawn, recommendations to the NTCC and for possible further research will be given and an evaluation of the process of service evaluation will be given.

7.1 Conclusions

In this research the NTCC services were mapped and the level of member satisfaction was measured. Also the attractiveness of potential new services which were extracted from a survey of activities was tested. In service quality evaluation two main models dominate this field. Both models have their advantages and it was chosen to use both, in order to maximize data input and because it was interesting to see the differences and similarities between the models.

It can be concluded that the member expectations of the NTCC are very high and overall the NTCC is performing reasonably good. Because of the differences in the models the overall conclusions were inconsistent. Regarding the SERVQUAL method the NTCC was underperforming and members were overall a little dissatisfied, while regarding the performance-evaluation matrix the NTCC was performing good and members were satisfied. Interesting is that regarding the services which require improvement both models are quite consistent. So the findings of this research balance somewhere in the middle in the active debate on service quality measurement. Some findings imply consistency amongst the models (which would mean they are interchangeable) and other findings imply that the two models measure different aspects and therefore give different outcomes.

Improvement solutions for nine services (mostly in the information providence area) were formulated and chosen, and implementation guidelines were established. Most important is that the NTCC has to communicate more clearly to its members and manage expectations about what the NTCC can do for them and what it can not.

7.2 Recommendations

The NTCC is recommended to implement all solutions presented in section 5.5. For this implementation the guidelines given in chapter 6 can be used. For the NTCC there is no real need for additional research. The NTCC is performing quite well and some aspects which would improve the current performance have come forth. I recommend the NTCC to work on these improvements first.

This research does not really contribute to the debate on service quality evaluation. It was not the goal of this research to test both models on consistency or to test which one is better in which situation. But this research underlines the debate that this is still not clear. I would be interested in further research in this area, especially in which situation which model is better applicable. I have only come across research on the comparability and consistency of the two models and I have not come across research on applicability in particular situations.

7.3 Evaluation

His evaluation consists of two parts, first an evaluation on the service evaluation process will be presented. After which a brief evaluation on my personal leaning is given.

7.3.1 The service evaluation process

The first thing SERVQUAL points out that is that members overall are dissatisfied, while using the performance – evaluation matrix members are satisfied with the NTCC services. From this research it can be concluded that the SERVQUAL method is stricter (with 4 out of 22 services marked as satisfactory) than the performance evaluation matrix (17 out of 22 services marked as satisfactory),

most likely to be caused by the variables used and the way questions are asked. In this way member satisfaction would depend on the model which is used.

But comparing the SERVQUAL analysis conducted here with SERVQUAL analysis in other researches the overall gap scores are really good so the strictness of the model seems to be a main difference. The statement of Hung et al. (2003) that expectations and importance are interchangeable criteria can therefore neither underlined by this research nor be declared false. Overall some same conclusions can be drawn, while the way questions are asked probably leads to different conclusions and expectations tend to be higher than the perceived importance of a service.

Both models point the same service as the largest priority for improvement. The three other services SERVQUAL pointed out where member dissatisfaction is largest are considered to be satisfactory by the performance evaluation matrix. The two other services where member dissatisfaction occurs according to the performance evaluation matrix, have minor gap scores in SERVQUAL. So no unanimous conclusion can be drawn regarding the two models. The main finding in both models is the same, but both models point out some other services where member dissatisfaction occurs. Used purely as an evaluation tool, both models can contribute in creating a better understanding how services are valued by customers, and what they expect from an organization such as the subject. So using two models instead of one has the advantage that more data is gathered, and decision makers have more information at their disposal. Problems in using both models are a lengthier questionnaire (resulting in less response), and a threat for misinterpretation. Large advantage of the SERVQUAL method is that it tries to explain why dissatisfaction occurs (using the service gaps), and how much improvement is necessary to satisfy the client (closing the gap).

7.3.2 Personal evaluation

I am very happy that I have got the opportunity to live and work for almost half a year in Bangkok, Thailand. During my research I did not only work on the research itself, but was part of the NTCC team with my own responsibilities. In working in this environment I learned a lot, for example regarding the fact that being results oriented can be very important, how things at the top of companies work and how to get things done in a different culture.

I have encountered several issues during the bachelor thesis as well. First there was kind of a difference between pre-arrival expectations and the after-arrival situation. I managed to adapt quickly and work in the new environment. A small disappointment was the significance of the research and the results which are not world-shocking.

Summarizing I can say that personally it has been a great learning experience.

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Appendix 1. The questionnaire

1. Introduction

First of all, thank you very much for taking a few minutes to fill in this questionnaire. It is highly appreciated.

This questionnaire consists of three sections. The first one is the "expectations" section, in which you can tell us what you expect from a foreign chamber of commerce. In the second "perceptions" section, we will ask your opinion about our services and events and in the last "importance" section we ask you to tell us which services are most important to you.

All questions in these sections can be answered on a scale of one to seven. For example if we ask you to rate a service the score of 1 means that you are totally dissatisfied with it, and a score of 7 means that the service couldn't be better. Of course scores between 1 and 7 are intermediates.

If you do not know the answer to a certain question, for example if you are unable to judge an event because you never attended, please tick the box "I don't know/ no opinion". The questionnaire starts here:

1. What kind of member are you?

Individual member

Corporate member

2. What company do you work for?

2. Expectations section

In this section we ask you to tell us what you expect from a foreign chamber of commerce. For example in what extent you expect a chamber to organize joint events with other chambers. If you expect a chamber to organize joint events in a very high extent, you choose a 7. If you expect a chamber to sometimes organize a joint event you choose a middle to lower rank. If you expect a chamber never to organize such an event, you rank this section with a 1.

3. In my opinion a foreign chamber of commerce should provide the following events/ additional services with high quality:

1= I do not expect a foreign chamber of commerce to provide this service/ event. When provided I do not expect great quality from this service/ event

7= highly expect a foreign chamber of commerce to provide this service/ event. I expect great quality of this service/ event

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I don't know/ no opinion
Net working events (such as luncheons, cocktails etc.)								
Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ the embassy								
Seminars/ workshops								
Company visits								
Informal, cultural and fun events								
Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or Law)								
Trade missions								
Trade fairs/ exhibitions								
Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking								
Providing members with business directories								
Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand								
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand								
Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying								
Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis or legal documents)								

Provide trade statistics
Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments
Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies
Do some charity
Rent out equipment (such as conference rooms, projectors etc.)
Taking care of commercial registration and bank credit checking for members
Document translation services
Provide addresses for direct mailing purposes
Mitigation and arbitration service
Arrangement of appointments with Thai companies or government agencies
Provide secretarial services
Provide interpreter services
Organize seminars/ conferences on behalf of the member
Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber members
A magazine

A (yearly) handbook with a membership directory

3. Perceptions section

In this section we ask you to value our services and events. For example if in your perception is that an event is poorly organized and of very low quality you rate the event with a 1. Please notice that if a certain service is performed above your expectation, the score in this section should be higher for that particular service than in the first "expectations" section.

4. How do you value the following events organized by the NTCC?

1 = This event is often poorly organized and of very low quality

7 = This event is always very well organized and of great quality

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I don't know/ no opinion
NTCC luncheons								
Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ the embassy								
The yearly golf tournament								
NTCC cocktails								
The yearly bowling tournament								
Seminars/ Workshops								
Member company visits								
The yearly award dinner								
The 15th anniversary gala								

5. How do you value the following services/ products provided by the NTCC?

1 = This service/ product is of poor quality and poorly adjusted to my/ my companies needs

7 = This service/ product is of very high quality and adjusted to my/ my companies needs very well

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I don't know/ no opinion
Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking								
Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or Law)								
Providing members with business directories								
Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand								
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand								
Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government, and lobbying								
Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis or legal documents)								
Provide trade statistics								
Keeping members up to date about								

political, economical and other developments
Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies
Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber members
Commerce magazine
The NTCC website
The bi-yearly NTCC handbook with membership directory

4. Importance section

In this final section, we ask you to tell us how important certain events and services are to you (for individual members) or your company (corporate members).

6. How important are the following NTCC events to you/ your company?

1 = This event is very unimportant to me/ my company. I participate as little as I can in this event

7 = This event is very important to me/ my company. I participate as often as I can in this event

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I don't know/ no opinion
NTCC luncheons								
Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ the embassy								
The yearly golf tournament								
NTCC cocktails								
The yearly bowling								

tournament
Seminars/ Workshops
Member company visits
The yearly award dinner
The 15th anniversary gala

7. How important are the following NTCC services to you/ your company?

1 = This service is very unimportant to me/ my company. I never need it, or when I need it I barely use it

7 = This service is very important to me/ my company. When needed I use it very often

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I don't know/ no opinion
Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking								
Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or Law)								
Providing members with business directories, information about doing business in Thailand								
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand								
Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government, and lobbying								

Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis or legal documents)
Provide trade statistics
Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments
Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies
Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber members
The Commerce Magazine
The NTCC Website
The bi-yearly NTCC handbook with membership directory

5. Additional section

The following questions are optional, if you do not have any comments, please leave the fields blank

8. 1 = I strongly disagree
7 = I strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I don't know/ no opinion
The NTCC should put more effort on fewer activities (So less activities but more quality).								

I know exactly what
the NTCC does and
what I can expect
from the NTCC

9. What event would you like the NTCC to organize more often?

10. What event/ service shouldn't the NTCC organize less often or not anymore at all?

6. Thank you

Thank you very much for filling out this questionnaire, it is highly appreciated. We hope to welcome you at our next event..

Appendix 2. Overview of all current services

NTCC luncheons. The NTCC organizes luncheons with guest speakers about once per two months. Previous topics for example were "Sustainable Investment: an opportunity for growth", "The KLM- Air France merger" and "Lancownership and nominee structures by foreigners". Objectives of the luncheons are both to inform the members about a certain topic, and to provide the opportunity for networking.

NTCC cocktails. The NTCC organizes networking cocktails about once per two months as well. Objective is to provide the opportunity for networking.

The yearly golf tournament. Once a year the NTCC organizes a golf tournament. Besides being an important fundraiser (responsible for about 30% of the annual budget) for the NTCC, this informal event provides networking opportunities for members.

The yearly bowling tournament. This informal yearly event is focused on middle managers and other non-management staff, in order that they can meet people from other companies and get involved in NTCC activities.

Seminars/ Workshops. Seminars and workshops are sometimes combined with a lunch and have the same objective, viz. to inform members about a certain subject and to provide networking opportunities afterwards. Seminars and workshops are organized about twice a year, recent subjects were "Offshore tax advantages" and "Thailand: Possibility of a Second Economic Crisis?"

Member company visits. About twice a year the NTCC organizes visits to member companies where the hosting company is given the opportunity to promote itself. Company visits can also be joint events with more than one hosting company. During a visit, visitors can see how business is handled at the host and networking luncheons or cocktails are organized afterwards.

The yearly award dinner. This event is definitely the most prestigious one. During a ceremonial gala evening business excellence awards are conferred to member companies that have done a remarkable job in the previous year. With lots of prominent guests this event is also a major fundraiser for the NTCC (about 30% of the annual budget).

The 15th anniversary gala. This event was organized as a celebration of the 15th anniversary of the NTCC and to thank all the members throughout the years for their continued support.

Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ The Netherlands Embassy. The NTCC has good relationships with several other foreign chambers of commerce, including the French, the British, the Swiss, the Italian, the Australian and the Scandinavian. In order to reach a larger audience, to get more different speakers and to increase the networking potential, joint luncheons, cocktails and company visits are organized.

Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or Law). The very large American Chamber of Commerce has several committees focused on different target groups like young professionals and marketing. The NTCC organizes so now and then events aimed at a certain target group. Examples are the bowling tournament for middle managers and special luncheons for CFO's.

Providing members with business directories. The NTCC prepares a bi yearly handbook with up to date data about all members, each member receives a copy. Furthermore, in the library the NTCC possesses directories of all other foreign chambers, and several other Thai business directories. Members looking for a certain company can use these directories.

Providing members with general information about doing business in Thailand. Often members and non-members who are new to Thailand arrive at the NTCC. The NTCC provides them with basic information on how to start a business in Thailand, which pitfalls to avoid, and some practical tips.

Provide trade statistics. Besides staying up to date on import and export statistics, the NTCC annually provides its members through its magazine with Thai trade statistics.

Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments. In the form of news flashes via e-mail the NTCC keeps its members up to date on political and economical issues and upcoming (non)chamber-activities.

Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking. Helping a sole member to make a match, i.e. find a suitable business partner, is currently not a priority of the NTCC. Larger foreign chambers of commerce (like the French and British) in Thailand put much more effort on this. Currently the NTCC receives requests from members once in a while to help them find or bring them in contact with certain third parties, such as lawyers, auditors, very specific companies (that for example produce a certain steel pipe), or a lot of companies at once. The NTCC tries to help by offering business directories, direct contacts of other members who have dealt with the same issue, or contacts to the company they need if someone at the NTCC knows exactly where to go to.

Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand. Besides the general information for new investors to Thailand, the NTCC is consulted regularly by established companies and individuals for personalized advice. This advice can cover a wide variety of business related topics.

Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis or legal documents). The NTCC provides/ prepares on member request and at a cost price, several documents. Example of this is a member that wanted to know more about the financial and shareholder structure of another company, the NTCC prepared a full report with analysis.

Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies. On the NTCC website there is a job-webboard where companies with vacancies and jobseekers can post their job descriptions and résumés. Furthermore the NTCC is sometimes contacted by companies with vacancies and jobseekers and tries to help these people out.

Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber members. The NTCC has many ways to do this. Sometimes it does so through a recommendation, a free publication or sometimes through a subtle hint. Disadvantage may be that for some companies in sectors where multiple members are represented, this can lead to conflicting interests. Examples are new members who get a (non-promotional) article in the magazine or small companies that get a stand at an informal luncheon.

Commerce magazine. The NTCC issues a quarterly magazine called "Commerce". With an issue of 1000 copies its contents covers registration of NTCC events, management articles, advertisements and a section where members can place a small news item.

The NTCC website. The website has several functions. It links visitors through to other trade promoting organizations, the embassy and other useful websites, it has a member section where members can update their information and view other members information, and the already mentioned job-webboard.

The bi-yearly NTCC handbook with membership directory. Once in every two years the NTCC prepares a handbook with a membership directory distributed amongst the members, other foreign chambers of commerce in Thailand and several other organizations.

Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying. The NTCC represents Dutch business interests in relation to the government of Thailand, Thai opinion leaders and decision makers, to other Chambers of Commerce and to the media in Thailand. The NTCC is represented in the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce Thailand (JFCCT), has very good connections with the Netherlands Embassy, and its president is one of the 35 people currently rewriting the Thai constitution.. An example is the strong reaction of the JFCCT regarding the proposed amendments of the foreign business act, which are very bad for NTCC members.

Appendix 3. The GAP Analysis

EXPECTATIONS	ALL RESPONDENTS			INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS			CORPORATE MEMBERS			ALL MEMBERS		
	# of resp	Average score	SD	# of resp	Average score	SD	# of resp	Average score	SD	# of resp	Average score	SD
Service	50	4.16	1.23	21	4.10	0.94	29	4.22	1.31	29	4.16	1.13
Networking events such as lunches, coffee, etc.	50	5.75	1.11	21	5.71	0.96	29	5.79	1.06	29	5.76	1.01
Events organized in cooperation with other companies in the industry	50	4.79	1.24	21	4.81	0.93	29	4.78	1.35	29	4.79	1.22
Sumo of workshops	50	4.38	1.48	21	4.38	1.08	29	4.38	1.88	29	4.38	1.40
Company visits	50	4.44	1.40	21	4.44	1.00	29	4.44	1.80	29	4.44	1.44
LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter	50	4.28	1.27	21	4.28	1.00	29	4.28	1.55	29	4.28	1.28
Events customized to a certain target group (e.g. HR, Finance, etc.)	50	4.32	1.34	21	4.32	0.94	29	4.32	1.74	29	4.32	1.30
Trade fairs/exhibitions	50	4.38	1.30	21	4.38	0.96	29	4.38	1.68	29	4.38	1.28
Helping members to find business partners	50	5.56	1.24	21	5.56	0.94	29	5.56	1.55	29	5.56	1.13
Providing members with business information	50	5.87	1.21	21	5.87	0.96	29	5.87	1.06	29	5.87	0.88
Providing members with general information about doing business in the UK	50	5.00	1.40	21	5.00	0.96	29	5.00	1.68	29	5.00	1.01
Providing members with personal and/or local business information	50	4.84	1.32	21	4.84	0.93	29	4.84	1.50	29	4.84	1.02
Helping members to connect with other companies in the industry	50	5.00	1.22	21	5.00	0.94	29	5.00	1.30	29	5.00	1.02
Providing specific information on membership and (such as financial analysis or local developments)	50	4.38	1.29	21	4.38	0.93	29	4.38	1.22	29	4.38	1.21
Provide trade statistics	50	5.28	1.51	21	5.28	0.93	29	5.28	1.58	29	5.28	1.23
Helping members to catch up on local and global developments	50	5.09	1.33	21	5.09	0.96	29	5.09	1.60	29	5.09	1.11
Helping members and companies with vacancies	50	4.63	1.40	21	4.63	0.93	29	4.63	1.47	29	4.63	1.23
Do anything	50	4.57	1.27	21	4.57	0.96	29	4.57	1.18	29	4.57	1.03
Helping members with administrative issues	50	3.88	1.38	21	3.88	0.94	29	3.88	1.22	29	3.88	1.03
Helping members with administrative issues	50	3.07	1.59	21	3.07	1.00	29	3.07	1.58	29	3.07	1.23
Account translation services	50	3.42	1.24	21	3.42	0.93	29	3.42	1.52	29	3.42	1.03
Providing information on local and global developments	50	3.70	1.22	21	3.70	0.94	29	3.70	1.38	29	3.70	1.11
Providing information on local and global developments	50	3.10	1.36	21	3.10	0.93	29	3.10	1.64	29	3.10	1.07
Arrangement of appointments with the companies of government officials	50	4.68	1.31	21	4.68	0.96	29	4.68	1.51	29	4.68	1.11
Providing information on local and global developments	50	2.38	1.40	21	2.38	0.94	29	2.38	1.71	29	2.38	1.28
Providing information on local and global developments	50	3.76	1.30	21	3.76	0.93	29	3.76	1.55	29	3.76	1.08
Organizing seminars/events on behalf of the members	50	3.53	1.31	21	3.53	0.96	29	3.53	1.60	29	3.53	1.03
Providing information on local and global developments	50	4.44	1.34	21	4.44	0.93	29	4.44	1.60	29	4.44	1.11
Providing information on local and global developments	50	5.57	1.21	21	5.57	0.94	29	5.57	1.21	29	5.57	0.92
Providing information on local and global developments	49	4.04	1.48	19	4.04	0.93	29	4.04	1.58	29	4.04	1.03
Average score		4.57	1.48		4.57	1.02		4.57	1.48		4.57	1.28

Note: For two cases a member did not fill in the was a corporate member. For the total scores the influence on the fair real. These members were counted for both the individual member and the corporate category.

Service: The NTCO service address.

Organization: The dimension the individual services are categorized with.

SD: The sum of all member scores given to this attribute.

of resp: The number of useful responses to this attribute.

Average score: The sum of all scores on an attribute divided by the number of useful responses.

SD: The standard deviation of the scores to this attribute.

All member score = score individual members * 30% + score corporate members * 70%

Perceptions	ALL RESPONDENTS			INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS			CORPORATE MEMBERS			ALL MEMBERS		
	# of resp	Average score (%)	SD	# of resp	Average score	SD	# of resp	Average score	SD	# of resp	Average score	SD
Source												
MCC, individual	46	5.51	1.18	16	5.94	1.0	30	5.68	1.21	10	5.83	1.01
Events organized in cooperation with other chambers of commerce	40	5.93	1.12	17	6.23	1.0	23	5.63	1.21	13	6.23	1.01
My yearly self-evaluation	24	4.75	1.73	8	4.63	1.7	16	4.87	1.73	8	4.73	1.73
MCC website	43	5.63	1.12	15	5.93	1.0	28	5.53	1.21	5	5.93	1.01
My view on how to improve	21	4.74	1.67	7	4.27	1.6	14	4.87	1.67	0	4.93	1.67
My rating of my efforts	28	4.68	1.23	11	5.03	1.0	17	4.53	1.21	0	4.68	1.21
My rating of my company's efforts	30	4.93	1.17	12	5.17	1.0	18	4.73	1.21	0	4.93	1.21
My view on award of me	38	5.63	1.18	11	5.47	1.0	27	5.53	1.21	0	5.53	1.21
My view on award of my	37	5.93	1.18	13	6.23	1.0	24	5.11	1.21	0	5.93	1.21
My rating of my company's efforts	29	4.66	1.61	12	4.75	1.0	17	4.68	1.61	0	4.66	1.61
My rating of my company's efforts	24	4.71	1.23	8	4.53	1.0	16	4.88	1.23	0	4.71	1.23
My rating of my company's efforts	30	5.23	1.43	18	5.23	1.43	12	5.23	1.43	0	5.23	1.43
My rating of my company's efforts	36	5.23	1.03	15	5.23	1.0	21	5.11	1.03	0	5.11	1.03
My rating of my company's efforts	26	4.88	1.82	10	4.53	1.6	16	4.94	1.82	0	4.94	1.82
My rating of my company's efforts	35	4.74	1.63	15	4.63	1.6	20	4.53	1.63	0	4.53	1.63
My rating of my company's efforts	21	4.29	1.95	10	4.53	1.1	11	3.82	1.95	0	3.82	1.95
My rating of my company's efforts	29	4.21	1.62	10	4.53	1.0	19	4.20	1.62	0	4.20	1.62
My rating of my company's efforts	46	5.64	1.47	17	6.23	1.1	29	5.43	1.47	0	5.43	1.47
My rating of my company's efforts	20	4.19	1.90	8	4.23	1.8	12	4.11	1.90	0	4.11	1.90
My rating of my company's efforts	30	4.73	1.70	10	5.03	1.1	20	4.10	1.70	0	4.10	1.70
My rating of my company's efforts	40	5.32	1.11	18	5.23	1.0	22	5.20	1.11	0	5.20	1.11
My rating of my company's efforts	43	4.68	1.51	10	4.53	1.0	33	4.53	1.51	0	4.53	1.51
My rating of my company's efforts	41	5.53	1.11	10	5.53	1.0	31	5.23	1.11	0	5.23	1.11
Average score		4.86	1.51		5.22			4.81			4.80	

Note: In the cases where the number of individual members is less than 10, the total score is calculated for both the individual members as well as the corporate members.

- Source: The NCCC website address
- Comment: The number of individual members is categorized with 0-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 71-80, 81-90, 91-100
- # of resp: The number of respondents to this attribute
- Average score: The sum of all scores for an attribute divided by the number of useful responses
- SD: The standard deviation of the scores for this attribute
- # of resp: The number of individual members * 100% = score corporate members / 100%

INDIVIDUAL GAP SCORES PER ATTRIBUTE

	ALL RESPONDENTS			INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS			CORPORATE MEMBERS			ALL MEMBERS		
	EXP	PERC	GAP SCORE	EXP	PERC	GAP SCORE	EXP	PERC	GAP SCORE	EXP	PERC	GAP SCORE
NTCC luncheons	6.15	5.81	-0.54	6.10	5.56	-0.54	6.15	5.63	-0.52	6.13	5.61	-0.52
Events organized in cooperation with other members of the embassy	5.75	5.33	-0.41	5.48	5.35	-0.12	5.81	5.30	-0.51	5.71	5.31	-0.39
the yearly golf tournament	5.37	4.75	-0.55	5.45	4.63	-0.92	5.17	4.82	-0.35	5.28	4.76	-0.52
NTCC cocktails	6.15	5.58	-0.57	6.10	5.60	-0.50	6.15	5.63	-0.51	6.13	5.62	-0.51
the yearly bowling tournament	4.44	4.24	-0.21	5.00	4.28	-0.71	4.19	3.94	-0.26	4.44	4.04	-0.39
Seminars/ Workshops	4.78	4.68	-0.10	4.81	5.00	0.19	4.69	4.50	-0.19	4.73	4.65	-0.08
Member company visits	4.69	4.93	0.25	4.81	5.42	0.61	4.60	4.40	-0.20	4.66	4.71	0.04
the yearly award dinner	5.30	5.55	0.25	5.55	5.45	-0.08	5.17	5.81	0.64	5.28	5.56	0.28
the 15th anniversary gala	5.37	5.32	0.03	5.55	5.62	0.07	5.17	5.17	0.00	5.28	5.30	0.02
Helping members to find business partners/ match making	5.59	4.66	-0.93	5.63	4.75	-0.88	5.58	4.56	-1.00	5.58	4.61	-0.97
Events customized to a certain target group	4.89	4.71	-0.18	5.00	4.33	-0.67	4.83	4.88	0.05	4.88	4.71	-0.17
Providing members with business directories	5.81	5.26	-0.55	5.68	5.33	-0.35	5.91	5.23	-0.68	5.85	5.28	-0.56
Providing members with general information about dining businesses	6.00	5.23	-0.77	5.84	5.27	-0.58	6.09	5.14	-0.94	6.31	5.18	-1.13
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand	4.94	4.88	-0.06	4.74	4.60	-0.13	5.00	4.94	-0.06	4.92	4.80	-0.12
Establishing strengthened contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	6.11	4.74	-1.37	6.00	4.67	-1.33	6.11	4.82	-1.29	6.08	4.77	-1.31
Provide specific information on member demand	4.38	4.25	-0.13	4.53	4.30	-0.23	4.22	3.82	-0.40	4.31	3.98	-0.35
Provide trade statistics	5.29	4.31	-0.98	5.05	4.60	-0.45	5.39	4.26	-1.13	5.29	4.42	-0.86
Keeping members up to date	5.89	5.59	-0.30	5.70	5.82	0.12	6.00	5.45	-0.55	5.91	5.56	-0.35
Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies	4.53	4.19	-0.34	4.32	4.25	-0.07	4.47	4.17	-0.31	4.43	4.19	-0.23
Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber	4.44	4.23	-0.21	4.60	5.00	0.40	4.32	4.10	-0.23	4.41	4.37	-0.04
Commerce magazine	5.31	5.54	0.24	5.30	5.22	-0.08	5.29	5.70	0.41	5.30	5.56	0.26
the NTCC website	4.95	4.95	0.00	4.95	4.50	-0.45	5.21	5.21	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00
the bi-yearly NTCC handbook with membership directory	6.04	5.63	-0.41	5.94	5.50	-0.44	6.09	5.74	-0.35	6.05	5.67	-0.38
Average	5.32	4.98	-0.33	5.33	5.02	-0.31	5.29	4.81	-0.48	5.30	4.95	-0.36

EXPECTATIONS: The average expectation score on this attribute

PERCEPTIONS: The average perceptions score on this attribute

GAP SCORE: The expectations score - the perceptions score of this attribute

All members' score = score individual members * 30% + score corporate members * 70%

Dimension	GAP SCORES PER DIMENSION		
	All respondents	Individual member	Corporate members
Events	-0.20	-0.22	-0.21
Individually helping a member	-0.33	-0.14	-0.10
Informational providence	-0.65	-0.28	-0.82
Contact with government/ lobbying	-1.37	-1.33	-1.29
Products/ tangibles	-0.08	-0.26	0.03

Note 1: Gap scores per dimension are determined by adding all attribute scores for a certain dimension, and dividing this score by the number of attributes

Note 2: To calculate expectations scores on NTCC luncheons and NTCC cocktails the expectations score of "organizing networking events" was used

Note 3: To calculate an expectations score on "the yearly bowling tournament" the expectations score of "organizing informal, cultural and fun events" was used

Note 4: To calculate expectations scores on "the yearly golf tournament", "the yearly award dinner" and "the 15th anniversary gala" the expectations scores of organizing networking events and "organizing informal, cultural and fun events" were averaged

EXPECTATIONS ON CURRENT SERVICES AND BENCHMARKED SERVICES			
AI respondents	Score	Rank	Currently provided
Networking events (such as luncheons, cocktails etc.)	6.15	1	yes
Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	6.11	2	yes
A (yearly) handbook with a membership directory	6.04	3	yes
Providing members with general information about doing business in	6.00	4	yes
Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other	5.89	5	yes
Providing members with business directories	5.81	6	yes
Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ the embassy	5.75	7	yes
Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	5.59	8	yes
A magazine	5.31	9	yes
Provide trade statistics	5.29	10	yes
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand	4.94	11	yes
Trade missions	4.92	12	no
Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or	4.89	13	yes
Seminars/ workshops	4.78	14	yes
Company visits	4.69	15	yes
Trade fairs/ exhibitions	4.69	16	no
Arrangement of appointments with Thai companies or government agencies	4.59	17	no
Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies	4.53	18	yes
Informal, cultural and fun events	4.44	19	yes
Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber	4.44	20	yes
Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis	4.38	21	yes
Do some charity	4.31	22	no
Provide addresses for direct mailing purposes	3.70	23	no
Organize seminars/ conferences on behalf of the member	3.53	24	no
Document translation services	3.43	25	no
Taking care of commercial registration and bank credit checking for	3.37	26	no
Mitigation and arbitration service	3.10	27	no
Provide interpreter services	2.75	28	no
Rent out equipment: (such as conference rooms, projectors etc.)	2.55	29	no
Provide secretarial services	2.33	30	no

DIMENSION GAP SCORES		ALL RESPONDENTS		
Dimensions	Gap score	Normalized	Importance	Normalized Gap Score
Event	-0.20	0.19	0.19	-0.18
Financially helping members	-0.23	0.17	0.21	-0.23
Financial independence	-0.05	0.21	0.22	-0.08
Contact with government	-1.27	0.22	0.22	-1.50
Products/Services	-0.08	0.21	0.21	-0.08
Average				-0.53

DIMENSION GAP SCORES		INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS		
Dimensions	Gap score	Normalized	Importance	Normalized Gap Score
Event	-0.22	0.19	0.19	-0.27
Financially helping members	-0.14	0.19	0.20	-0.12
Financial independence	-0.20	0.20	0.22	-0.27
Contact with government	-1.23	0.22	0.22	-1.47
Products/Services	-0.20	0.20	0.20	-0.20
Average				-0.47

DIMENSION GAP SCORES		CORPORATE MEMBERS		
Dimensions	Gap score	Normalized	Importance	Normalized Gap Score
Event	-0.27	0.19	0.19	-0.18
Financially helping members	-0.40	0.17	0.23	-0.23
Financial independence	0.82	0.21	0.85	0.85
Contact with government	-1.28	0.22	1.40	-1.40
Products/Services	0.03	0.22	0.03	0.03
Average				-0.53

DIMENSION GAP SCORES		ALL MEMBERS		
Dimensions	Gap score	Normalized	Importance	Normalized Gap Score
Event	-0.27	0.19	0.20	-0.20
Financially helping members	-0.22	0.17	0.23	-0.23
Financial independence	-0.05	0.21	0.08	-0.08
Contact with government	-1.30	0.22	-1.43	-1.43
Products/Services	-0.03	0.21	-0.03	-0.03
Average				-0.53

The Normalized Gap Scores are determined by dividing the Gap score by (10) and multiplying it by the Normalized Importance score.

Appendix 4: The Performance – Importance Analysis

PERCEPTIONS	ALL RESPONDENTS		INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS		CORPORATE MEMBER		ALL MEMBERS	
	# of resp	Average score/SD	SUM # of resp	Ave score	# of resp	Ave score	# of resp	Ave score
IS/NOT								
MCC 1. Achieve's	46	5.01 1.18	100	19	50	5.01	50	5.01
Events organized in partnership with other chambers the art-hazy	42	5.23 1.14	31	17	27	5.30	27	5.31
the year's top 100 members	24	4.75 1.28	37	3	17	4.83	17	4.73
MCC activities	43	5.69 1.14	34	15	30	5.05	30	5.02
The year's new and interesting	21	4.24 1.37	30	7	16	5.04	16	4.94
Members' needs types	28	4.08 1.28	35	11	18	4.60	18	4.65
Member company visits	30	4.83 1.37	35	12	20	4.71	20	4.71
the year's award dinner	30	5.55 1.33	30	11	19	5.61	19	5.53
the 1st anniversary gala	37	5.32 1.38	39	13	24	5.41	24	5.30
Helping members find business partners/matchmaking	39	4.53 1.37	37	13	18	4.58	18	4.51
Events customized in partnership with other chambers (for example, wine & dine)	24	4.71 1.23	38	9	16	4.83	16	4.71
Providing members with best practices	39	5.29 1.40	30	19	22	5.20	22	5.28
Providing members with general information about doing business in Dallas	35	5.53 1.33	70	15	21	5.17	21	5.18
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Dallas	28	4.88 1.33	49	13	18	4.80	18	4.80
Establishing relationships with other members/donors (such as the total analysis of legal agreements)	35	4.74 1.33	70	15	22	4.82	22	4.77
Providing specific information to members/donors (such as the total analysis of legal agreements)	30	4.95 1.45	43	10	11	5.83	11	5.83
Providing staff training	29	4.31 1.34	49	10	18	4.42	18	4.42
Keeping members up to date about activities and other developments	48	5.53 1.41	30	17	31	5.41	31	5.53
Helping members and companies with vacancies	26	4.13 1.30	34	3	18	4.11	18	4.13
Promoting new and innovative products/services with other chamber members	30	4.23 1.28	50	10	21	4.10	21	4.37
Keeping members	48	5.51 1.17	34	15	30	5.61	30	5.53
the MCC website	43	4.83 1.34	72	19	28	5.21	28	5.00
The year's MCC members with members in of memory	41	5.03 1.41	99	19	27	5.74	27	5.07
Average score		4.53 1.12			30.04	4.51		4.51

IMPORTANCE	ALL MEMBERS		INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS		CORPORATE MEMBERS		ALL MEMBERS	
	# of resp.	Average Score (SD)	# of resp.	Average Score	# of resp.	Average Score	# of resp.	Average Score
Workshops	45	3.59 (1.48)	18	3.14	30	3.90	30	3.31
Events organized in cooperation with the Chamber of the industry	46	3.31 (1.38)	16	4.12	30	3.61	30	3.30
The yearly golf tournament	41	3.41 (1.51)	14	3.04	27	3.64	27	3.47
Trade fairs	46	3.00 (1.72)	14	3.01	32	3.81	32	3.00
The yearly award for the best company	39	2.50 (1.87)	14	2.33	27	2.74	27	2.78
Seminars/Workshops	45	4.79 (1.53)	18	4.34	27	4.71	27	4.61
Member activities	41	4.07 (1.03)	14	4.53	29	3.93	29	4.06
The yearly award for the best company	42	4.93 (1.86)	14	4.83	28	5.14	28	4.91
The yearly award for the best company	43	4.79 (2.02)	14	4.14	29	4.55	29	4.73
Helping members to find business partners/matchmaking	41	4.11 (1.88)	14	4.83	28	4.54	28	4.80
Events organized by a certain trade group (e.g. textile, IT, etc.)	40	4.10 (1.51)	13	3.53	29	4.73	29	4.27
Providing market/business forecasts	41	4.99 (1.08)	15	5.07	30	4.87	30	4.88
Giving members personalized advice concerning business	42	4.11 (2.02)	14	4.23	28	3.57	28	4.11
Participating in projects with the Government and lobbying	43	5.23 (1.92)	14	4.14	30	5.20	30	5.19
Providing specific information on market demand (e.g. as in total analysis or legal documents)	41	3.71 (1.88)	13	3.84	28	3.53	28	3.67
Provide trade statistics	43	4.29 (1.42)	14	3.83	30	4.73	30	4.29
Keeping members updated about public economic calendar developments	41	3.73 (1.83)	14	3.83	31	3.81	31	3.81
Help jobseekers and employers with vacancies	41	3.70 (1.87)	15	4.00	27	3.07	27	3.95
Providing my companies products/services with other members	43	4.53 (2.02)	14	4.64	30	4.41	30	4.52
Commerce magazine	44	5.01 (1.93)	15	4.84	30	5.23	30	5.03
The Newsletter	44	5.00 (1.83)	15	4.74	30	4.98	30	4.98
The bi-yearly N. D. handbook with membership directory	41	5.33 (1.92)	15	4.84	27	5.33	27	5.19
Average		4.59 (1.74)		4.74		4.58		4.58

ALL MEMBERS	NR	PERCEPTION	IMPORTANCE
Keeping members up to date about political, economical and other developments	1	5.56	5.67
NTCC uncheons	2	5.61	5.34
Events organized in cooperation with other chambers/ the embassy	3	5.31	5.35
Establish/ strengthen contacts with the Thai government and lobbying	4	4.77	5.18
The bi-yearly NTCC handbook with membership directory	5	5.67	5.19
Commerce magazine	6	5.56	5.06
NTCC cocktails	7	5.62	5.00
The NTCC website	8	5.00	4.98
Providing members with business directories	9	5.28	4.93
The yearly award dinner	10	5.56	4.95
The 15th anniversary gala	11	5.30	4.73
Seminars/ Workshops	12	4.65	4.64
Helping members to find business partners/ matchmaking	13	4.61	4.65
Promoting my/ my companies products/ services with other chamber members	14	4.37	4.52
Events customized to a certain target group (for example HRM, Finance or Law)	15	4.71	4.27
Provide trade statistics	16	4.42	4.42
Giving members personalized advice on doing business in Thailand	17	4.90	4.10
Member company visits	18	4.71	4.06
Provide specific information on member demand (such as financial analysis or legal documents)	19	3.96	3.67
Help jobseekers and companies with vacancies	20	4.19	3.35
The yearly golf tournament	21	4.76	3.47
The yearly bowling tournament	22	4.04	2.78

Improve [3.5], [5.7]
Maintain/improve [5.5], [7.7]
Maintain [3.3], [5.5]
Reduce/maintain [3.1], [5.3] and [5.3], [7.5]

